



Examining the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale in private institutions of higher learning

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DECLARATION

I, Jan Higgs Venter declare that this mini dissertation is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the North West Business School, North West University. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University. I further declare that I have obtain the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research and to submit this mini dissertation.

J. H. Venter

Desember 2019

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- My study leader, Mrs. N. Khumalo. For me, this wouldn't be possible without your continuous support, guidance and patience. Thank you.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale in private institutions of higher learning. The ever-changing landscape of private higher institutions and the need for leaders that are capable to lead change and the impact on the employee's commitment to change and the effect on their morale were the motivation for this study.

The literature study in chapter three of this study focuses on change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale. In the literature study the effect of change leadership on commitment to change and the effect of change leadership on the employee morale were taken into consideration.

The study was one phase cross-sectional and the questionnaires were sent at a single point of time to the personnel of the two private higher institutions. A total of 130 employees of the two private higher institutions received the questionnaire. 65% of the employees from various operational levels in the private higher institutions responded to the questionnaire. The findings in the study clearly indicated that the interaction between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale are high. The respondents clearly indicated that their commitment to change are influenced by the change leader, and the data indicated that the change leader support during change does have an impact on their morale.

Keywords: Change leadership, commitment to change, employee morale, leadership.

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CHAPTER 1 NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study will focus on the background of leadership and the problem statement that was identified by the researcher. Main objectives and secondary objectives will be stated and research questions that needs to be explored and answered regarding change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale are stated in this chapter. Concepts and definitions that are relevant to the study are given. This chapter will end with a summary of the information in each of the chapters for this study.

1.2 Background

Leadership is a concept as old as the world itself. Leaders are a different breed of people; they present different attributes and act differently from most people. Throughout history leaders have emerged and shaped a future for next generations, they have challenged the status quo, built empires, enable breakthroughs and most important of all they embraced change (Abib-Pech, 2013).

Descriptions of leadership that reside in literature can be described as the art of influencing people to accomplish a certain outcome, or that a leader is a person who focus on the mission, does the right thing and maintain an eye on the future, but Grimm (2010) characterize leadership as having a vision and possessing a plan that uses strategies for change. The development of change leadership and employee commitment to change significantly determines the successful implementation of any organizational change. The competitive business world and strategic adaptability are forcing many organizations to set and implement new goals. Struggles identified are very similar amongst leaders, falling into three nearly universal categories: the ability to lead organizational change, the ability to think strategically and solve problems creatively, and the ability to develop new leaders and communicate effectively (Cullen & Nickerson, 2017). Within each organization, going through change the egocentric and narcissistic, the my way or highway, the deceivers and the leaders who tend to avoid responsibility are in key positions, intimidating leaders and the inappropriate focused leaders are also part of senior leadership and each of their behaviours having a influence on employee morale and performance (Seago, 2016). In a world where organizational values need to

promote the triple bottom line people, leaders are required to change radically what they do and how they do it (Burnes, Hughes, & By, 2018).

Even though the considerable rate of change and change implementation failure reported by organizations worldwide has led researchers to scrutinize key individual and contextual factors contributing to the success and sustainability of change in organizations (Kali McKay, 2013). According to Saravana Kumar (2018), research has demonstrated that a manager's leadership style has a remarkable impact on employee's behavioural pattern. This includes their conviction and willingness to adopt and abide by the firm's strategic pathway and new goals. It takes leadership, not merely management, to guide an organization through a rapidly changing world (O'Neil, 2018).

1.3 Problem statement

Multiple studies have concluded that the number one key to a successful change initiative is effective change leadership and management sponsorship (Friesen, 2016). Whilst Burns suggested in 1978 that leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth, despite three decades of transformation and organizational change leadership discourse, leadership is still in crisis (Burnes et al., 2018). The most difficult aspect of major change has little to do with getting the right concept, core design or the right team at the top, it lies in the skills and behaviour of hundreds of people, down the line. Pendleton, Furnham, and Palgrave (2012) argues that leadership influences the bottom-line personnel and that good leadership is an inextricably link between internal quality of the organization (its culture and climate), which is closely associated with staff satisfaction and loyalty. The impact of the change on the morale of the organization employees can be linked to the performance of the employee, the key would be to establish the impact on the morale of the employee due to change in leadership. A leader, as a key figure, actions or interactions can determine others well-being (Burnes et al., 2018).

As much as leadership and organizational change are inextricably intertwined, organizational change and change leadership has become an interest for organizational consultants more so than for empirical researchers (Bryman, 2011). Jeffrey and Laurie (2012) stated that available research is incomplete regarding both what constitutes leadership and the impact of change leaders' approaches, behaviours and activities on

change outcomes of any type. Due to a mounting pressure to sustain higher education is under pressure to adapt, the subsequently challenge effect of employee performance and morale in the workplace, the everyday pressure of change and change leadership may have an influence on the commitment to change and morale of the employees.

Evidently these companies are experiencing a spurt of growth, this means that the management and changing leadership with new vision and strategy is an integral part of the growing process. The phenomenon regarding the impact of this change of leadership on the personnel morale and commitment to change must be investigated. Change leadership, commitment to change and the effect on the morale of personnel need to be solved.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 Main objective

The outcomes of this study aim to help organizations to identify the importance change leadership and commitment to change from the employees to the benefit of the organization. The role that change leadership and the importance of a change leadership style in an organization in the beginning of change play, the implementation of change is a considerable challenge, in ever changing times this is a factor that has an influence on every organization. Recent studies have highlighted the importance of leadership in change processes in organizations. According to Voet (2016) limited empirical evidence exists regarding the importance of leadership on organizational change.

This study aims to show the importance of leadership and the role it is playing in a changing environment. Change itself is most of the time a concerning thought for the employees of an organization. This study will focus on the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale.

1.4.2 Secondary objective

The secondary objectives of this study are:

- To determine the prevalence perceived of change leadership and employee morale in privately owned institutions of higher learning;

- To determine the relationship between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale;
- To examine the role of change leadership in employee's commitment to change and employee morale.

1.5 Research questions

- What is the prevalence perceived of change leadership and employee morale amongst the employees?
- What is the relationship between change leadership and employee's commitment to change amongst the employees?
- What is the role of change leadership in employee's commitment to change and employee morale amongst the employees?

1.6 Significance of the study

The outcomes of this study help organizations to identify the importance of change leadership and commitment to change from the employees to the benefit of the organization. The role that change leadership and the importance of a change leader in an organization in the beginning of change play, the implementation of change is a considerable challenge, in ever changing times this is a factor that has an influence on every organization.

Change itself is most of the time a concerning thought for the employees of an organization. This study focused on the importance of change leadership commitment to change and employee morale in private institutions of higher learning.

1.7 Conduction of the study

This study made use of quantitative research method and the collection of data for the study were done by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to the participants at a single point in time which made this study a cross-sectional study. Cross-sectional were the most applicable design to follow since the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale were examined.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The hierarchy level of participants in the study were not taken into consideration, due to quantitative research method that were used. A qualitative approach may have resulted in a more in-depth study regarding the interaction between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale.

1.9 Concepts and definitions

For the purpose of this study, the following concepts and definitions are applicable:

- **Commitment to change**

Commitment to change can be defined as a force (mind-set) that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative (Hill, Myeong-Gu, Jae Hyeung, & Taylor, 2012).

- **Leadership**

Leadership can be defined as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and in the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (Woods; & West, 2015).

- **Change leadership**

Change leadership defined as the behaviour that target at the specific change consists of visioning, enlisting, empowering, monitoring and helping with individual adaption (Wulandari, Mangundjaya, & Utoyo, 2015). Ahmad and Zhichao (2018) defines change leadership as a leader that inspire employees to exceed their individual interests for the good of the organization and can have a significant impact on their employees.

- **Employee morale**

Morale is the feeling of employee enthusiasm, confidence and challenging task, morale refers to how employees positively and supportively feel about and for their organization (Rukshani, Senthilnathan, & Practices, 2015).

1.10 Chapter summary

Chapter one of this study discussed the problem statement, objectives, research questions and the definitions of concepts that will be measured. Change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale are the aspects that will be measured for this study. In chapter two the literature of leadership, change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale will be explored. Chapter three focusses on the research methodology of the study. Chapter four discuss the results of the study and chapter five gives a summary of the findings of the study, recommendations and conclusion of the study also form part of chapter five.

1.11 Conclusion

In chapter one the background and problem of change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale were discussed. Objectives and research questions of the study were indicated, and the importance of the study were emphasized. The next chapter consists of a literature study regarding change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study focusses on the literature of change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale.

In order to develop a theoretical framework to disentangle the underlying mechanisms that can explain the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and the morale of the employees, literature on leadership, change leadership as a focus, commitment to change and the morale of employees must be explored.

2.2 Literature review

2.2.1 Leadership

The concepts of being a leader changed drastically from the Great man theory in the early 1800's. Leadership behaviour studies tried to identify the characteristics of good and bad leaders to form a conceptual framework to identify the ideal leader. According to Clark (2015) leadership is learned while a leader's knowledge and skills may be influenced by attributes like, values, believes, character and ethics. Knowledge and skills influence the way a leader influence other people, but attributes give the leaders certain characteristics that make them unique. Cismas, Dona, and Andreiasu (2016) stated that leadership skills can be developed by setting targets such as: organizing and motivating others; setting objectives; persevering when things are not working out; accepting responsibility for mistakes or wrong decisions and to know what their followers need. Leadership is thus a combination of the different attributes and characteristics of a person and these characteristics and attributes determines the effectiveness of a person as a leader. According to Schooly (2019) there are nine common leadership styles. Each of these styles have their own attributes and characteristics. In Table 2-1 below the characteristics are illustrated (Becker; Cismas et al., 2016; Schooly, 2019):

Table 2-1: Leadership styles and characteristics

Leadership style	Characteristics
Autocratic leadership	These leaders tend to be very strict and have control over the decision-making process.
Bureaucratic leadership	These leaders strongly rely on hierarchy, not as strict as an autocrat but tend to strictly enforce regulations and statutes.
Democratic leadership	For these leader's participation from followers are important and creative work environments tend to flourish under these types of leaders.
Laissez-faire leadership	These leaders have a hands-off approach and their followers have all the decision-making responsibilities. These leaders tend to thrive when working with highly experienced followers.
Situational leadership	These leaders can modify and implement different types of styles accordingly to the needs of their followers. These leaders tend to be effective in most type of organizations.
Servant leadership	Servant leaders tend to share power and decision-making responsibilities with their employees. These leaders tend to be effective in organizations where teams need to create diversity, inclusion and morale.
Transactional leadership	These leaders can be effective in organizations where reward can be used as motivation.
Transformational leadership	Transformational leaders use their personality to create a positive working environment, they inspire followers to build confidence and accountability, these leaders are effective in organizations where interactivities between members are high.
Charismatic leadership	These leaders inspire others to follow their lead, they are very likable, and this helps them to be effective. These leaders are effective in organizations where a positive morale is needed.

According to Cismas et al. (2016) leadership styles such as authoritarian, transformational, democratic and laissez-faires naturally emerge in organizations, but effective leaders tend to have characteristics such as confidence, purpose, courage, ethical and effective goal setting capabilities according to Grimm (2010). For leading organizational change Lowder (2009) is of meaning that transformational and servant leadership is most significant during organizational change. Lowder (2009) states that transformational leaders tend to have a stronger focus on intellectual stimulation while servant leaders tend to focus on developing their follower’s personal potential. Transformational leadership style has been identified by Akinbode and Shuhumi (2018) to be more effective during organizational change.

Yukl, Gordon, and Taber (2002) already indicated in their study that effective change-oriented leaders tend to be transformational and/or charismatic leaders. Yukl (2012) hierarchical behaviour taxonomy, four meta-categories were identified, and each meta-category has a different objective. In table 2-2 hierarchical taxonomy of leadership behaviours of Yukl (2012) is displayed.

Table 2-2: Hierarchical taxonomy of leadership behaviours

Task-oriented	Clarifying Planning Monitoring operations Problem Solving
Relations-oriented	Supporting Developing Recognizing Empowering
Change-oriented	Advocating change Envisioning change Encouraging innovation Facilitating collective learning
External	Networking External monitoring Representing

(Source: Adapted from (Yukl, 2012))

Change oriented behaviour's main objective in this taxonomy is to promote innovativeness and create opportunities for collective learning, envisioning change and explaining why the change is necessary. Being change oriented characteristic of having a strong desire to influence others and being self-confident help to promote innovativeness and according to Shastri, Mishra, and Sinha (2010) these characteristics form part of the characteristics of a charismatic leader. Corcoran and Wellman (2016) describes charisma as a social dynamic and interactive process by which an individual perceive certain characteristics and being perceived as extraordinary and worthy of authority. Transformational and charismatic leadership involves four factors (Kendrick, 2011; Shuhumi, 2018): Idealized influence, which is founded on trust; inspirational motivation, this is the ability to help followers identify what is right to do; intellectual stimulation, helps followers to create a more creative solution to problems; individual consideration, each follower is treated as a contributor, this creates opportunity for coaching and mentoring of followers. Kendrick further indicates that each of these factors as an individual element can provide the opportunity to create the ideal circumstance for leading change. Transformational and charismatic leadership styles may influence and help leaders to create the ideal environment for change, change management models however must also be taken into consideration to lead organizational change effectively.

Effective leadership have the ability to produce movement, aligning people, inspiring and motivating while management produce consistency by means of effective organizing, planning and problem solving (Clark, 2015). According to Al-Haddad and Kotnour (2015) leadership is critical for implementing change but not following a change method to implement the change a risk of not achieving the necessary outcomes, are a possibility.

2.2.2 Change management

Change in organizations can be a big or a small change and the change can be over a long- or short period of time. If the change is clearly identified a leader can choose the most appropriate change method (Al-Haddad & Kotnour, 2015).

Change can be identified as a constant, organizations there for need to identify a driver of change within the organizations. Coley (2019) identified seven drivers: connection to the global economy; growing public accountability; more corporatized environment; competition; internationalization and innovative technology. Change take place over time

and to increase the success of change, planning is essential and change enablers should be identified. According to Ahmad and Zhichao (2018) proper planning identify the gap where an organization is and where the organization wants to be. In figure 2-1 change enablers, as identified by Al-Haddad and Kotnour (2015) are displayed. Al-Haddad and Kotnour argues that for successful change knowledge and skills of the employees, commitment to the change of the employees and resources available for the change are key enablers for successful change.

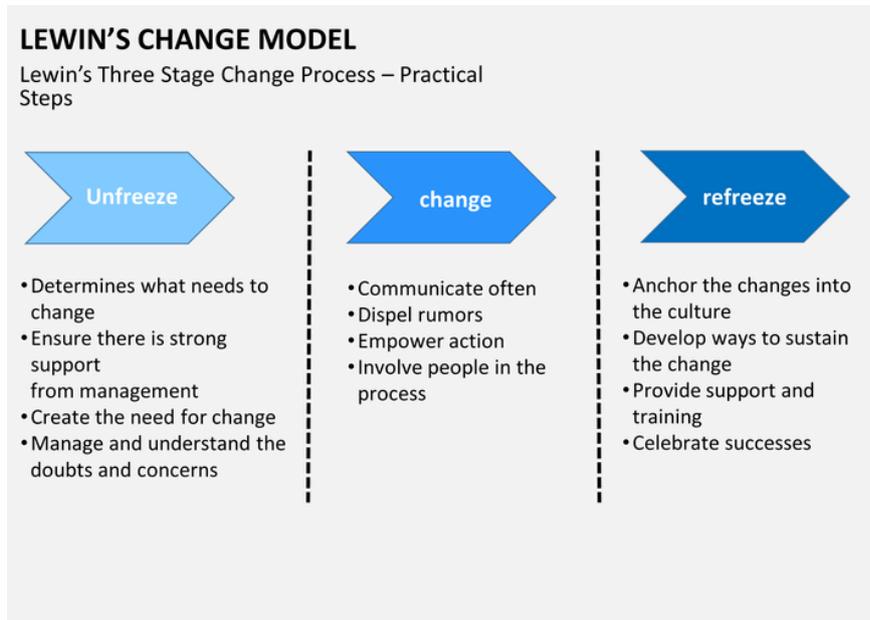


Figure 2-1: Change enablers

(Source: Adapted from (Al-Haddad & Kotnour, 2015))

Identification of the change driver can lead to the implementation of the correct change method. A change method is the actions carried out to deal with the change and can be categorized as systematic change method and change management methods (Coley, 2019). Change management model like Lewin's change management model, focus is on procedure while change management models such as Kotter's theory is more employee oriented (Mulholland, 2017). Lewin with the 'changing as three steps' theory are widely considered as the founding father of change management (Cummings, Bridgman, & Brown, 2016). In Table 2-3 is a description of Lewin's change model.

Table 2-3: Lewin's change model



Source: Adapted from (Mulholland, 2017)

The Kotter change model has shaped the theory and practise of change management drastically, Kotter change model are most affective for steering large groups (Coley, 2019). Table 2-3 describes Kotter change model.

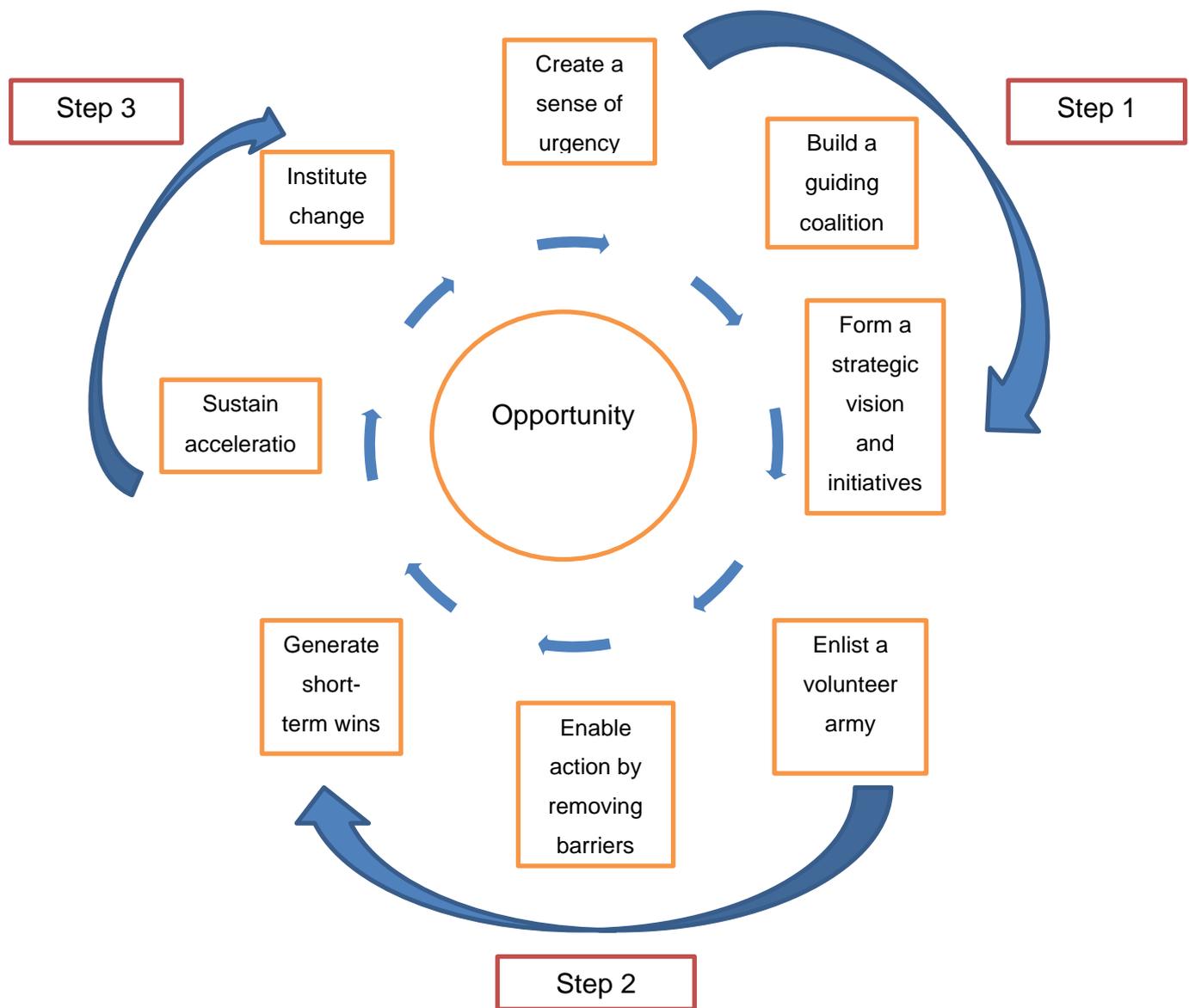


Figure 2-2: Kotter 8-Step Process for leading change

Kotter 8-step process for leading change help organizations to lead change by following eight steps to create and sustain change (Kotter, 2006). Kotter states that there are three components in the change model, the first step is to create a sense of urgency, building a coalition and develop a change vision. The second step is to communicate the change vision for buy-in and enlist volunteers to help with the new change vision, enable action by empowering the employees to change and generate short-term wins. The last step in Kotter change model is to make sure that change is sustained and to ensure that the change is part of the organizational culture.

Organizational change according to Ling, Guo, and Chen (2018) depends on successful leaders. Nelson (2018) stated that an organization that does not experience change, are likely the organization that is dying. Change requires creating a new system, which in turn demands leadership (Kotter, 2006). Leadership is viewed as the key to this successful change (Gill, 2002). Characteristics for leading change and overcoming of resistance to change are identifiable in change leaders, this means that a change leader can get employees to commit themselves to new strategic ventures, goals and organizational change.

2.2.3 Change leadership

Leadership in any organization is generally viewed as a force essential for successful organizations. Woods and West (2015) describes leadership as the directing of activities of a group towards a shared goal, John Quincy Adams, sixth president of the United States of America defined leadership as follows;

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader”.

This quote presents a reasonably comprehensive definition of leadership. Leadership in this quote attributes to the roots of a person, it alludes a higher purpose and the ability to inspire others, the need to do more than just the normal duty and the constant need for learning and action can all be found in the President’s quote.

Most leadership literature makes a clear distinction between leaders and managers. The roles of leader and manager have been viewed as two different roles, now they are more often viewed as two different concepts with a natural overlap between the skills they require (Madanchian, Hussein, Noordin, & Taherdoost, 2017). Leadership experts have highlighted that leaders think in terms of actions, are not passive, want to shape goals and react to them, and have the ability to alter peoples mood, expectations and perceptions about a particular situation (Abib-Pech, 2013). Management can drive business results by getting individuals and groups ready, willing and able to implement and sustain new ways of working (Nelson, 2018).

Whenever people have a set of common values or objectives, the emerge of a leader seems inevitable, leadership seems to be a natural consequence of human interaction

(Puth, 2016). Maxwell (2014) describe the ability to change as one of the characteristics of a good leader, he also stated that most people will change jobs between fifteen and twenty times in a career. This place some emphasis on the need and capability for a leader to change. The ability to understand and manage change is critical for all successful leaders in organizations (Nelson, 2018).

Change leadership as defined by Wulandari et al. (2015) is the behaviour that target at the specific change and consist of visioning, enlisting, empowering, monitoring and helping with individual adaption. Pendleton et al. (2012) states that leadership has an impact on how people in the organization feel about and understand themselves, this is a positive outcome and may even contribute to the motivation of the employee. This statement places more emphasis on the importance of change leadership, as the conclusion can be made that leaders have to help employees adapt to change in their environment. Nelson (2018) describes necessary competencies for a change leader as a person who understand people, change and themselves. Change leaders must have a knowledge of the Human dynamics of change, this will keep productivity and morale up. The best change leaders display different skills and actions at different times during the change to meet people where they are (Nelson, 2018).

According to Friesen (2016) and Nelson (2018) the number one key to successful change is effective leadership, Friesen stated that the following roles are important for change leaders:

- (i) Communicator – a change leader must communicate why the changes are needed and the risk of not changing. Effective change leaders know how to communicate complex messages across the organization:
- (ii) Advocate – the change leader must support the change through word and actions:
- (iii) Liaison – the leader must be able to balance the needs of both project and business teams to achieve goals:
- (iv) Coach – a leader must be able to coach the employees thorough the change process; this include preparing the employees for the change and explaining the new performance expectations very clearly to all the employees:

- (v) Resistance – it is very important to identify and manage resistance, to respond to questions and concerns timely. According to Reynolds (2018) to understand the employee concerns and to address those concerns early in the process lower the risk of resistance.

Effective change leaders also understand the change process and unique requirements that it brings. A. change process can be described as a systematic way of addressing organizational processes and the people who drive those processes in its totality while introducing a new way of thinking, and meeting new operational or organizational goals (Strauthers, 2016).

2.2.4 Employee morale

Employee morale can depend on many factors, such as work hours, workload and remuneration. Employee morale is an indication of the emotions, attitude, satisfaction and overall outlook of employees during their time at work. According to Pater (2013) most leaders talk about the importance of engaging workers, and recognize the connection between employee morale and performance. Pater further states that leaders approach set the tone for workers morale.

Morale, according to Rukshani et al. (2015) is the feeling of employee enthusiasm, confidence and challenging tasks, morale refers to how employees positively and supportively feel about and for their organizations. External factors, business climate and blame shifting may result in negative employee morale and sharing and communicating a shared vision may have a positive impact on employee morale (Gish, 2015). Employee morale can be afflicted by arrogance, distraction and disconnection (Xuanfang, 2017), supporting this is the study done by The Society for Human Resource Management (2016) stating that the most important aspects that can influence employee morale are respect, company culture and connection with leadership.

Low employee morale comes from various change factors, according to Niu and Roberge (2017) change in leadership and change leadership are playing a role in employee morale. The Kübler-Ross Change Curve, also known for as the five stages of grief is a model consisting of the various levels or stages of emotions which are experienced by a person going to approach death or who is a survivor of an intimate death, this model can also be applied in the business world. As a reliable tool the Kübler-Ross Change Curve

(1969) can be used to understand the stages where people are when they are going through a major or significant change.

According to Semuel. (2017) and Octavia. (2017) when the executive is capable to execute its leadership well, employees will be inspired to actively involve work by which employees' job satisfaction will be improved, this will mean that they will perform better which will increase their morale. Morale, engagement and change leadership go hand in hand (Strauthers, 2016). A change leader must be able to get the employees to participate and engage in the change, with no engagement between the leaders and the employees the morale and engagement to change would be at a low. Strauthers further states that employee engagement is based on trust, integrity, two-way commitment and communication between an organization and its members. Change leaders influence employee's change-oriented behaviour through improving their skills and capabilities and by building their confidence in successfully implement change. The outcome of the employee's work must be of value for the individual, as this may have an effect regarding the employee's commitment to the organization, which in turn could influence the morale of the employee.

Leadership influence company performance, which is consistent with research conducted and shows that when an executive is capable to execute their leadership well, employees will be inspired to be actively involved at work by which the employees' job satisfaction will be improved and at the end, their morale would be influenced in a positive way (Semuel; et al., 2017).

2.2.5 Employee commitment to change

Commitment to organizational change can be defined according to Hill et al. (2012) as a force (mind-set) that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of change. Van der Voet, Kuipers, and Groeneveld (2016) believe that effective commitment to change from leadership is the desire to provide the necessary support that they need for the change, but the support is in such a way that the leaders believe in its inherent benefits are understood by the employees. According to Hill et al. (2012) and Wulandari et al. (2015) the mind-set or desire for change can be described as:

- (i) A desire to provide support for the change based on a belief in its inherent benefits:

- (ii) A recognition that there are a set of costs associated with failure to provide support for the change (continuance commitment to change):
- (iii) A sense of obligation to support the change (normative commitment to change).

Commitment to change usually reflects the employee's level of attachment to the implementation of change. Ling et al. (2018) argues that leaders should understand how employees' collective identity mediates the influence of change leadership on employees' behaviour and attitude towards their job. Individual characteristics of employees must be kept in mind by the leader, for this will influence their commitment to change, personally and towards the organization. According to Gish (2015) one of the most important things to do to keep employees committed to change is to create and communicate a shared vision.

The literature on organizational change reveals that change leadership has a positive impact on employees' affective commitment to a specific change and that change leadership may contribute to "successful" organizational change (Ling et al., 2018; Van der Voet et al., 2016). Pendleton et al. (2012) argues that leadership influences the bottom line – not directly, but by shaping the culture within which an organization operates, its climate and by its influence on employment. This can arguably have an influence on the commitment to change of the employees. A leader employing change leadership should realize that change, in general, requires a great deal of effort and time (Grimm, 2010).

When things are changing, it is essential to communicate key messages often, O'Neil (2018) states that elegance is not the byword in communication around change, but rather repetition. Change leadership aim is to induce favourable attitudes among recipients concerns regarding change, this can only be met by effective communication. O'Neil (2018) and Pendleton et al. (2012) are once that effective communication can only be possible through personal relationships and engagement with the employees. Engagement and personal relationships have a major impact on sickness absence, customer service, employee-retention and the likelihood that the employee would recommend the organizations product or service (Pendleton et al., 2012). When the change process is based on high quality communication there are very little surprises and

the employee uncertainty to the change are a mere factor. According to Van der Voet et al. (2016) high-quality change communication ideally:

- (i) addresses why the change is necessary by demonstrating the fact that the organizations are not where it is supposed to be:
- (ii) expresses the employee success regarding the change:
- (iii) successfully argues that the measures taken are appropriate:
- (iv) reassuring the employees that they will be supported during the implementation of the change:
- (v) emphasizes that an employee's self-interest is not at stake because of the change.

By improving the quality of the information regarding the change to the employee's, change leadership is thus expected to be positively related to change recipients' commitment to change.

Different leadership styles have the ability to influence the employees in a variety of ways. For employees the most important aspect of their working life is the impact of their immediate line manager, and his or her leadership style (Saravana Kumar, 2018; Pendleton et al., 2012). The change leader on every level of management in an organization must keep the employees engaged, Pendleton et al further states that employees which are engaged simply turn up to work and often tend to stay in their jobs.

Change leaders are capable to present a clear vision, displaying charisma, motivating employees through inspiration and intellectual stimulation derived from exposing them to new and complex ways of thinking (Hill et al., 2012). This means that the leader must be able to keep the employees participation levels high regarding the change of the organization.

According to Ling et al. (2018) change leaders have a considerable effect on the employee's cognitive processes and the advancement of their organizational knowledge. Ling et al further state that change leaders are change orientated and are willing to motivate their employees to engage in organizational change. Change leaders can influence employee's self-concept and can help them to develop beliefs to face high risk

demands. Change leaders can improve employees self-change efficiency according to Ling et al. (2018) through three approaches:

- (i) Role modelling – the change leader must act as a role model for the employees:
- (ii) Previous experiences – experience allows the change leader to make reference to previous change successes:
- (iii) Verbal persuasion – a change leader must have the ability to communicate effectively and on an understanding level of the employees.

Ahmad and Zhichao (2018) and Ling et al. (2018) studies found that change leadership correlates significantly with employee commitment to change, however these studies fails to consider employee morale as a key role player.

2.3 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework consists of the variables in a study. According to Patrick (2015) a conceptual framework is the attempt to answer a question that has been asked by the researcher by identifying the variables from the literature study. The main objective in this study is to identify the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale.

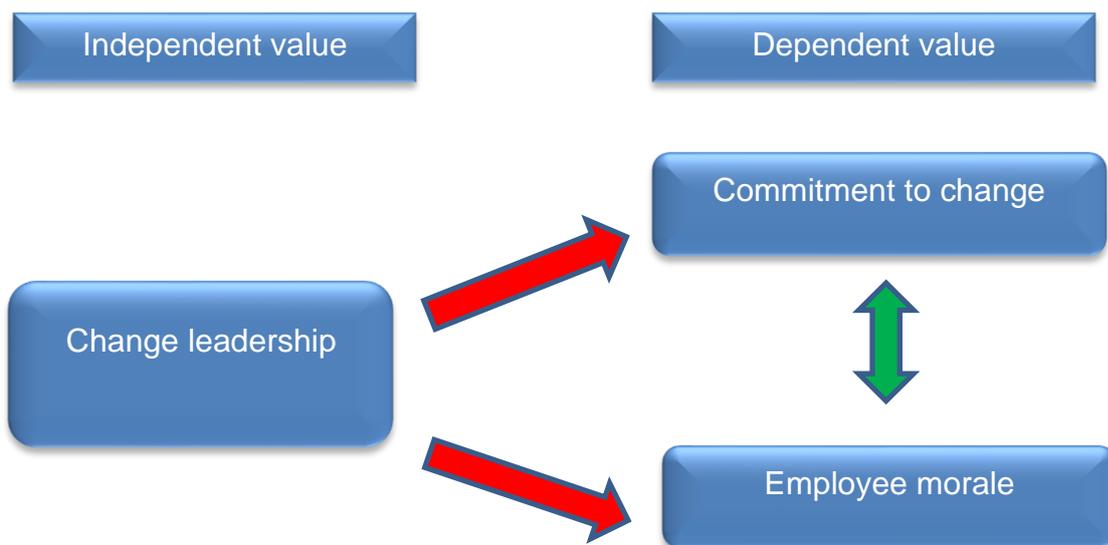


Figure 2-1: Conceptual framework: Change leadership, Commitment to change and employee morale.

In this study the contend is that, change leadership, as an independent value does have an influence on the employee commitment to change and employee morale, as independent values. Employee commitment to change influence the morale of the employee and the morale of the employee influence the employees' level of commitment to change. Change leadership influence the employee morale which influence employee's commitment to change.

The argument in this study is that change leadership does have an influence on employee commitment to change and morale. The study predicts that the leader leading change and the employees' participation in the change process does have an influence on the employees' commitment to change and influence the morale of the employees. If the change is led by a change leader with the necessary skills and characteristics the employees' commitment to change and morale will be affected positively, and the employees tend to found more purpose in their work.

2.4 Research gaps

In the study done by Burnes et al. (2018) were the researchers explored the challenge of organizational change and change leadership as an ethical process, the study found that the higher the levels of employee involvement regarding change the better they experienced the change and this had a positive reaction on their emotions. Lumbers (2018) study on approaches to leadership and change in the National Health Sector in England found that for effective change the person leading the change must be carefully selected and this leader must have the necessary skills to lead and navigate the change. Lumbers stated that an effective change leader suited the needs of the workforce and are an essential part of successful change.

The study done by Ling et al. (2018) regarding change leadership and employees commitment to change found that change leadership significantly correlates with collective identity, employee commitment to change and self-efficacy. The study found that the total effect of change leadership on employee commitment to change was positive.

The literature study indicated that there is a lack of empirical research regarding the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale. For this reason, there is a need for further research.

2.5 Summary

This chapter discussed change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale. Change leadership and the influence of change on the employees commitment to change were discussed, the effect of change leadership on the employee's commitment to change in literature indicated that change leadership does have an influence on the employee's commitment to change, this mentioned aspect will be measured in chapter four. The impact of change leadership on the employee's morale indicated in the literature study that the relationship between the change leader and employee's morale may be identified as a factor that can influence the morale of the employees. A conceptual framework for the study were discussed in this chapter. Chapter four of this study will focus on the relationship between the change leader and employee morale and the impact of it on the employee.

This chapter concludes with the literature of change leadership and the impact on commitment to change and employee morale. Chapter three focus and discusses the research methods and techniques used to investigate this studies' topic.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The two private higher training and education organizations, Sol-Tech and Akademia were established as niche markets, focussed on providing training and higher education in Afrikaans. The identification of the need to provide higher education and training in Afrikaans is due to the identification of the need in the market.

The literature study indicated the influence of change leadership on the employees' commitment to change and employee morale, the results of this study and other studies on the topic of change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale will assist the organizations to lead and manage change, change in leadership and the effect of it on employees' commitment to change and the impact of it on their morale.

This chapter of the study discusses the research methods and techniques used to investigate the topic of the study.

3.2 Research paradigm

For the purpose of this study the approach was positivist, as indicated by Bryman et al, positivism is a natural science approach. The goal was to find the variables between change leadership, commitment to change and the impact on the morale of the employees. According to Bryman et al. (2017) quantitative research usually emphasize quantification in the collection and analysis of data, and is a research process influenced by positivism.

3.3 Research method

Quantitative research is described by Bryman et al. (2017) as a distinctive research approach that entails the collection of numerical data and that the relationship between theory and research deductive is and that it a natural science approach in general prefer.

This study did make use of quantitative research methods. As the term suggest, quantitative studies are concerned with the collection and analysis of data in numeric form. The goal of science is to establish laws and principles that can help us explain phenomena in our world and universe in a systematic manner and, in many cases, how

we may be able to predict and/or influence these phenomena (Leppink, 2017). Quantitative research consists of those studies in which the data concerned can be analysed in terms of numbers, quantitative research is based more directly and is thus more openly and responsive to its subject (Hughes, 2012; Landrum & Garza, 2015).

3.4 Research design

The study used a cross-sectional design, according to Bryman et al. (2017) cross-sectional means that surveys will be completed at a single point in time. Key elements of cross-sectional design can include the following outlines, cases which are associated with more than one case being examined, the study focused on three cases being investigated, change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale. Bryman et al. (2017) describes the structure of the cross-sectional design as a design that consist of the collection of data on a series of variables at a single point in time.

3.5 Study population

Two private higher training and education organizations namely Sol-Tech and Akademia were used for the purpose of evaluating change leadership, commitment to change and the impact on personnel morale. Both organizations are relatively young with Akademia being seven years old with a total of 70 employees and Sol-Tech being 11 years old with an employee count of 60. The target population for the study were 130.

3.6 Sample size

Bryman et al. (2017) describes a sample as the segment of the population that is selected for research, it is a subset of the population. The choice of the appropriate sampling technique is dependent on the research question(s), according to (Mark & Lewis, 2000) research questions and objectives in need of estimate statistically characteristics of the population from a sample, require probability samples, research questions and objectives that do not require generalisations, can make use of non-probability sampling techniques. Non-probability sampling techniques are being used where it is difficult to construct a sampling frame or where the need arise to select a sample purposively. The sample of this study, the management, administration personnel and personnel of Akademia and Sol-Tech, the study made use of non-probability sampling and the suitable sample size was determined by the convenience sampling method. According to Bryman et al. (2017)

a convenience sample can be described as one that is available to the researcher by virtue of accessibility.

A total population of 130 employees were targeted and 85 responded to the questionnaire, of the 85 responses only one were incomplete and the data for this response were not used during the analysis of the data. This bring the response of the study to a 65% response rate, which makes the outcomes of the study valid for the two private higher training and education organizations.

3.7 Measuring instrument

A structured questionnaire was used for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire consists of 28 items which are appropriate for the focus of this study on change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale.

Both the private higher and training organizations personnel are mainly Afrikaans speaking individuals, for this reason the questionnaire questions or statements were in Afrikaans and English. The questionnaire was a self-administered questionnaire. Bryman et al. (2017) describes a self-administered questionnaire as a questionnaire were the respondents answer and complete the questionnaire by themselves. The questionnaire questions and/or statements are short and easy to understand.

The questionnaire was divided in two sections. Section A and section B. Section A focused on the biographical information of the participants; this information was gathered only for the purpose of statistical analysis. Section B focused on change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale. The following information were gathered in section A of the respondents:

- Gender
- Age group
- Years working at the organization
- Years worked in their current function
- Highest academic qualification

- Their level of employment.

Section B of the questionnaire were divided in three categories which consist of the following:

3.7.1 Change leadership

Change leadership was measured using the eight-item scale by Herold *et al.* (2008). The leading is “During the implementation of change, my direct supervisor...” An example item is “Developed a clear vision for what was going to be achieved by our department”. Change leadership was measured by means of a 5-point Likert-type scale, where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree. In their research (Ling *et al.*, 2018; Voet, 2016) reported a coefficient α of .91 using this instrument in their study.

3.7.2 Commitment to change

For commitment to change a nine-item scale by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) was used to measure commitment to change, an example item is “I believe in the value of change”. Commitment to change was measured by means of a 5-point Likert-type scale, where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree. In their research Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) reported a coefficient α of .88 using this instrument to measure commitment to change.

3.7.3 Employee morale

Employee morale was measured using a twelve item-scale for employee morale, an example item is “I agree that stress in my workplace is affecting my life outside of work”. Employee morale was measured by means of a 5-point Likert-type scale, where 1 indicates Strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree.

The wording of the questionnaire was modified to ensure that the respondents understood the questions. The respondents in this study did not experience any difficulty completing the questionnaire.

3.8 Data collection

The goal of this study was to collect and obtain quantitative data from individuals working in private higher education. The development of cloud based online survey services such

as Survey Monkey and Survey Sparrow are companies which deliver the platform for survey questionnaires. This study made use of Survey Monkey to obtain the responses from the participants.

The survey was sent to all participants via email through each companies' Human Resource management department. The link to the questionnaire were open for completion from the 12th of August 2019 until the 30th of August 2019. The response rate on 30th August 2019 was not enough and a follow-up email were sent to encourage the personnel of the private higher education organizations to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaires' link were open until the 20th of September 2019; the response rate was enough with a total of 65% responses.

3.9 Data analysis

The completed questionnaires were captured in data sets with coding of the open-ended questions. Coding is an important dimension in the analysis of data, coding refers to the repackaging of data to be in a better analytical format (Bryman et al., 2017). The coding of data must be done without compromising the participants anonymity and the data must be presented clearly. Clearly presented data help others to interpret it more easily.

Statistical procedures and tests were done by means of significance test, effect size and standard deviation. In the analysis a distribution profile and ratio coefficient were used to illustrate the power of the relationship between two variables. A deviation test was used where the sample group was measured against the standard norm. For the analysis of two items a statistical significance test (t-test) were used. The p-value is a criterion of this and is giving the probability that the value obtained could be obtained under the assumption that there is no difference between the population means, and that it may be true. A small p-value, smaller than 0.05 is enough evidence that the results is statistically significant. If there were more than two items to analyse, Anova test were used.

3.10 Ethical aspects

This study complied to the University requirements for ethical clearance and the study were of low risk to the participants. Discussions about ethical principles in business research and how they can be transgressed can be classified in four main areas (Bryman et al., 2017):

- whether there is harm to participants:
- whether there is a lack of informed consent:
- whether there is an invasion of privacy:
- whether deception is involved.

This study made use of a survey by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent via email. The participants participation in this study was totally voluntary and a consent form did cover the core statements of the study and participants needed to give their consent first, before they could start with the questionnaire. The participation in this study were informed and assured of their anonymity for taking part in the study.

The participants ethical assurance was assured by means of being informed about the means and purpose of the study. Both the private higher training and education organizations did give their consent for their employees to partake in the study. The researcher focused only on the facts in discussions and conclusions from the data obtained from the questionnaires.

3.11 Limitations of the research

Possible short coming of this study may include but are not limited to:

- The collection of data will be among a single group of people at a single point in time.
- The cross-sectional analysis points toward significant relationships between concepts, but casual effects cannot be identified.
- Change leadership in this study are not on more than one hierarchy level, for the purpose of this study hierarchy levels were not in consideration. The study, due to quantitative research method does have some limitations, a more in-depth study can be accomplished by using a qualitative approach.

3.12 Chapter summary

The research design, data collection, participants, measuring instrument and the statistical analyses were discussed in this chapter. The ethical aspects and reliability and

validity of the study were also revealed, and possible shortcomings were discussed. In chapter four of this study the empirical outcomes of the study will be presented that assessed the interactions of change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale of the personnel at the two private higher organizations, Akademia and Sol-Tech.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the outcomes of the empirical study of the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale in the two private higher education and training institutions will be presented, analysed and described.

4.2 Biographical information

As indicated in the ethical application for this study, biographical information was only used for statistical reasons. Biographical information collected for this study from the respondents were related to their gender, age group, years worked for the organization, years worked in their current function, highest academic qualification and their level of employment.

4.2.1 Respondents gender

The gender response in the study, assessed in figure 4-1 was a 47% male and 53% female participation. This is a true sample of representation of the gender profile of the two private higher and training organizations.

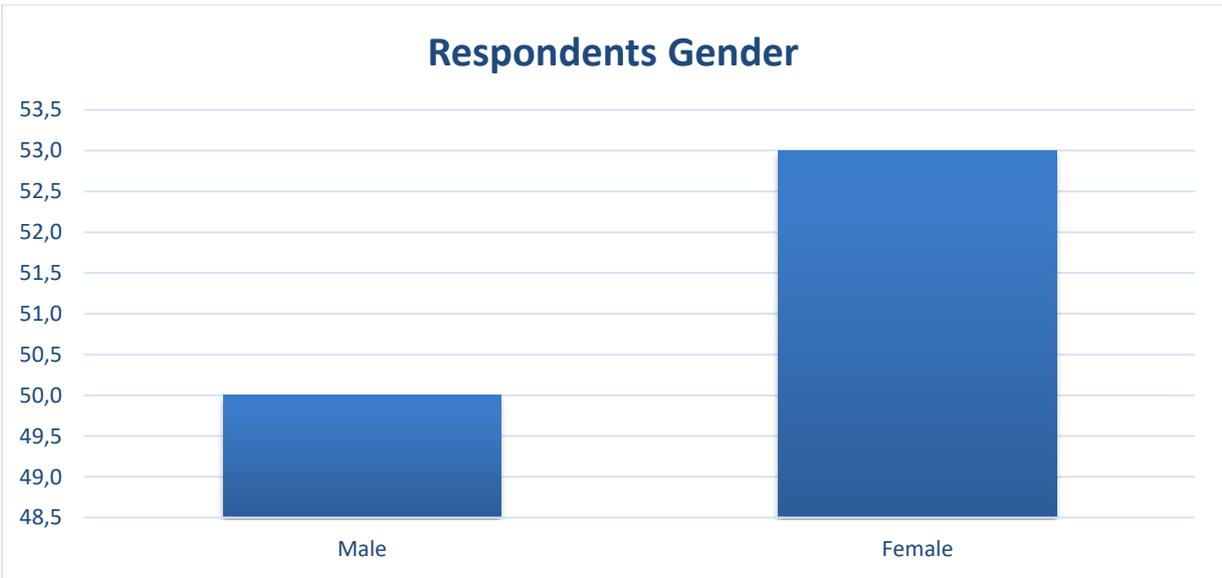


Figure 4-1: Respondents Gender

4.2.2 Respondents age group

The age group representation in the study, assessed in figure 4-2 indicates that the age group between 30 – 39, representation of 41%, are the highest average age group which participated in the study. The age group representing 23%, the second highest participation in the study, were between the ages of 20 – 29, this may be seen as an indication that most of the employees are relatively young and form part of the millennial workforce. The pie chart indicates that 23% of the respondents are between 20 – 29 years, 41% are between 30 – 39 years, 16% are between 40 – 49 years, 14% are between 50 – 59 years and 6% are between the ages of 60 – 65.

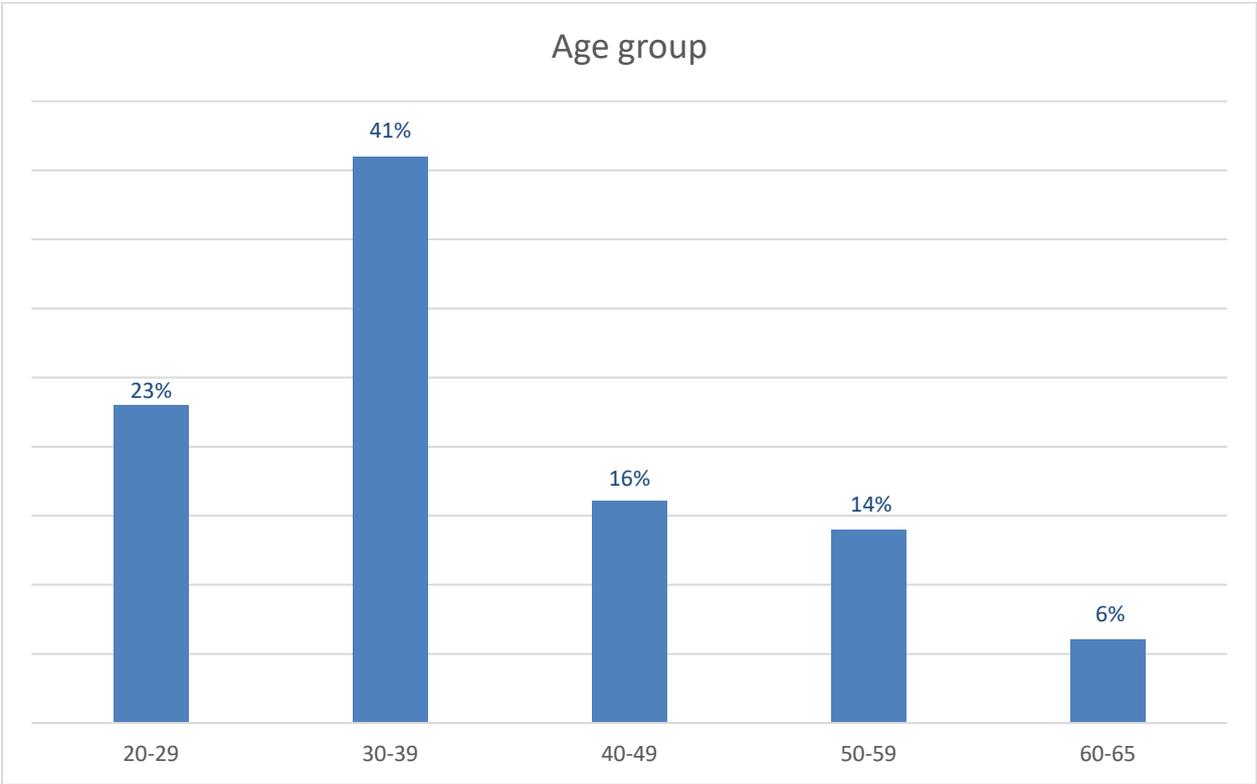


Figure 4-2: Age Group

4.2.3 Years worked for the company

An assessment of figure 4-3 below indicates the years worked at the two private higher and training organizations. Table 4-4 indicates that 82% of the respondents have been working less than five years for the organizations. Only 14% of the respondents have been working longer than six years and less than ten years. The respondents working longer than ten years dropped to 4%.

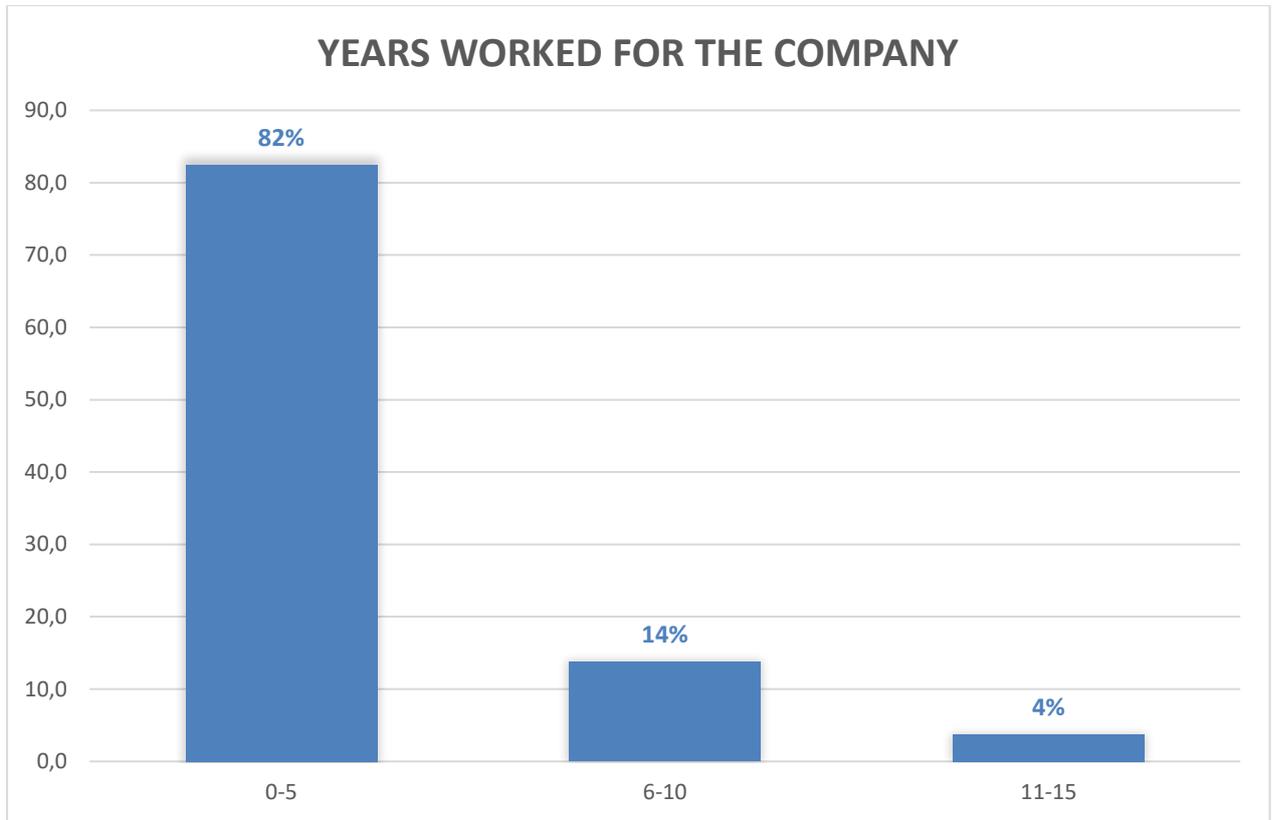


Figure 4-3: Years Worked for the Organization

4.2.4 Years worked in their current function

Participants' years that they worked in their current function assessment is in figure 4-4. A massive 82% of the respondents worked for five years and less for the two private higher education and training organizations. The massive drop to 15% for six to ten years and 3% for eleven to fifteen years is an indication of the growth of the organizations. This maybe also be an indication that the organizations growth may have been in the last five years.

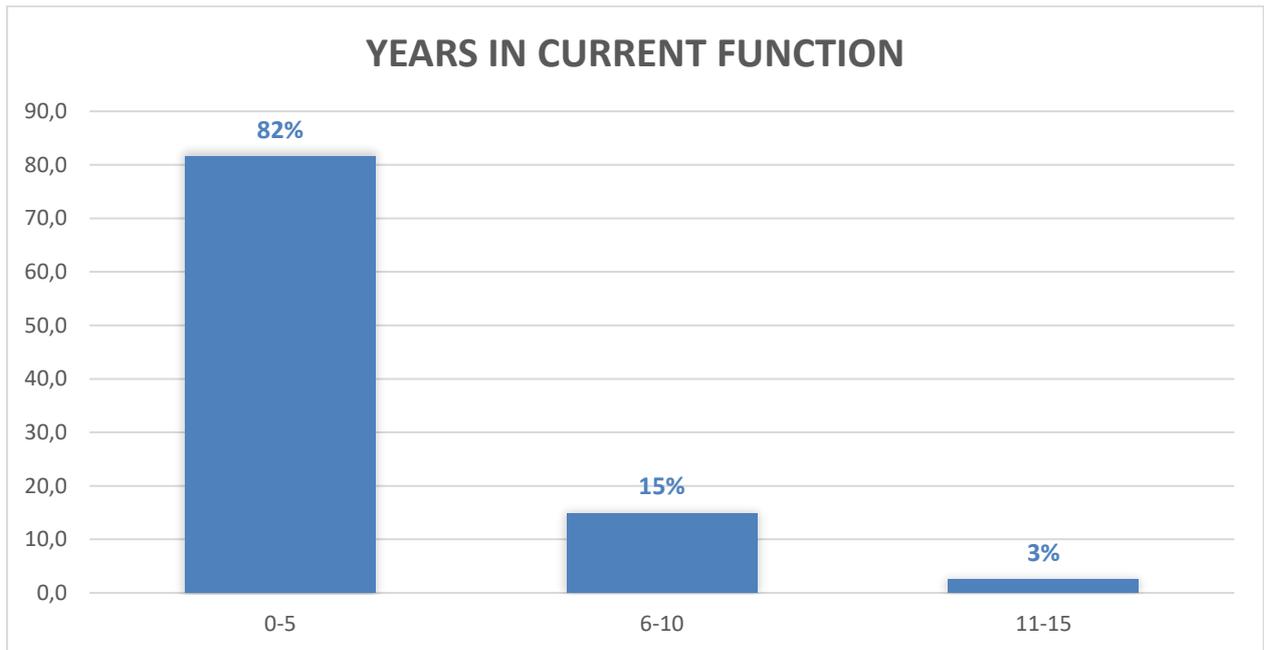


Figure 4-4: Years Worked in current function

4.2.5 Respondents highest academic qualification

An assessment of figure 4-5 indicates the respondents' academic qualifications. Most of the respondents have a qualification higher than matric. For the two private higher and training organizations, the norm should be at least a post graduate degree or a technical or business diploma. The assessment in figure 4-6 indicates that 26% of the respondents does have a post graduate degree, the percentage drop for Master's degree to, 15% and Doctoral degree-, to 7% maybe an indication that the organizations are relatively young, and for this reason the percentage respondents with master's and doctoral degrees are not the highest.

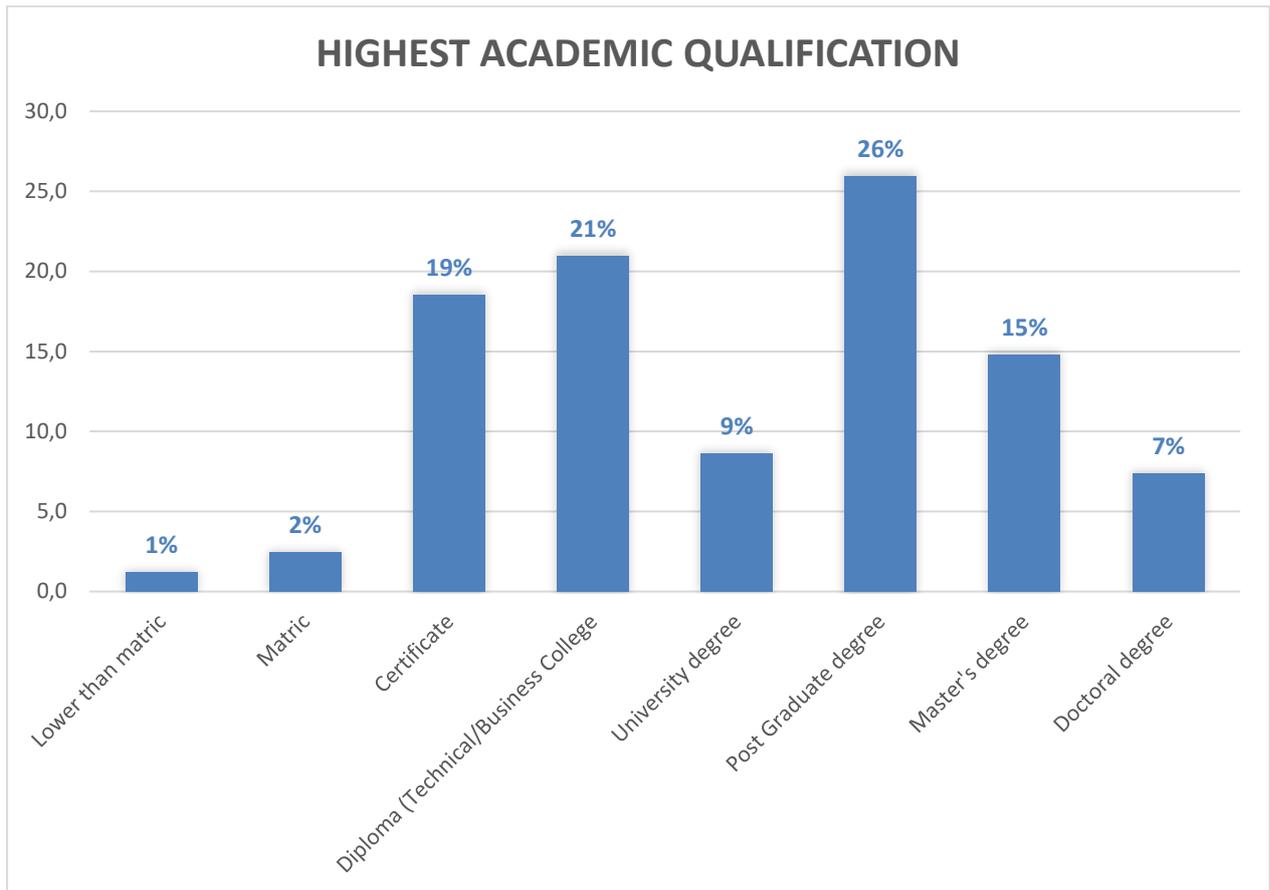


Figure 4-5: Highest Academic Qualification

4.2.6 Respondents level of employment

In figure 4-6 below is an assessment of the respondents' level of employment. The respondents are a good sample of representation of the employees on each of the levels of employment. The respondents represent the two organizations on all three levels of management, namely senior-, middle management and head of departments. Lecturing staff as respondents are 32% and administrative personnel 29%. A total of 9% of the respondents were heads of department and 17% were part of the middle management of the organizations. A total of 12% of the respondents were part of the senior management of the organizations.

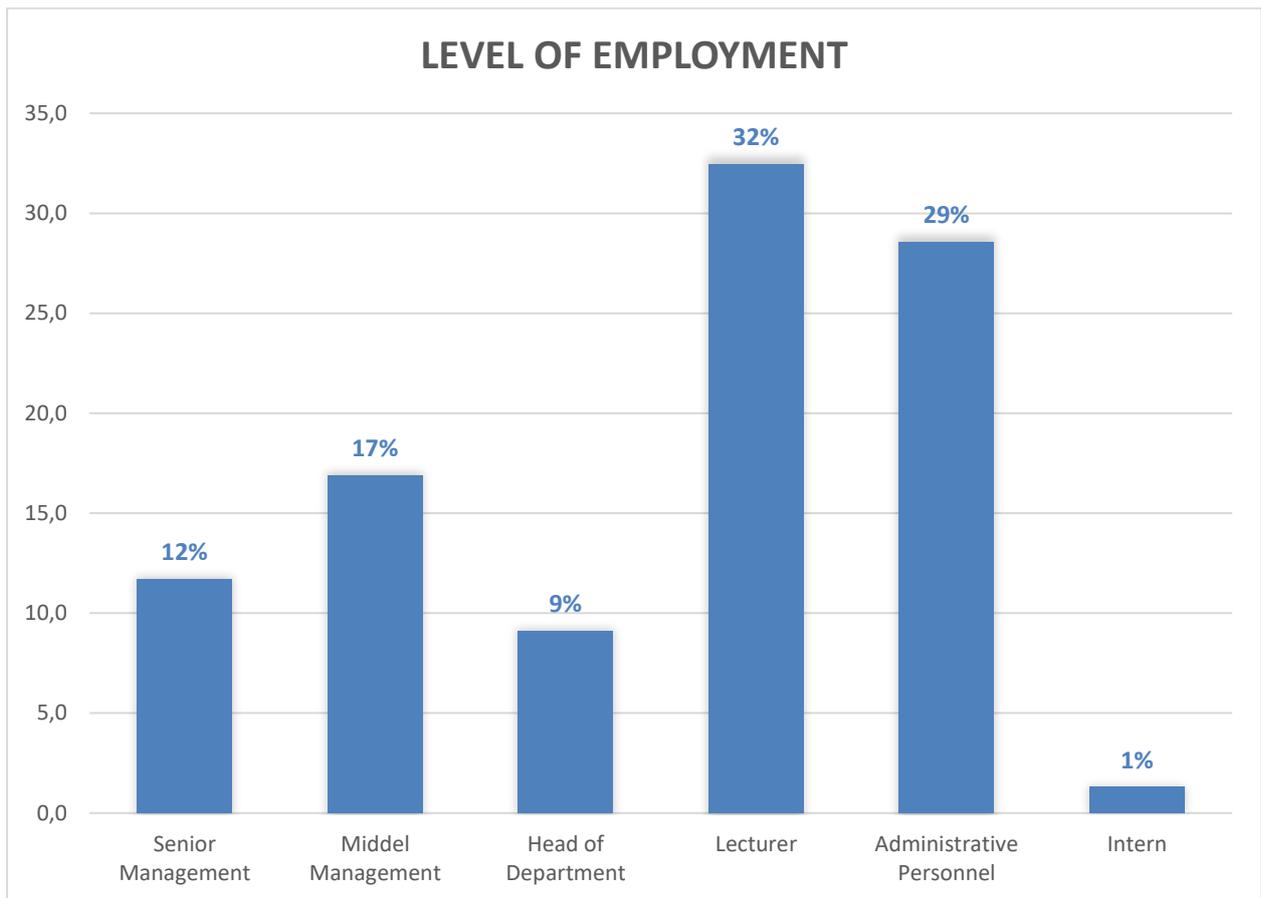


Figure 4-6: Level of Employment of respondents

4.3 Frequencies and descriptive statistics.

The reliability of the data, which refers to whether an instrument can be interpreted consistently across different situations. Internal consistency were determined by using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, which shows how closely related a set of items are, were used to determine the reliability of the data (Field, 2009). In most social science research, a Cronbach Alpha coefficient >0.7 suggests that the items have a relatively high internal consistency. The alpha coefficient for the 28 items of this study is 0.874, suggesting a relatively high internal consistency, as indicated in table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Internal Consistency

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.890	0.874	28

4.3.1 Inferential Statistics

The purpose of this study was to show the importance of leadership and the role it is playing in a changing environment. Objectives for this study include the importance of change leadership, the importance of change leadership during a time of change and the role change leadership is playing regarding commitment to change.

4.3.1.1 The importance of Change Leadership

Change leadership for this study was measured using the eight-item scale used by Herold *et al.* (2008). Ling *et al.* (2018) used the same measuring instrument and they reported a coefficient of ∞ .91 in their study. This study findings indicated a coefficient of ∞ .95, which is in correlation with the findings of the study done by Ling *et al.* (2018). These findings stress the importance of change leadership during a time of change.

Table 4-2: Importance of change leadership

	Question	1	2	3	4	5
1	Developed a clear vision for what was going to be achieved by our department	9 11.69%	15 19.48%	12 15.58%	29 37.66%	12 15.58%
2	Made it clear upfront to those in our department why the change was necessary	7 9.09%	19 24.68%	7 9.09%	32 41.56%	12 15.58%
3	Made a case for the urgency of this change prior to implementation	8 10.39%	12 15.58%	15 19.48%	33 42.86%	9 11.69%
4	Built a broad coalition up front to support the change	5 6.49%	19 24.68%	15 19.48%	31 40.26%	7 9.09%

	Question	1	2	3	4	5
5	Empowered people to implement the change	6 7.79%	15 19.48%	13 16.88%	30 38.96%	13 16.88%
6	Carefully monitored and communicated progress of the change implementation	9 11.84%	17 23.37%	13 17.11%	31 40.79%	6 7.89%
7	Gave individual attention to those who had trouble with the change implementation	7 9.09%	23 29.87%	21 27.27%	21 27.27%	5 6.49%

Interpretation of the data in Table 4-2: The importance of Change Leadership

Most of the employees from the two private higher institutions felt that their leader knows how to lead the change but 29.87% of the employees felt that the leader did not give individual attention to the personnel, which had a problem adapting to the change. According to Wulandari et al. (2015) as stated in the literature study, a characteristic of a change leader is the ability to give individual attention to personnel during change. 40.26% of the employees felt that the leader did build a broader view regarding the change. The problem is the 24.68% of the employees who did not feel that a broader view regarding the change was introduced to them by the change leader. This is in correlation regarding the employees who felt that change was not monitored, 23.37% of the employees responded that they do not agree to the statement that the leader monitored the change. The assumption may be made that the 24.68% who did not feel the broader view regarding the change was communicated well enough and the 23.37% of the employees who felt that the change was not monitored, this may be from the same responses. However, most of the employees' responses indicated that the leaders of the two private higher institutions did support and lead them through the change.

The respondents' reaction towards the questionnaire is an indication of the important role a change leader plays during a time of change.

4.3.1.2 The role change leadership plays regarding commitment to change

For commitment to change a nine-item scale by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) was used to measure commitment to change. They reported a coefficient of ∞ .88 in their study. This study coefficient was ∞ .76. The difference in the correlation of the findings in the studies are not great. In their findings they also stated the important role that change leadership plays regarding commitment to change, the findings of this study also indicate the important role of change leadership regarding commitment to change.

Table 4-3: The role of change Leadership plays regarding commitment to change

	Question	1	2	3	4	5
1	I believe in the value of change	0 0%	0 0%	4 5.19%	41 53.25%	32 41.56%
2	I believe that change is a good strategy for the organization	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.63%	43 56.58%	31 40.79%
3	I think management is making a mistake by introducing change	26 33.77%	34 44.16%	12 15.58%	5 6.49%	0 0%
4	I believe change serves an important purpose	0 0%	1 1.30%	3 3.90%	38 49.35%	35 45.45%
5	I believe that things would be better without change	38 49.35%	26 33.77%	11 14.29%	2 2.60%	0 0%
6	I believe that change is not necessary	41 53.25%	29 37.66%	5 6.49%	1 1.30%	1 1.30%
7	I believe that change does influence my job performance	4 5.19%	10 12.90%	14 18.18%	36 46.75%	13 16.88%
8	I believe that change does influence the organizational Climate.	0 0%	5 6.49%	6 7.79%	48 62.34%	18 23.38%
9	I believe that the change did influence my personal life	0 0%	5 6.49%	8 10.39%	41 53.25%	23 29.87%

Interpretation of Table 4-3: The role Change Leadership plays regarding commitment to change

Most of the employees from the two private higher institutions who took part in the survey believe in the value of change, 53.25% agreed and 41.56% of the employees strongly believed in the value of change. In correlation with the believers in the value of change, 56.58% agreed and 40.79% strongly agreed that change would be a good strategy for the institutions. A percentage of 44.16% of the employees of the two private higher institutions disagreed and 33.77% of the employees totally disagreed with the statement that the institutions are making a mistake by introducing change. In correlation with the statement that things would be better without change, 49.35% of the employees totally disagreed and 33.77% disagreed. The consistency with the response from the employees with the statement that change is not necessary, 53.25% strongly disagreed and 37.66% of the employees disagreed. A total of 53.25% of the employees agreed with the statement that change does influence their personal life. This may be an indication that work life balance maybe influenced by change. The response from the employees are an indication that the employees of the private higher institutions are committed to change in the institutions.

The role of a change leader in the employees' commitment to change can be identified in the responses from the personnel of the two private higher institutions. This also correlates with the study done by Ling et al. (2018) regarding change leadership and the influence it had on the employees commitment to change. An employee's commitment to organizational change reflects the employees attachment for the implementation of new strategic ventures, goals and organizational change (Jaros, 2010). The positive effect of the personnel regarding their commitment to change may be an indication of the effective role the change leaders in the two private higher institutions play.

4.3.2 Secondary objective

The secondary objectives of this study were to determine the prevalence of change leadership and employee morale, the relationship between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale and the role of change leadership in employees' commitment to change and employee morale.

Table 4-4: Prevalence between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale

			Commitment	Change	Employee
	Commitment to Change	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.158	-0.119
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.171	0.302
	Change Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	0.158	1.000	-.653**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.171		0.000
	Employee Morale	Correlation Coefficient	-0.119	-.653**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.302	0.000	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

Interpretation of Table 4-4: Prevalence between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale

The correlation between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale are > 0.01, this indicates that change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale prevalence are high. This indicates that change leadership may influence both commitment to change and employee morale.

Employee morale contribute to the employees ability to act effectively and with confidence, Rukshani et al. (2015) stated that morale means how an individual feels at a particular point in time, this result indicates that a change leader may have an influence on the employees morale.

4.3.3 Independent t-test group statistics, effect size

The independent-means t-test according to Field (2009) is used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of the two populations. The population in this study is not normally distributed (53/47), due to the sample size, >30 for each sample, the t-test can still be used.

4.3.4 Effect size

Salkind (2017) defines an effect size as a measure of how different two groups are from one another. The use of effect size has many advantages over the use of the significance test alone. The effect size emphasises the different sizes (Field, 2009).

The guideline values for effect size are:

0.2 – Small effect

0.5 – Medium effect

0.8 – Large effect

There was not a significant difference between the population group, male and female, of the study. The effect size is 0.07 which is <0.2. The effect size indicates that the male and female employees of the two private higher institutions experience change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale with little difference.

There is, however, a difference in the experience of change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale found in the years worked at the two private higher institutions. The effect size of 0.55 is an indication that there is a medium effect of difference experienced by the employees.

4.3.5 P-Value

The p-value, also known as the observed level of significance is used to get a test statistical equal to more extremes than the sample result, given the fact that the null hypothesis is true (Field, 2009). For this reason, a p-value <0.05 is considered as enough evidence that the results are significant.

4.3.6 Independent sample test

The independent sample test measures the variation of the values as they are distributed for this study. The average answer for each of the studies questions is visible in table 4-5, below.

Table 4-4: Average answer for each question

	Question	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I believe in the value of change	4.37	0.588
2	I believe that change is a good strategy for the organization	4.39	0.543
3	I think management is making a mistake by introducing change	1.93	0.875
4	I believe change serves an important purpose	4.40	0.637
5	I believe that things would be better without change	1.69	0.822
6	I believe that change is not necessary	1.59	0.790
7	I believe that change does influence my job performance	3.56	1.093
8	I believe that change does influence the organizational Climate	4.04	0.761
9	I believe that the change did influence my personal life	4.07	0.827
10	Developed a clear vision for what was going to be achieved by our department	3.27	1.277
11	Made it clear upfront to those in our department why the change was necessary	3.31	1.262

	Question	Mean	Std. Deviation
12	Made a case for the urgency of this change prior to implementation	3.31	1.185
13	Built a broad coalition up front to support the change	3.21	1.119
14	Empowered people to implement the change	3.37	1.217
15	Carefully monitored and communicated progress of the change implementation	3.09	1.199
16	Gave individual attention to those who had trouble with the change implementation	2.92	1.100
17	Stress in my workplace is affecting my life outside of work	3.81	1.227
18	I can manage my workload effectively	3.72	1.034
19	The employee morale is good	3.05	1.089
20	I do get the necessary recognition for my work	3.03	1.241
21	My work does give me a sense of accomplishment	3.81	1.123
22	I am respected at work	3.64	0.880
23	My relationship between me and my direct supervisor are good	3.96	0.936
24	I am important to my supervisor	3.57	1.042
25	My supervisor care about me	3.63	1.037
26	I feel secure in my current job	3.41	1.175
27	I am satisfied with my current salary	2.92	1.148
28	I do have a good chance of promotion at my company	2.67	1.234

4.4 Summary

Chapter four of this study highlighted the outcomes of the empirical study. The results exposed some interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale. Some of the factors revealed in the literature study were applicable in this study and some gaps were identified in the revealing of the data of the empirical study. The interesting fact is, however, that most of the employees reacted positively to change leadership and, were committed to change. An assumption may be made that most of the employees believe in the value of change. Employee morale of the two private higher institutions may be perceived as relatively high, however an indication from the responses of the employees is the fact that work does have an influence on their private lives, but they also found meaning in the work that they do. In Chapter five the interactions of change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale of the private higher institutions will be discussed, and final conclusions will be drawn. Challenges in the study will also be identified and future research recommendations will be made.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The information in chapter 4 made it clear that the respondents in this study understood the questions in the questionnaire. The change leadership section of the questionnaire did show some indications of concern from the employees regarding change. The commitment to change section of the questionnaire shows that the average employee knows the importance of change and that they believe change in the institutions are necessary. The morale of the employees seems to be at a good level, most of them indicated that they are able to handle their workload, but most of them are concerned about the fact that work stress does influence their life outside of work. The relationship between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale were found to be significant. The results of the study didn't have significant differences, except for the difference between male and female experience regarding change. The results will be discussed, and recommendations will be made in this chapter.

5.2 Summary of findings

5.2.1 Importance of Change Leadership

The definition of leadership in this study, is the influencing of others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and the definition of change leadership is being defined as the behaviour that target specific change. Being a leader focuses on influencing people to understand what needs to be done, being a change leader focuses on specific change. This may imply that the change is part of an organization's strategy. The study focused on change leadership, indicated that most of the participants in the study experienced the leading of change by their leader differently. In the findings, change leadership plays an important role in organizational change. The different way the employees experienced the manager or leader leading change may be an indication of the fields that the two private higher institutions can identify for future personal growth for the managers or leaders.

The employees experienced that the manager or leader did not give personal attention to the employees who struggled with the change, is an indication as made by Friesen (2016) that a change leader needs to be a good communicator, being connected with personnel can only be achieved through effective communication, the fact that the employees did not feel that the manager or leader recognizes the fact that they are not coping well with change, may be due to a lack of communication.

5.2.2 The role of Change Leadership regarding commitment to change

Most of the respondents in this study indicated that they are committed to change. The definition for commitment to change in this study indicated that commitment to change is a forced mind-set that binds an individual to a course of action. Being a change leader is to influence the employees for change, this however, indicates that the employees also need a certain mind set to react positive towards the change in an organization.

Employees' reaction towards the influence of change on their job performance may be an indication of the importance of effective communication from the manager or leader for the reason of change. The indication that the employees believe that change influence the organizational climate may be the reason for the negative reaction from some of the employees towards change and may also be the reason that some of them felt unsupported from their manager or leader during a time of change. The findings in the study clearly indicates the important role of change leadership regarding commitment to change.

5.2.3 Secondary objectives

5.2.3.1 Prevalence of Change Leadership and Employee Morale

Most of the employees of the two private higher institutions indicated that their work does give them a feeling of accomplishment, being successful in the work they do seems to have a positive impact on their morale. The influence of the way they feel regarding the care of the supervisors and possibility of being promoted, may have a negative impact on their morale.

The effect of the way change is lead and employees' commitment to change influence the employees' morale, this conclusion may be made due to the fact that the data indicated a strong correlation between change leadership and employee morale.

5.2.3.2 Relationship between Change Leadership, commitment to change and Employee Morale

The data indicates that the relationship between the variables of change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale, in a high correlation stands >0.01 , change leadership and commitment to change correlation is 0.158, change leadership and employee morale correlation is 0.302. This indicates that change leadership does influence employee commitment to change and also does have an influence on the morale of the employees. Wulandari et al. (2015) stated that job employee satisfaction and well-being plays an important role in their commitment to change. This means that the relationship between change leadership and employee morale may have an influence on their commitment to change.

5.3 Recommendations

The role that change leadership and the importance of a change leadership style in an organization plays in the beginning of change and the implementation of change is a considerable challenge. In ever changing times this is a factor that has an influence on every organization, as indicated by this study. According to Voet (2016) limited empirical evidence exists regarding the importance of change leadership on organizational change, this study aimed to make employee commitment to change and employee morale part of the equation.

The objectives of the study were met, and the research questions can be answered. The following recommendations will be made from the research findings.

5.3.1 Importance of Change Leadership

In the literature study the following roles and capabilities of a change leader were identified:

- (i) Communicator – a change leader must communicate why the changes are needed and the risk of not changing:

- (ii) Advocate – the change leader must support the change through word and actions:
- (iii) Liaison – the leader must be able to balance the needs of both project and business teams to achieve goals:
- (iv) Coach – a leader must be able to coach the employees thorough the change process; and
- (v) Resistance – it is very important to identify and manage resistance, to respond to questions and concerns timely.

The change leader in the two private higher institutions has the responsibility to communicate the change and the reason for the change. During this time the leader must focus on the needs of the employees to make sure that they are supported during the change period. Both the institutions must make sure that the leaders responsible for leading the change can communicate with their personnel. Effective communication will boost the employee commitment to change, the employee morale and their productivity (Smith, 2019).

Leading the change for the two private higher institutions must be leaders who believe in the change. The leaders must have the know-how and must be able to set the example to implement the change, through this example setting, the personnel will have an example to follow. In chapter 4 of this study the age and time worked for the companies were analysed. The indication of this analysis showed that 41% of the employees were between the age of 30-39 and 85% of the employees worked 0-5 years for the two private higher institutions. This may indicate that most of the employees of the relatively young institutions may not have the necessary experience to lead a major change initiative. For this reason, the two private higher institutions may see the need to appoint an individual or more than one, with the necessary experience to lead the institutions through a major change period. In motivation to appoint an individual to lead the change, in chapter 4 of this study the employees indicated that a total of 38% of them are employed as part of the management of the institutions. One of the core capabilities of a change leader is experience.

5.3.2 The role of Change Leadership plays regarding Commitment to Change

Most of the employees working at the two private higher institutions indicated that their commitment to change are average to above average. Recommendations to influence employees' commitment to change are also relevant to change leadership. To influence the commitment of the employees towards change, the two private higher institutions must make sure that the leader or manager has the ability to relate to the personnel to let them understand the reason for the change and the leader must try to help and support the personnel who are struggling to understand or adapt to the change. The middle management of the two private higher institutions must ensure that the relationship between them and senior management are professional and in good faith. The more attached the personnel feels towards the management, the more supportive they will be towards change.

Commitment to change is an essential part of any organizations change implementation, motivating the personnel to be part and to be active role players are essential to successful change. Leadership must for this reason make opportunities for the personnel to take part in the change initiative of the organization.

Most of the employees responded that they experience a sense of accomplishment in their work. This may imply that they gain energy from their work and the two private higher institutions must identify the aspects of work that energize the personnel. This would have a positive effect on the employees' commitment toward the institution, which should also have a positive effect on their commitment to change.

5.3.3 The Prevalence of Change Leadership and Employee morale

In the literature study, chapter 2 of this study, work satisfaction was identified as one of the factors which may influence employee morale. The opinions of the employees indicated that they felt that the work they are doing does influence their morale. Most of the employees indicated that their morale is relatively high.

Most of the employees of the two private higher institutions indicated that they do not have a good opportunity for promotion at their institution. This may have a negative impact on the employees' morale, the high prevalence between change leadership and employee morale may be used as a tool to navigate a career plan for the personnel, with

the human resource departments of each of the private higher institutions. The career path would indicate the importance of the personnel for the institutions and may have a positive impact on the fact that they do not fore see a possibility of promotion.

5.4 Opportunities for further research

The impact of change on higher education, with regards to change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale are not only affecting the private higher and training institutions, but government and work-based training institutions as well. The effect of the necessity of the much-needed change in the higher education and training is something that can be explored in a South African context. The effect of not only change leadership, but the employees' commitment to change and employee morale in government higher education and training institutions must be explored.

This study didn't explore the best leadership style during change and the effect of the leader's style on the employees' commitment to change and employee morale, this topic may also be explored in future research. Organizational culture during change may also be an opportunity for further research.

5.5 Conclusion

The change leader should embrace change as for most of the change leaders, change can be motivating and exciting. The difference between a leader and manager during times of change are usually seen in the employees of the individual. The leader would take the change as an opportunity to help the employees grow while the managers may be confronted with fear. The impact on the employees' commitment to change and their morale maybe an indication if the person they report to are a leader or manager. The ever-changing world of higher education and training may change so fast that the institutions do not realize the important role of change leaders to help lead the personnel through change. The identification of the right leaders may have a positive effect on the commitment of the personnel towards the change and this in turn may keep their morale on the positive side, which influences their productivity, and ultimately the institutions get the best out of the employees.

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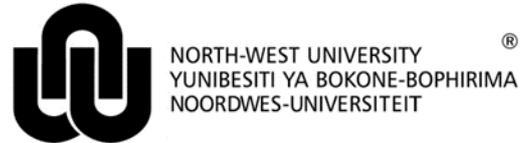
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ADDENDUM A: ETHICS APPLICATION



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Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Tel: 018 299-1427
Email: Bennie.Linde@nwu.ac.za

Mrs N Khumalo

Per email

Dear Mrs Khumalo

FEEDBACK: ETHICS APPLICATION 26072019: J H Venter (12372250) MBA – Mrs N Khumalo

Your ethics application on, Examining the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale in privately owned institutions of Higher Learning, that served on the EMS-REC meeting of 26 July 2019 refers.

Outcome:

Approved as a minimal risk study. A number **NWU-00817-19-A4** is given for three years of ethics clearance.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Linde', enclosed within a large, loopy oval flourish.

Prof Bennie Linde

Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-
REC)

Potchefstroom Campus

ADDENDUM B: ETHICS INFORMED CONSENT FORM

MBA – STUDY: Faculty of economic and management sciences

FIELD OF STUDY: NWU Business School

NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY

RESEARCHER: J.H. VENTER

ETHICS NUMBER: NWU-00817-19-A4

SOUTH – AFRICA

CELL: 072 858 4585

Email: higgs@sol-tech.co.za

Dear Participant

You are kindly invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Mr. J.H. Venter, a **master's student** from **North-West University Business School**.

Please note the participants of the study involves all the personnel of the privately owned institutions of higher learning, Sol-Tech and Akademia.

The purpose of this study is to *examine the interactions between change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale in privately owned institutions of higher learning.*

Please note that the basic biographical information related to you will be asked, such as your gender, age, position and related experience to the topic. The biographical information for this study is not for individual identification, but for statistical analysis purposes, therefore the study is anonymous, and no names will appear on the document. It is assured that the data provided by you shall be used only for academic purposes and finished data and the identity of the respondent will be kept confidential.

Web-based questionnaire will be distributed through to all the participants. Participants are kindly requested to complete the survey without disclosing any personal information rather than the characteristics required in the survey, which is not more than gender, age group, years at the institution, years in current function, highest academic qualification and the level of employment.

The only researcher will have access to the completed data by means of data central mail, no third party will be able to trace or receive the respondent's answers and therefore, concerns for data protection are assured.

Please note the following:

- The research is **anonymous, no names** will appear on the document
- The study will be treated as **strictly confidential**
- You should take about 20 minutes or less to complete the assessment
- Please note the **biographical information will be needed**
- Please note the questionnaire takes place on a **voluntary basis**
- The electronic final version of the study would be available on the NWU library system
- The research has **no negative** outcomes towards the participants, **no participants will be confronted or addressed**
- **No harm** and **manipulation** are intended toward the participant
- The data gathered will primarily and **only used for academic research purposes.**

Please indicate by ticking the applicable box as conformation of your willingness to participate in this study.

Yes

No

ADDENDUM C: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study. I would like to assure you that your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If at any time you do not want to continue completing the questionnaire, please feel free to stop. Your time to complete the questionnaire is appreciated.

Be assured that no one else will handle or have access to the completed questionnaires. The completed questionnaires will be captured and analyzed by the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University. The data would be safeguarded with password protection.

Mark the applicable block with a cross (x) and complete the applicable information. Please take note that the limited biographic information will only be used to form a profile of the participants and will NOT be used to make any comparisons between groups.

The researcher will ensure that all results will be kept confidential and no ethical guidelines will be breached. The researcher and researcher supervisor as well as the statistician will be the only persons having access to the data.

Thank you for your completing the questionnaire.

Indicate your gender	Male	Female
----------------------	------	--------

Indicate your Age group	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 65
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How many years have you worked for your current company?	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	20+
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How many years do you work in your current function?	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	20+
--	-------	--------	---------	---------	-----

Indicate your highest academic qualification	Lower than Matric	
	Matric	
	Certificate	
	Diploma (Technical/Business College)	
	University degree	
	Post Graduate degree	
	Master's degree	
	Doctoral degree	

Indicate your level of employment	Senior Management	
	Middle Management	
	Head of Department	
	Lecturer	
	Administrative Personnel	
	Intern	

The following statements concern your attitude towards change leadership, commitment to change and employee morale.

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by marking with an "x" over the appropriate number on the 1 to 5-point scale next to the statement.

1 = Strongly Disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neutral	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly Agree
------------------------------	---------------------	--------------------	------------------	---------------------------

	Statement	Scale				
1	I believe in the value of change.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I believe that change is a good strategy for the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I think management is making a mistake by introducing change.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I believe change serves an important purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I believe that things would be better without change.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I believe that change is not necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I believe that change do influence my job performance.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I believe that change does influence the organizational Climate.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I believe that the change did influence my personal life.	1	2	3	4	5
	During implementation of change, my direct supervisor...					
10	Developed a clear vision for what was going to be achieved by our department.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Made it clear upfront to those in our department why the change was necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Made a case for the urgency of this change prior to implementation.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Built a broad coalition up front to support the change	1	2	3	4	5
14	Empowered people to implement the change	1	2	3	4	5
15	Carefully monitored and communicated progress of the change implementation.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Gave individual attention to those who had trouble with the change implementation.	1	2	3	4	5

17	How significant is organizational change for you?	1	2	3	4	5
	I agree that...					
18	Stress in my workplace is affecting my life outside of work.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I can manage my workload effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
20	The employee morale is excellent.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I do get the necessary recognition for my work.	1	2	3	4	5
22	My work does give me a sense of accomplishment.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I am respected at work.	1	2	3	4	5
24	My relationship between me and my direct supervisor are good.	1	2	3	4	5
25	I am important to my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
26	My supervisor care about me.	1	2	3	4	5
27	I feel secure in my current job.	1	2	3	4	5
28	I am satisfied with my current salary.	1	2	3	4	5
29	I do have a good chance of promotion at my company.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for completing the questionnaire.

ADDENDUM D: LANGUAGE EDITING SERVICES



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To Whom It May Concern

This letter serves as confirmation that Mr. H Venter's mini dissertation has been proofread and checked for spelling, tense and language errors, to the best of my abilities.

Kind regards,
Lorraine de Ronde
Communication Specialist
