



Determining the relationship between middle management leadership qualities and employee engagement: The case of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my mother, Mantilo Kungoane for her words of encouragement and support in all my undertakings throughout my life. To her I say, “My success in achieving this milestone, Master of Public Administration qualification is inspired by the trust and confidence you have in me to realise greater heights in life”.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to determine the relationship between middle management leadership qualities and employee engagement in the DAFF. A sample of 100 participants was identified by way of stratified random sampling from a target population of 397 middle managers. Participants were classified according to salary levels, race and gender. The self-administered Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and Employee Engagement Questionnaire were developed and sent to participants through email. The study was conducted by using the quantitative design and MLQ which was composed of scales that measure the transformational, transactional and passive/avoidant (laissez-faire) leadership qualities while the Employee Engagement Questionnaire was composed of scales that measure the three psychological conditions of employee engagement, which are meaningfulness, safety and availability. A response rate of seventy-eight percent was achieved.

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was employed to do the in-depth data analysis. The Spearman's rho correlation coefficients were used to test the hypothesis. The results of this study confirm some earlier findings that transformational leadership enhances employee engagement. However, the study shows that transactional leadership is a stronger predictor of employee engagement. The study found a negative and not statistically significant relationship between passive/avoidant leadership behaviours and employee engagement.

Keywords: Leadership, leadership styles, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, passive/avoidant (laissez-faire) leadership, employee engagement, psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, psychological availability.

CHAPTER 1

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a background to the main topic. It highlights the problem statement as well as a literature review based on the previous research done on the constructs. The research objectives and questions and the significance of the study are also presented. Finally, the research methods are explained and the provisional report structure of this research is outlined.

1.2 ORIENTATION

Higher productivity profitability and sustainable competitiveness of any organisation are dependent entirely on the quality of the leadership, and so does the responsibility to overcome employee disengagement (Swindall, 2011:9). An effective leader manages relationships, ensures effective communication within a team and drives the team towards achieving the common goals of the organisation (Daft, 2007:302). Effective leaders engage other people through their charisma or ability to inspire (Gill, 2011:258). According to Chemers (2014:1), leadership is a process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. Ricketts and Ricketts (2010:5) describe leadership as a pattern of behaviours demonstrated consistently overtime with specific goals.

Leadership qualities demonstrated by top management of an organisation in turn influence the behaviour of managers throughout the organisation. According to Leatherman and Leatherman (2008:4), leadership is the ability to set a direction and a vision, to align employees to the organisation's vision and to motivate and inspire employees to achieve their vision. Senior managers can make a real difference to people and performance; however, many of the managers have issues around visibility, communications and employee engagement (Cook, 2008:187). On the one hand, Swindall (2011:10) defines employee engagement as the product of strong leadership

and therefore efforts must be focused on developing managers to become strong leaders. On the other hand, Carbonara (2012:10) defines employee engagement as the level of dedication, commitment, passion, innovation and emotional energy an employee is willing to expend. Thus, engagement really is the responsibility of the leaders in the organisation who need to be guided to truly understand how to get their employees inspired and energised to achieve common goals.

As competition among organisations for a skilled workforce intensifies, employee engagement becomes an issue of increasingly high importance (Cook, 2008:8). According to Cook (2008:27), the challenge to organisations seeking to improve engagement levels is to determine the unique elements of the work experience most likely to influence engagement in the environment in which they operate. Organisations are only as good as their weakest employees. The more employees are equipped in what they do, and engaging them more, the more they stand a chance of performing better. As Garber (2012:1) puts it, the level of employee engagement in an organisation is directly related to the working relationship between managers and employees.

Employee engagement has an enormous impact on achieving organisational outcomes such as realising low turnover, safety, customer satisfaction, productivity and profitability (Marrelli, 2010:2). According to Cook (2008:19) organisations with disengaged employees can be identified through high absenteeism, high turnover, high stress levels and a lack of effective communication.

Engaged employees invest in themselves, are authentic in the job and work with passion, persistence and energy (Byrne, 2014:5). Dickson (2011:18) states that engaged employees feel a strong sense of alignment between their personal interest and values and those of the organisation. On the one hand, disengaged employees do as little as possible and will not go an extra mile to exceed in achieving organisational goals or expectations (Dominguez, 2016:75). On the other hand, the problem of employee disengagement is a source of ongoing frustration for managers in any organisation. Not only does it irritate the management team, it demoralises the

productive employees who carry most of the workload (Swindall, 2011:10). While a challenging workload has a positive influence on employee engagement, a workload that overwhelms the individual can become detrimental (Truss *et al.*, 2013:67). The ability to delegate interesting tasks to others is an important skill for any leader. The benefits apply to not just the leader, but to the organization and the team as well. According to Robbins *et al.* (2009:249) a research conducted in a South African organisation found a positive correlation between leadership behaviour and job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job security, employee engagement and psychological empowerment.

Aryee *et al.* (2012), as cited in Byrne (2014:48) suggest that there exists a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement. Shelton (2012:1) observes that transformational leadership is a partnership to reach a high level of motivation, trust, engagement and empowerment. Nongard (2014:10) argues that transformational leadership manifests in dynamic leadership that recognises change as a constant and that as a result, leadership is an ongoing function of organisational and individual wellness. Bertocci (2009:49) suggests that transformational leaders motivate or inspire their followers to accomplish a vision or goals through intrinsic rewards that are internally rewarding to followers, such as self-satisfaction or being part of the team. According to Byrne (2014:47) transformational leadership, in particular, is identified as a potential focus of career and leadership development programmes for fostering engagement.

On the one hand, Shelton (2012:3-4) states that transformational leaders have self-confidence that allows them to feel satisfied with themselves and direct their efforts towards allowing them to lead from strength rather than from uncertainty or weakness. He further states that they can show genuine concern for the needs of the member first, putting themselves second and at times go beyond what normally would be expected from manager or a leader. While Northouse (2012:203) on the other hand argues that as transformational leaders play a direct role in creating changes, establishing a vision and advocating new direction, He goes on to argue that they are often perceived as

acting independently of the followers or they are putting themselves first above the needs of the followers.

For the purpose of this study, the following, as derived from above, will be considered as evidence for positive employee engagement. The employees are:

- committed to the organisation's vision, strategy, goals and values;
- satisfied that the organisation fulfils their basic needs;
- motivated to perform to the best of their abilities;
- assured of progression;
- receiving acknowledgement of the value they add to the organisation;
- showing intention to stay; and
- feeling part of a trusted group in order to drive deeper levels of engagement.

Transformational leadership, as derived from above, is observed when employees are:

- inspired to move beyond their own self-interest and work toward a shared vision and goals for an organisation;
- inspired to perform and contribute to their highest potential;
- stimulated to be innovative and creative;
- accountable for their actions and development; and
- encouraged to work as a team.

According to Van Zyl *et al.* (2009:156), great leaders are defined in terms of their ability to bring about change for better or worse in their organisations. The capability of managers to engage their teams is critical to employee engagement (Bridger, 2014:74). The study argues that determining the relationship between middle management's leadership qualities and employee engagement will contribute to the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) achieving its organisational goals.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In May 2009, President Jacob Zuma announced new ministerial portfolios, including the extension of the Department of Agriculture to become the DAFF. The Forestry function was transferred from the former Department of Water Affairs, and the Fisheries function was transferred from the former Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism to form the new department (DAFF Annual Report, 2010:19).

The aim of the DAFF is to lead, support and promote agricultural, forestry and fisheries resources management through policies, strategies and programmes to enhance the sustainable use of natural resources, and to achieve economic growth, job creation, food security, rural development and transformation (DAFF Annual Report, 2010:16). The entire legislative mandate of the DAFF is derived from sections 24(b)(iii) and 27(1)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

Since the amalgamation of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries departments/functions into a new Department in 2009, not all the functions were integrated to alleviate duplication, with specific reference to the corporate services support functions and this negatively affected optimal utilisation of resources and service delivery (DAFF Strategic Plan, 2013:27). According to the Human Resource Plan, the full integration of the three broad functions, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, remains a limitation in achieving the strategic objectives of the Department and this therefore presents a concern to an ever-increasing need to match the technical and specialised skills requirements (DAFF, 2015:55). As the labour market continues to tighten, the Department is increasingly concerned about maintaining a stable workforce. Without a sufficient qualified and productive workforce, the Department is vulnerable to competitive forces as well as the impact of negative relationships with its customers (DAFF, 2015:135).

In order to give effect to the directive issued by the Minister for Public Service Administration in terms of Section (3)(e) of the Public Service Act, 103 of 1994, the DAFF developed and approved the Exit Interview Policy in June 2011. All employees in

the Department are requested to complete the Interview Form prior to exiting the Department. This practice of Exit Interviews is important to the Department in receiving objective feedback for human resource planning and turnover analysis (DAFF, 2015: 2) According to the Human Resource Plan, 481 employees terminated their services with the Department during the 2014/15 financial year. Seventeen and half percent (17.5%) of employees terminated their services due to financial considerations (DAFF, 2015:109). Reasons such as aspiration, career development, relocation, leadership and management style and working environment contributed less than 3.5% each. The Human Resource Plan (DAFF, 2015:109) indicates that employees not disclosing their reasons for exiting contribute 74.2% as a result it is difficult for management to improve the functionality of the Department.

The Department of Public Service and Administration requires all Departments to maintain the turnover rate below 15%. As per the Human Resource Plan, the turnover rate has been increasing since 2012 (DAFF, 2015:111). The current turnover rate is at 7.9%, and is within acceptable norm in terms of the benchmark for the Public Service. However, the DAFF is experiencing a high turnover rate about specific scarce and critical occupational groups such as economists and veterinarians, which is at 13.4% and 15.2% respectively. A high turnover is also experienced in critical and valued occupational groups such as Health Science (20%), Legal (25%) as well as Communication and Information (27.3%) occupational groups. This high turnover in scarce and critical occupational groups affects the achievement of the DAFF objectives in delivering on its mandate (DAFF, 2015:116).

In the 2014/15 financial year, the vacancy rate increased from 9.8% in 2014 to 13% in 2015, exceeding the prescribed vacancy rate of 10% for the Public Service (DAFF, 2015:130). This is due to the moratorium placed in 2014 on appointments. Since the moratorium, 203 employees left the Department through termination of service and 33 through transference from the Department, which has impacted negatively on the vacancy rate (DAFF, 2015:130).

The Department currently employed 6 161 employees. Out of these employees, 4 156 have utilised sick leave. This represents 67% of the total workforce. A total of 31 303 days were utilised with an average of 7.5% a day per an employee. The total cost of sick leave utilised is R30 346 000.00, with the highest figure being on salary levels 6-8 (DAFF, 2015:145). The percentage of employees utilising sick leave and its financial implication are a cause for concern. For the purpose of this study, this is seen as evidence of employee disengagement.

Employees absent from work for an average of 7.5 working days in a year put a strain on their colleagues who are keen on performing their duties as expected of them. In determining the Human Resource Policy priorities for the Department, managing employee absenteeism is one of the priorities that were agreed upon by the Department's Executive Committee as it impacts negatively on the employee productivity and organisational performance (DAFF, 2015:154).

The Annual Report indicates that the rate of grievances lodged since the financial year 2010/11 has been increasing, from 45 in 2010/11 to 102 in 2015/16 (DAFF, 2016:148). On average, only 50% of the grievances lodged have been resolved. According to Sharma (2016:281), a grievance is any complaint by an employee that is brought to the attention of the manager or a union or both and is generally accompanied by an actively disturbing feeling in connection with the employee's employment situation. Effective grievance management is an essential part of employee management. Unresolved grievances may result in employee frustration and dissatisfaction, increased staff turnover, low productivity, lack of interest in the work and increased employee absenteeism (Gennard & Judge, 2005:301).

The increasing absenteeism, turnover, disciplinary cases, grievances lodged and the unavailability of critical competencies hinder service delivery in the DAFF. The problem statement for the study is to determine the nature of the relationship between transformational leadership as exhibited by middle managers and employee engagement in the DAFF. The study seeks to explore how middle managers can use

transformational leadership to enhance employee engagement in order for the Department to deliver on its mandate.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the study is to determine the relationship between middle management leadership qualities and employee engagement in the DAFF. Secondary objectives include:

- to describe the theoretical framework for employee engagement and transformational leadership;
- to determine the nature of the relationship between employee engagement and transformational leadership;
- to offer recommendations as to how middle managers may use transformational leadership qualities to enhance employee engagement in the DAFF.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that provide focus to the study include:

- What theoretical frameworks describe employee engagement and transformational leadership?
- What is the nature of the relationship between employee engagement and transformational leadership?
- What are the leadership qualities that middle managers in the DAFF could use to enhance employee engagement?

1.6 CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENTS

There are many acceptable reasons organisations lose employees, but the majority of employees leave because of their managers (Swindall, 2011:178). Employees leave because they are unhappy or they do not feel their work is appreciated and are therefore not motivated to stay. According to Crowley (2011:14), poor leadership is often stated as a contributing factor more than compensation in employees' decisions to leave organisations. Lavigna (2013:11) argues that engaged employees are likely to remain in the organisation and feel pride in recommending their workplace to others as

a good place of work. Disengaged employees, however, are more likely to be absent from work for more frequent and longer periods, are less productive on average and therefore more of a liability to the organisation (Baker, 2009:123).

This study seeks to determine the nature of the relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement specifically as it pertains to the leadership role of middle managers. According to Hohn and Nell (2015:48-49), transformational leaders share with the employees the importance of the organisation's targets. The more the manager and the employee work together on a common pursuit, the stronger the bond between them and the greater the engagement.

For this quantitative study, the literature review will describe and synthesise the transformational leadership theory developed by Burns (1978) in his work on political leaders and its significant influence on employee engagement. Bass (1985) later enhanced this transformational leadership theory by specifying in detail the styles and the focus of each leadership style (Byrne, 2014:47). According to Gill (2011:272), Burns relates transformational leadership to Maslow's (1954) theory of motivation. Followers of transformational leaders are motivated to achieve the highest possible level of need satisfaction through self-actualisation. Bass (1985) claims that employees' extra effort show how highly a transformational leader motivates the employees to perform beyond expectations. Salvendy (2001:853) concludes that the emphasis on satisfying self-actualisation needs reflects the type of need underlying the employees' motivation, whereas extra effort reflects the level of their motivation.

Another theory of motivation, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory suggests that employee engagement and willingness are influenced by motivational factors and hygiene factors (Marksberry, 2012:226). Motivation factors such as responsibility, achievement, recognition, advancement, professional and personal growth and work itself motivate employees to improve performance. Hygiene factors such as working conditions, salary, benefits, administration policies and attitudes, type of supervision, interpersonal relations with supervisors and peers and job security ensure that employees do not

become dissatisfied, but the factors themselves do not motivate the individual to achieve higher levels of performance (Thompson, 2013:13). In the study, the relationship between transformational leadership (as conceptualised by Burns and Bass) and employee engagement (as operationalised through Maslow and Herzberg's motivational theories) will be determined.

Based on the argument raised earlier, the following hypotheses guide the analysis of data.

H₀: There exists no relationship between middle management's transformational leadership qualities and employee engagement.

H₁: There exists a relationship between middle management's transformational leadership qualities and employee engagement.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study follows a quantitative approach. Quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of data using statistically based methods (Muijs, 2010:2). According to Wild and Diggines (2010:86), quantitative research is the collection of data that involves larger and more representative participant samples and the numerical calculation of the results. The research methodology discussed covers the literature review and the empirical study.

1.7.1 Literature review

According to Fink (2013:3) a literature review is a systematic, explicit and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating and synthesising the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars, and practitioners. Literature review aims to create a complete, accurate representation of knowledge and research-based theory available on a topic (Dawidowicz, 2012:5). According to Hart (1998), as cited by David and Sutton (2011:54-55), literature review is a the selection of all available but relevant documents (both published and unpublished) on the topic, which contain information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint, to fulfil certain

aims or express certain views on the nature of the topic and how it is to be investigated and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed. For the purpose of this, the literature review also informs the development of the questionnaire to be used in proving or disproving the proposed hypotheses. Specific theories, as detailed in the theoretical statement discussion will provide the conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between leadership and employee engagement.

1.7.2 Empirical study

The empirical study is a way of gaining knowledge by comparing theories and observations using real-life data for analysis (Malhotra, 2016:2). Empirical evidence is analysed quantitatively.

1.7.2.1 Research design

According to Gorard (2013:8), a research design in the social sciences is a way of organising a research project or programme from its inception in order to maximise the likelihood of generating evidence that provides a convincing answer to the research question for a given level of resource. In quantitative research, the research design encompasses all structural aspects of a study, including the nature of the study sample, the sample size, the type of statistical design and the form of quantification employed (Simon & Usher, 2012:152). Wild and Diggins (2010:53) refer to research design as a plan indicating the required data, the sampling plan and the methods of data collection.

The study is an exploratory non-experimental design using middle managers of the DAFF on posts level 11 and 12. The collected data from the sample is analysed with the purpose of testing the hypothesis about how leadership qualities of middle managers might be related to employee engagement.

1.7.2.2 Sampling

According to Sullivan (2009:458), sampling is the process of selecting a subgroup of a population to study. O'Dwyer and Bernauer (2013:76) describe a population as all individuals or groups that possess the characteristics that the researcher aims to investigate. The subset of units from this process is called the sample. Sampling is used

to improve the quality of data analysis and to test a hypothesis when there is not enough time, money and other resources to study all of the elements in the population of interest (Cargan, 2007:235).

The researchers use probability sampling techniques in order to generalise accurately from a segment of the population to the whole population (Rubin & Babbie, 2009:132). Sampling techniques can be classified into two categories, probability and non-probability sampling techniques. In a probability sampling, each population element has a known and nonzero chance of being selected while in a non-probability sampling, the probability of selection of an element is unknown and or indeterminable (Daniel, 2011:6). Probability sampling is sub-divided into simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling (Thompson, 2012:125). Stratified random sampling, however requires a prior knowledge of strata membership and adds complexity to the analysis plan (Miller *et al.*, 2010:38).

As the study is quantitative, a proportional stratified random sampling will be used as it ensures representation of all groups. This study targets middle managers because they are more involved in the day-to-day work of the DAFF and they provide valuable information for this study. According to Sparrow (2012:2), middle managers have the highest influence on the culture, engagement levels and team and individual performance. Middle managers in post levels 11 and 12 form two mutually exclusive groups called strata. Elements in each stratum will be numbered and proportionate stratified sampling will be applied. The samples selected from the strata will be combined to obtain a single sample for this study.

The sample size plays an important role in determining how closely the sampling distribution represents the normal distribution (Singh, 2007:115). Bryman (2016:183) argues that, the bigger the sample, the more representative it is likely to be, provided the sample is randomly selected. Sample size indicates whether the study is feasible or not as costs, the amount of time needed to collect the study's data, management issues and random sampling error are tied to the size of the population (Daniel, 2011:11).

According to the DAFF Annual Plan, the population size of study is 397 members of the Middle Management Services, 249 members on level 11 and 148 members on level 12 (DAFF, 2017:29) . The demographic information that influences the sampling frame for the study is presented in the following Tables 1.1 and 1.2:

Table 1.1: Demographic information of middle managers in the DAFF

			Middle Management				TOTAL
			Black	Coloured	Indian	White	
Gender	Female	Count	85	16	5	40	146
		% within Gender	58.20%	11.00%	3.50%	27.30%	100%
	Male	Count	173	14	5	59	251
		% within Gender	69.00%	5.40%	2.00%	23.50%	100%
TOTAL		Count	258	30	10	99	397
		% within Gender	65.00%	7.50%	2.60%	24.90%	100%

Source: DAFF personnel post status

The next Table shows the distribution of the DAFF middle managers per gender and salary levels.

Table 1.2: DAFF middle managers per gender and salary levels

			Middle Management		TOTAL
			Salary level 11	Salary level 12	
Gender	Female	Count	91	56	147
		% within Gender	62.20%	37.80%	100%
	Male	Count	158	92	250
		% within Gender	62.90%	37.10%	100%
TOTAL		Count	249	148	397
		% within Gender	62.70%	37.30%	100%

Source: DAFF personnel post status

For the purpose of this study, the sample size will be 100. The above Table will be used to determine a representative sample for the study based on salary levels, race and gender, as is depicted in the Table in the next page.

Table 1.3: Sample size by salary levels, race and gender

Salary level	Race	Gender	Total	Salary level	Race	Gender	Total
11	Black	Female	12	12	Black	Female	9
		Male	33			Male	10
	Coloured	Female	2		Coloured	Female	1
		Male	2			Male	2
	Indian	Female	1		Indian	Female	1
		Male	1			Male	1
	White	Female	7		White	Female	3
		Male	5			Male	10
TOTAL			63	TOTAL			37
TOTAL FOR MIDDLE MANAGERS ON SALARY LEVELS 11 AND 12						100	

Source: DAFF personnel post status

Strata size for MMS members on level 11 will comprise 63 participants, while strata size for MMS members on level 12 will be 37 participants.

1.7.2.3 Research instrument

According to Colton and Covert (2007:5) a research instrument is a mechanism for measuring phenomena, which is used to gather and record information for assessment, decision making and ultimately understanding. The data collection instrument for this study is a structured questionnaire (Annexure A). Gupta and Gupta (2011:66) describe a structured questionnaire as a formal list of questions framed, to get the facts, with pre-arranged order.

In a structured questionnaire, every effort is made to ensure that the questions are standardised with a common and transparent meaning. Structured questionnaires are ideal for the statistical description and they are ideal for asking about factual matters. The technique of structured questionnaires attempts to eliminate doubts that might be about the validity of inferences drawn based on the research design that rests on the questionnaire (Bechhofer & Paterson, 2012:75).

The questionnaires accompanied by clear instructions were e-mailed to sampled participants to complete. Self-administered questionnaire method allows the researcher to obtain completed questionnaires faster and it is less expensive than conducting

personal interviews (Babbie, 2016:285). Once the questionnaire is completed, the participants returned them via e-mails.

All instruments were measured by using a 5-point Likert Scale, in which a participant has to choose among a number of categories of response, giving an indication of the degree of agreement or disagreement with the attitude being measured. A pre-test was conducted by using 10 managers with similar characteristics to the sample, but were not included in the actual research, to determine the clarity of items and consistency of responses.

1.7.2.4 Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity with regard to research findings are of great importance in all quantitative studies. To be confident of the results, it is important to know that the measures used are reliable and have been validated. Reliability refers to the degree of accuracy of the measure (Thyer, 2010:57). A measuring instrument is reliable if it provides a similar score when used repeatedly. The coefficient of reliability provides an index of measurement consistency ranging from 0, when the measurement is all error to 1, when there is no error in the measurement (Ary *et al.*, 2009:240). There are three broad categories of reliability coefficients. For this study, internal-consistency coefficient is calculated by using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha measures the correlation between item responses in a questionnaire and it ranges between 0 and 1 (Andrew *et al.*, 2011:202). According to De Vet *et al.* (2011:84), a high Cronbach's alpha value can be reduced by deleting items to make the instrument more efficient or the value can be increased by formulating more items, which are manifestation of the same construct.

Validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately measures what is supposed to be measuring (Rubin & Babbie, 2009:83). There are two types of validity, namely internal and external validity. External validity refers to the extent to which the results can be generalised beyond the sample used for the study, while internal validity refers to the extent that the research findings accurately represent the phenomenon under investigation (Coleman & Briggs, 2007:98-99). Like reliability coefficient, a validity coefficient ranges from 0 to 1. A validity coefficient of 0 indicates the test scores

absolutely do not measure the construct under investigation, whereas a validity coefficient of 1 provides strong evidence that the test scores are measuring the construct under investigation (Kurpius & Stafford, 2005:142).

1.7.2.5 Data analysis

Data analysis is a process of computing various summaries and derived values from the given collection of data (Berthold & Hand, 2013:3). The purpose of data analysis is to study the characteristics of the sample data for approximating it to the population characteristics (Verma, 2012:2).

Statistical methods for data analysis can be classified into two categories, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics is used to describe, summarise or explain a given set of data, whereas inferential statistics uses statistics computed from a sample to infer about the population concerned (Singh, 2007:124-125). For the purpose of this study, both descriptive and inferential statistics method are employed. The purpose of descriptive statistics is to organise and summarise data. Measures of central tendency and variability will be used to perform descriptive statistics test. A Chi-Square test for Contingency Tables is used to determine whether a relationship observed in the study is statistically significant. A finding is statistically significant when the evidence supports the alternative hypothesis rather than the null hypothesis (Johnson & Christensen, 2010:511).

Coded data stored in the form of an Excel data table was imported into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. Coding is defined as the process of conceptualising research data and classifying them into meaningful and relevant categories for the purpose of data analysis and interpretation (Singh, 2007:82). Labelling of data and assigning of values was done in SPSS software.

1.7.2.6 Ethical considerations

In all research involving the collection of data from human beings, there is a fundamental moral requirement to treat those people in accordance with standards and

values, which affirm their essential humanity (Oliver, 2010:12). Below are ethical considerations for the middle managers of the DAFF.

1.7.2.6.1 Informed consent

Adequate information regarding the participation in the study was e-mailed to all participants. Participants provided consent by ticking the appropriate box provided for as part of the questionnaire.

1.7.2.6.2 Deception

Participants were not deceived into participation in this study, by either withholding or non-disclosure of the full intention of the study. Participants ticked the appropriate box in the questionnaire to indicate their voluntary participation.

1.7.2.6.3 Participant's rights of privacy

Assurance was given to all participants about their remaining anonymous. Participants' names and personal details were requested. The only demographic information collected through the questionnaire related to the population characteristics as evident in the sampling frame depicted in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2.

1.7.2.6.4 Confidentiality

All completed questionnaires remain confidential and will not be disclosed to other parties or used for any other purpose.

1.7.2.6.5 Disclosure of findings/results

Participants in this research will receive upon request, a copy of the completed study.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The results of the study contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of leadership and employee engagement. The study determines the association between leadership styles and employee engagement in the DAFF and this particular type of study had not been previously conducted. Furthermore, the study will contribute towards a richer theory on the process behind the implementation of employee engagement, highlighting

the importance of leadership qualities that can assist management of the DAFF in achieving organisational goals.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Howlett *et al.* (2013:45) refer to limitations as those aspects of the study that reduce its generalisability. Limitations can lead to bias in the outcomes of the study. Quantitative research methods to be employed in this study are meant to reduce potential errors. This study is limited in that the sample is not representative of all the South African government departments. It is also limited in its scope of investigation. The results thereof cannot be largely generalisable. The research is only conducted in the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and targeted only members of Middle Management Services (MMS) for the convenience of the researcher because he is an employee in the Department.

1.10 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The report structure of this research is outlined as follows:

Chapter 1: This chapter introduces the topic and sets the problem statement to be investigated. The chapter summarises the research objectives and questions and explains the significance and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2: The chapter provides literature review of the leadership and employee engagement theories. It further establishes the theoretical relationship between these conceptual frameworks.

Chapter 3: This chapter describes the research methodology for the study. It discusses the research design, questions and the hypotheses. This chapter describes the characteristics of the target population, data collection and analysis methods.

Chapter 4: The chapter presents the summary of the descriptive statistics, data analysis and the research findings. The chapter also describes the research methods employed.

Chapter 5: The chapter focuses on the interpretation and considerations of the results and the drawing of inferences. The chapter provides conclusions and makes recommendations to middle managers in facilitating employee engagement through transformational leadership.

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter highlighted the background to the topic, the problem statement, the purpose of the study and defined the three research questions critical to this study. A brief literature review pertaining to the constructs concerned within the study were presented. This chapter had detailed the importance of the study to the DAFF as an organisation, managers, leaders, academicians and researchers. This chapter further defined the main terms of this study, which are leadership, leadership styles and employee engagement.

The next chapter reviews in detail the literature pertaining to the constructs concerned within this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter laid out the introduction and discussed the problem statement, research questions, objectives and conceptual framework of the study, hypothesis and the research methodology. The chapter ends with the significance and limitations of the study followed by the structure of the dissertation.

This chapter provides critical review and evaluation of leadership theories and styles, employee engagement theories and need-based theories of motivation and establishes the theoretical relationship between these conceptual frameworks.

2.2 LOCATING LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public administration is both a domain of practice and a field of study (Bourgon, 2011:8). As a domain of practice, public administration is defined by Holzer and Schwester (2011:32), as the formation and implementation of public policy. It is an amalgamation of the management-based strategies such as planning, organising, directing, coordination, and controlling. Milakovich and Gordon (2009:11) define Public Administration as a field of study and of professional training, from which a substantial number of governmental employees currently are drawn.

Leadership in the public sector became popular in the 1990s when thought was given to how more leaders could be developed (Joyce, 2017:4). The report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2001:7) argues that developing and improving leadership in the public sector would produce more engaged and motivated employees, changed cultures, enhance organisational performance, more effective public service systems, greater responsiveness to the citizens and reformed public governance institutions.

According to Van Wart and Dicke (2008:37), the leadership gap for public administration has only existed in the academic discipline, whilst practitioners have long been “doing leadership” but without a good model. Practitioners have all along concentrated their efforts in gaining sufficient leadership training in dealing with the relationship-based issues they face daily and, thus, universities have started programmes that explicitly link leadership and the public sector environment.

Leadership is different from administration, but both are equally important to organisational success (Henry, 2016:125). According to Henry (2016:126), both leadership and administration involve, deciding what needs to be done, creating the work and relationships to achieve it and then trying to ensure that those people actually do the job. To achieve these, leadership sets a direction, creates a vision for the organisation, aligns employees, communicates and inspire to achieve the vision while administration plans and budgets for the vision, organises, recruits employees, control activities and solves problems to implement it.

In order to achieve the above, human capital is perceived as a critical asset of any organisation. Snell and Bohlander (2013:4) refer to human capital as the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of individuals that have economic value to an organisation. High quality human capital needs effective human resource management (HRM) to add to the competitive value of the organisation (De Pablos & Tennyson, 2013:58). According to Mahajan (2015:4), the main objective of HRM is to ensure the availability of committed and competent workforce in the organisation. To achieve this objective, HRM performs inter-related functions, which can be broadly classified into two categories, which are managerial and operative functions. According to Durai (2010:6), managerial functions include planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating and controlling. Goyal (2014:8) states that modern management theorists are of the opinion that the directing function of HRM is the sum of inter-related activities like communication, motivation and leadership, and it is therefore seen as an important management function because employees in the organisation are guided, motivated and led by a manager to achieve predetermined goals.

Durai (2010:6) asserts that operative functions of the HRM are related to specific personnel activities, namely procurement, human resource development (HRD), compensation, maintenance and motivation, and integration. Operative functions are performed in conjunction with the managerial functions. Procurement as the first important operative function of HRM is concerned with planning, organising, directing and controlling of all activities that are related to acquisition and deployment of human resources (Srinivasan, 2008:102). This is the critical operative function of HRM because employees are necessary for the functioning of an organisation (Chandramohan, 2008:8). According to Durai (2010:8), this function involves securing and employing the right person for the right job, at the right time and right place to accomplish organisational goals. The second important operative function of HRM, according to Chandramohan (2008:13) is HRD, which is the process of developing skills and knowledge abilities and talents values and attitude of employees. The HRD function includes performance appraisals, training, management development programmes, organisational change, organisational development and leadership. According to Deb (2008:200), leadership is linked to management because it involves directing, controlling of activities and changes occurring within the organisation.

Compensation, the third operative function of HRM is concerned with determining adequate, equitable and fair remuneration of employees in the form of monetary or non-monetary rewards in order to accomplish organisational objectives, such as employee retention, satisfaction and motivation. The compensation function comprises activities such as job evaluation, job analysis, wages and salary administration, welfare activities, incentives, bonus, fringe benefit and social security benefit (Chandramohan, 2008:13), which are constructs that fit the theoretical concept of psychological meaningfulness, which is one of the primary drivers of employee engagement (Truss *et al.*, 2014:59).

The fourth operative function of HRM, namely the maintenance and motivation function is concerned with providing safe and secure working environment to employees through various welfare measures such as health and safety, employee welfare and social

security measures in order to retain efficient and experienced employees in the organisation. Kumar (2010:14) argues that merely appointing and training of people is not sufficient, they must be provided with good working conditions so that they may like their work and workplace and to maintain their efficiency. According to Kumar (2010), working conditions certainly influence motivation and morale of employees. Srinivasan (2008:114) asserts that morale can affect productivity and job satisfaction in organisations. Measures of good working conditions mentioned above are constructs that theoretically correspond to Kahn's (1990) conceptualisation of psychological safety, which is one of the antecedents of employee engagement (Truss *et al.*, 2014:65).

Integration, the fifth operative function of HRM, deals with integrating individual, societal and organisational goals. Integration consist mainly of industrial relations and aims at ensuring good relations between the management and the employees. HRM implement industrial relations programmes that would ensure ethical and fair treatment in disciplinary action, grievance redress and career management processes (Durai, 2010:9). These activities speak to the organisational justice, a construct that fit the theoretical concept of psychological safety, which is one of the primary drivers of employee engagement (Truss *et al.*, 2014:65). According to Phillips and Gully (2014:146), engagement is enhanced when employees:

- have a clear goal and roles;
- have resources to do a good job;
- get meaningful feedback on their performance;
- are able to use their talents;
- have positive relation with co-workers;
- have opportunities to learn and grow; and
- have supportive leadership.

These engagement drivers clearly fall within the wider scope of HRM. Parry and Tyson (2014:155) argue that, although employee engagement is a new concept in HRM and has therefore been subject to only small amount of empirical research, it has become increasingly popular with employers and thus became prominent in the world of HRM

practice. According to Parry and Tyson (2014:155), Kahn (1990) was one of the first theorists to discuss the concept of engagement in relation to employees, and HRM was adopted by human resource practitioners as a characteristic of employees that is related to high productivity. One of the goals of HRM is to manage employee engagement, commitment and turnover, which are influenced by employees' career development in the organisation (Phillips & Gully, 2014:450).

The next section of this Chapter defines leadership and lists important personality traits that distinguish an effective leader from others.

2.3 LEADERSHIP

While there are many different definitions of leadership, it may be defined as the ability to establish and share a clear and inspiring vision, to set direction towards a common organisational goal and to inspire employees to perform beyond expectation (Shelton, 2012:29). Yukl (2006) as cited by Rowe and Guerrero (2011:1) maintains that leadership is “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives”. On the same breath, Yukl (2006) and Northouse (2010) suggest that leadership is a process that can be learned and that is available to every individual.

In support of this notion, Daft (2015:23) describes leadership as an art that can be learned through practice and hands-on experience as well as intense personal exploration and development because many of the leadership skills cannot be learned from the book. He further describes leadership as science because it requires careful analysis and understanding of the available information in order to draw conclusions based on objective facts about organisational performance and sustainability (Daft, 2015:23). According to Lussier and Achua (2016:6) leadership occurs when leaders and followers share a formal group membership. The leader is seen therefore, as that person at the centre of the group change and activity and carries forward the will of the group.

The definition above identifies the following components as central to the concept of leadership:

- **Leadership is a process:** Through this process, the leader of an organisation influences a group of followers to achieve a common organisational goal. Leadership is therefore not a trait or characteristic in the leader but it is a transactional event that occurs between the leader and the followers (Rowe & Guerrero, 2013:1). Leadership defined as a process implies that a leader affects and is affected by followers and it is therefore an interactive exchange.
- **Leadership involves influence:** Leadership occurs among individuals, as it is not something done to individuals. It is concerned with how the leader influences followers. The influence process is one in which a leader changes the actions or attitudes of several group members or subordinates. Leadership influences many aspects behaviours in organisations and followers are therefore important part of this process, without followers leadership cannot occur.
- **Leadership occurs in groups:** Without groups, leadership cannot take place. Leadership is about influencing a small or a big group of individuals who are engaged in a common goal or purpose. This definition of leadership precludes the inclusion of leadership training programmes that teach people to lead themselves.
- **Leadership involves common goals:** Leaders direct their energies toward individuals who are trying to achieve something together. Leaders and followers have a common and mutually agreeable purpose.

Based on how others have defined leadership, Hackman and Johnson (2013:10) identified four primary definitional themes:

- **Leadership is about who you are:** This theme focuses on the leader's traits and attributes. The emphasis is on identifying the characteristics that define a leader.
- **Leadership is about how you act:** Leadership is defined as the exercise of influence or power. Leaders are identified by determining who is influencing whom.

- **Leadership is about what you do:** Leaders direct their influence and encourage change in order to meet needs or to reach goals of the group or an organisation.
- **Leadership is about how you work with others:** Leaders and followers establish mutual purposes and work together as partners to reach their goals

Studies by Stogdill (1948, 1970), Mann (1959) and Lord *et al.* (1986) have focused on leadership as a trait and this perspective suggests that certain individuals have special inborn qualities that make them leaders, qualities that are not possessed by other individuals (Zehndorfer, 2014:26-27). However, Daft (2015:27) argues that leadership can be learned and developed, as most people are not born with natural leadership skills and qualities.

The important personality traits to distinguish an effective leadership from others include personal integrity, emotional steadiness, diplomacy, self-confidence, determination, uniqueness and ingenuity, the ability to judge, knowledge sharing and verbal communication skills (Murari, 2015:25). Effective leadership creates an exciting and desirable vision describing what the group should be like in the future (Hackman & Johnson, 2013:6). According to Armstrong (2016:275), effective leaders are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and are skilled at understanding what will motivate their team members. The important conclusion from leadership theory is that the leader's ability to influence followers may be determined by the leader's traits or skills and behaviour and various situational factors interacting together other than the leader's formal authority or position (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008:151). To understand the contemporary views about leadership better, the next section will review how leadership theory has evolved over the years.

2.4 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERSHIP THEORIES

This section provides a broad overview of the different types of leadership theories and discusses the evolution of leadership over the years in terms of 13 categories.

2.4.1 Great Man Theory

The Great Man Theory was the basis of most leadership research until mid-1940s (Marquis & Huston, 2009:37). This theory assumed great leaders are born rather than made and tried to determine which unique traits made a person a great leader (Ledlow & Coppola, 2011:58). The Great Man Theory evolved around men as leaders who were born with leadership qualities that enabled them to exercise control and power over people in order to accomplish things (Kimmelman, 2010:50; O'Connor, 2010:8). According to Ledlow and Coppola (2011:59), the Great Man Theory concentrated on individual leaders who were considered “great”, with those characteristics or traits being identified as reasons for their success

2.4.2 Trait theories

Around 1920, researchers moved away from Great Man Theory and began to focus at the traits and characteristics that differentiate leaders from their followers (Kimmelman, 2010:51; Robbins *et al.*, 2009:290). Researchers looked for traits and characteristics possessed by leaders, which made them good leaders (Hurd *et al.*, 2008:15). Stogdill (1948) as cited by Foster *et al.* (2013:38) reported five general categories of traits:

- **Capacity:** Personal traits such as intelligence, communication skills, alertness and judgment.
- **Achievement:** Qualities of scholarship, knowledge and athletic accomplishments.
- **Responsibility:** Traits of dependability, initiative, persistence, aggressiveness, self-confidence and desire to excel.
- **Participation:** Characteristics of activity, sociability, cooperation, adaptability and humour.
- **Status:** Qualities of socio-economic position and popularity.

Stogdill (1948) asserted that individuals do not become leaders simply by displaying pattern of characteristics. Stogdill (1948) acknowledges that leaders that perform well in one situation might fail in another because different situations affect differently one's ability to lead others in achieving organisational goal (Denhardt *et al.*, 2013:196; Iszatt-White & Saunders, 2017:61)

2.4.3 Behavioural theories

There was a growing understanding that, whilst traits and skills provide a foundation for leadership, it is the leader's actions that create results, as such, traits theories began to make way for behavioural theories in the mid-1900s (Komives *et al.*, 2011:39; Taylor & Webster-Henderson, 2017:34). Contrary to the Great Man Theory, behavioural theories are based upon the belief that great leaders are made, not born and followers learn from them by watching what they do (Hurd *et al.*, 2008:15). The primary focus of these theories is to determine which particular behaviour and styles leaders use to influence others to follow them rather than traits they possess (Ledlow & Coppola, 2011:58).

2.4.4 Contingency theories

Contingency theories provide a framework for effectively matching the leader and the situation (Northouse, 2012:123) and assume that the effectiveness of the leader's behaviour is contingent on the organisational situation (Kimmelman, 2010:52). Contingency theories focus on how the situation changes an individual's leadership style (Hurd *et al.*, 2008:15). Fiedler's (1967) findings suggest that there is no one leadership style ideal for every situation, the interrelationship between the group's leader and its members were most influence by manager's ability to be a good leader (Marquis & Huston, 2009:40). According to these theories, success depends on the characteristics of the leader, the nature of the task, the nature of organisation and the maturity levels of the followers (Bertocci, 2009:34; Taylor & Webster-Henderson, 2017:34).

2.4.5 Situational Leadership Theory

The Situational Leadership Theory developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1969) is a useful framework for analysing leadership behaviour (Northouse, 2012:99). Situational leadership theories suggest that different situations require different leaders (Hurd *et al.*, 2008:17). An effective leader recognises what the employees need and choose the best course of action to meet those needs (Northouse, 2012:100). The Situational Leadership Theory assumes that the followers are at different readiness levels for different tasks they perform. Readiness is defined as the willingness, confidence and ability to do a particular task (Peterson & Kelly, 2015:5).

According to the Hersey and Blanchard (1969) as cited by Taylor and Webster-Henderson (2017:34), the Situational Leadership Theory suggests that effective leaders use one of the following four styles:

- **Telling style:** The followers are reluctant and unskilled. The leader defines roles and tells followers what, how, when and where to do various tasks, emphasising directive behaviour.
- **Selling style:** The followers are willing but lack skills. The leader provides direction and support.
- **Participating style:** The followers are competent but lack confidence. The leader encourages and assists followers in contributing to sound decisions.
- **Delegating style:** The followers are competent, experienced and willing. The leader provides little direction and support.

The four styles suggest that effective leaders put greater or less focus on the task in question and the relationship between the leader and the follower depending on the competency and capability level of the follower. The Theory assumes that leaders who can accurately read the followers' readiness are more likely to match their leadership behaviour to the needs of the group and the goal of the organisation (McKee *et al.*, 2013:40).

2.4.6 Charismatic Leadership Theory

The foundational theories for describing and studying charismatic leadership emanated from Max Weber (1947). In one of his classic works, Weber (1947) dealt with the issues of power, domination, legitimated action and authority and described three forms of legitimate authority within society as traditional, rational-legal and the charismatic (Bryman *et al.*, 2011:86). Max Weber (1947) established charismatic leadership to describe a type of authority based on perceptions of an extraordinary individual. Weber (1947) defines charisma as "a special personality characteristic that gives a person superhuman or exceptional powers and is reserved for a few, is of divine origin and results in the person being treated as a leader" (Northouse, 2015:164). The Charismatic Leadership Theory developed by House (1971) describes how charismatic leaders act and distinguishes characteristics and situations in which such leaders would be effective

(Kelly, 2010:11). Charismatic leadership combines a leader perceived to have special qualities with followers who are committed to the leaders (Rumsey, 2013:7). A charismatic leader has the ability to inspire and motivate followers to do more than they would normally do, despite challenges and personal sacrifice (Daft, 2013:511)

2.4.7 Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership was first coined by James Downton through consideration of accounts of revolution and revolt in society in his book named *Rebel Leadership* in 1973 and the concept was further developed by James MacGregor Burns in his study of political leadership in 1978 (Bryman *et al.*, 2011: 299). Bass (1985) expanded more on the work of Burns (1978) and House (1976) and refined version of transformational leadership by giving more attention to followers' rather than the leaders' needs and emotional elements and origins of charisma (Northouse, 2015:166). According to Kelly (2010:2), the Transformational Leadership Theory suggests that the relationship between the leader and the follower inspires and empowers an individual toward commitment to organisational goals.

Transformational leadership as described by Fairholm and Fairholm (2009:17) implies changing the individual as well as the group to enable leaders and followers to reach higher levels of accomplishment and self-motivation. This leadership has a transforming effect on both a leader and a follower, raising the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both. Shelton (2012:1) defines transformational leadership as “a partnership between the leader and the follower to reach a higher level of motivation, trust, engagement and empowerment”. Cartwright and Cooper (2009:418) assert that transformational leadership is “an intrinsically based motivational process in which leaders, who can be at any level in the organisation, create an emotional and intellectual connection with their employees that motivates them to engage in levels of effort that are above what is expected of their prescribed work role”.

Transformational leaders are charismatic, visionary, inspiring and serve as role model of trust (Marshall, 2010:3). According to Weber (1947) as cited by Northouse (2015:164), charismatic leaders possess a special personality characteristic that gives them

exceptional powers to do extraordinary things. Murari (2015:106) states that transformational leaders inspire followers to share a vision and empower them to achieve the vision and provide the resources necessary for personal skills development. Bertocci (2009:48) asserts that transformational leaders have the ability to inspire and motivate followers to performance levels that exceed their own and their leader's expectation through internal rewards such as self-satisfaction or being part of the team than external rewards such as incentives. Lowe, Kroeck and Sivasubramaniam (1996) as cited by (Northouse, 2012:179) found that people exhibited transformational leadership were perceived to be more effective leaders with better work outcomes than those who exhibited only transactional leadership.

2.4.8 Transactional Leadership Theory

According to Hurd *et al.* (2008:249) and Murari (2015:249), transactional leadership focuses on the behaviours leaders use to encourage compliance by employees through rewards and punishments. Transactional leaders recognise good performance and punish poor work or negative outcomes using clearly specified criteria (Humphrey, 2013:15). Because transactional leadership is an exchange relationship between a leader and employees, a leader motivates employees by exchanging resources, offering incentives for doing work (Borland *et al.*, 2014:46). Iszatt-White and Saunders (2017:111) assert the exchanges in transactional leadership involve the following dimensions:

- **Contingent rewards:** The leader set clear expectations, provides the necessary resources and link the mutually agreed goals to the rewards.
- **Management-by-exception:** While some leaders prevent mistakes by actively monitoring the work of employees, watching for deviations from set rules and standards and taking corrective action, other leaders intervene only when set standards are not met or when performance is not as per expectation and punishment may be used as a response to poor performance.
- **Laissez-faire leadership:** Leaders are hand-off and allow group members to make decisions. Although, group members are given the power and authority to make decisions the leaders still takes responsibility for the actions of the group

members. This is a non-transactional type of leadership characterised by delayed decisions, giving no feedback and it generally leads to lowest productivity among group members.

From the above, the deductions can be made that transactional leadership is a style of leadership where leaders motivate their employees to get the best out of themselves using disciplinary power and array of incentives. Leaders inform their employees beforehand what incentives will be given for their performance. Not only do leaders set clear objectives and goals for the employees, they indicate how they should execute the task and what sources and resources can be used. Transactional leaders do not look forward to transforming or improving the future, but just want to maintain routine by managing individual performance and facilitating group performance. This style of leadership is therefore ideal to carry out tasks that need to be performed in a systematic and structured manner, and work best with employees who know their jobs and are motivated by the reward-penalty system.

2.4.9 Servant-Leadership Theory

According to O'Brien (2011:13), Greenleaf (1977) originally conceived the concept of servant-leadership. Daft (2015:178) describes four basic principles in Greenleaf's Servant-Leadership Theory:

- **Put service before self-interest.** In this view the organisation exists as much to provide meaningful work to the person as the person exists to perform work for the organisation
- **Listen first to affirm others.** One of the servant-leaders greatest gifts to others is listening authentically.
- **Inspire trust by being trustworthy.** Servant-leaders build trust by doing what they said they will do, being honest with others and focusing on the well-being of others
- **Nourish others and help them become whole.** Servant-leaders care about followers and believe in the unique potential of each person to have a positive impact on the world.

The servant-leader's priority is service to the employees, clients, stakeholders and the public. The servant-leadership is linked to ethics, virtues and morality (Lussier & Achua, 2016:344). Servant-leaders take up leadership roles because they are motivated by the opportunity to serve others (Gill, 2011:69). The Servant Leadership Theory advocates that the servant-leaders put the interest of followers above their own to ensure that the highest priority needs of the followers are being served (Lynch, 2012:4). Servant-leaders make conscious decisions daily to use their talents for the growth of individual followers first, the organisation second and their own last (Sendjaya, 2015:1). According to Lee (2016:28), servant-leaders delegate, engage in participative decision-making and attempt to encourage employees to perform to their highest potential.

2.4.10 House's Path-Goal Leadership Theory

According to Lussier and Achua (2016:119), Robert House (1971) first developed the Path-Goal Leadership Theory. The Path-Goal Leadership Theory is design to explain how leaders can help employees along the path to their goals by selecting specific leadership styles (directive, supportive, participative or achievement-oriented) appropriate to subordinates' needs and the organisational environment to maximise performance and job satisfaction (Northouse, 2012:138; Lussier & Achua, 2016:119). According to Jex and Britt (2014:385), Path-Goal Leadership Theory proposes that to be successful, a leader must be able to use these four distinct types of leader behaviours:

- **Directive leaders:** Leaders explains their roles as leaders of the groups and give clear guidelines about how to do the job, make rules and set performance standards.
- **Supportive leaders:** Leaders use this type of leadership to boost the confidence of their employees and to reduce boredom and increase job satisfaction. Leaders are usually friendly, approachable and concerned with the needs, status and well-being of employees.
- **Participative leaders:** Leaders consult with their employees to share knowledge and solicits their opinions and to involve them in decision-making.

- **Achievement-oriented leaders:** Leaders set challenging goals for their employees while expressing confidence in their abilities to achieve high standard of performance.

According to the Path-Goal Leadership Theory, the best suited style for the leaders depend on the subordinates' skills, knowledge, abilities and the attitudes towards the leader (Palestini, 2009:8). Essentially, the Path-Goal Leadership Theory attempts to explain the influence of leadership styles on employees' motivation, satisfaction, effort and performance as moderated by situational factors of the subordinates and the work environment (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012:115).

The Path-Goal Leadership Theory suggests that employees will be motivated if the following conditions are met (Rowe & Guerrero, 2011:205):

- employees believe in their ability to perform their assigned work-related tasks;
- employees believe that their work-related efforts will lead to appropriate outcomes; and
- employees believe that these work-related outcomes will be meaningful.

Northouse (2013:138) argues that different leadership behaviour affect employees' motivation differently and this impact will depend on the subordinate and the nature of the task. The Path-Goal Leadership Theory assumes that leaders are flexible and can readily change their style as the situations require (Griffin & Moorhead, 2013:337).

2.4.11 Leader-Member Exchange Theory

Formulated by Graen (1976), the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory proposes that leaders uniquely interact with each follower (Armstrong, 2016:10; Kaplan & Owings, 2017:87) due to limited time and resources (Dainton & Zelle, 2011:155). The LMX Theory is a relationship-based exchange theory of leadership that focuses on the quality of the relationship that develops between leaders and followers (Zehndorfer, 2014:114 and Lussier & Achua, 2016:234). The LMX Theory proposes that leaders in many cases form two subgroups, an in-group and an out-group of followers (Forsyth, 2009:279).

According to Landy and Cote (2010:558), in-group members are characterised by high quality relationship with their leader and high latitude for negotiating their work roles whilst out-group members are characterised by low quality relationship with their leader and little latitude for negotiating work roles. In-group consists of employees who the leader believes are competent, trustworthy, motivated to work hard and can accept responsibilities, out-group are thought not to possess these qualities. Consequently, members in the in-group are allocated greater responsibilities, more support, personal attention and rewards (Glendon *et al.*, 2016:313).

Thus, from the above the deductions can be made that the central concept of LMX Theory is that leadership is more effective when the exchange relationships between the leaders and followers are all high-quality. Leaders who are respectful and capable of building trust with all employees and recognising each employee as an individual who want to relate to the leader in a unique way are more likely to bring positive organisational outcomes. Leaders should therefore strive to enlarge the in-group by developing high-quality relationships with as many subordinates as possible.

2.4.12 Authentic Leadership Theory

Authentic leadership is one of the more recent theories to leadership. Walumbwa *et al.* (2008) as cited by Gagné (2014:189), define authentic leadership as “a pattern of leader behaviour that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information and relational transparency on the part of leaders working for followers, fostering positive self-development”. According to this definition, authentic leadership has four components:

- **Self-awareness:** Being conscious of and trusting in, one’s motives, desires, feelings and self-concept. Clarifying one’s strengths and weaknesses, personal traits and emotional patterns and being able to use this knowledge when interacting with others and their environment (Johnson, 2011:210).
- **Relational transparency:** Presenting one’s authentic self to others through clear self-disclosure of feelings and thoughts (Johnson, 2011:210).

- **Balanced processing:** Objectively making decisions after considering all relevant information.
- **Internalised moral perspective:** Self-regulation, by relying on internal morals and values that direct decision-making and behaviours regardless of external pressures (Johnson, 2011:211).

Authentic leaders' behaviour and decisions are based on values and beliefs which when strongly upheld increase their personal credibility and win the respect and trust of their team, colleagues and peers (Alidina & Adams, 2014:267). The key aspect of authentic leadership is leaders being genuine in their behaviour and harnessing the energy of followers by influencing them to connect with the goal of the leader and the group in order to serve the needs of the organisation effectively.

2.4.13 Fiedler's Cognitive Resource Theory

The Cognitive Resource Theory (Fiedler & Garcia, 1987) presents a modified approach to the trait theory by considering the contribution of the leader's experience, intelligence, competence and task-relevant knowledge to the team and organisational performance (Kessler, 2013:120). This Theory suggests that effective leadership is determined by both intelligence and the experience of the leader and furthermore, the leader's experience becomes more useful than his or her intelligence in stressful situation (Mumford, 2010:148).

The Cognitive Resource Theory can help during placements of people leadership positions by suggesting that people be tested for intelligence and the ability to manage stress in addition to assessing leadership qualities. This theory emphasises how a stressful situation can limit even an intelligent person's ability to lead (Russel, 2012:119).

As can be derived from the above discussion, theories and approaches to leadership have evolved, changed focus and direction and built upon one another during the past century. Table 2.1 in the next page provides a brief historical view and description of leadership theories.

Table 2.1: Historical leadership theories

Period	Theory	Description	Key writers
A focus on the individual as a leader			
1840s	Great Man Theory	Leaders are exceptional and are born.	James (1880), Carlyle (1888)
1940s	Trait Theory	List of personal qualities or characteristics a leader should have.	Bowden (1926), Gibb (1947) Weber (1947), Stogdill (1948)
1940s	Behaviourist Theories	Concentrate on what leaders do. Behaviours can also be categorised as 'styles of leadership'.	Katz <i>et al.</i> (1951), Fleishmann (1953), Halpin and Winer (1957), Likert (1967)
A focus on the situation or context			
1960s	Contingency Theories	Identifying the contingent variable that best predict the most effective leadership style required.	Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958), Fiedler (1967), House (1971), Vroom and Yvetton (1973), Adair (1973)
1970s	Situational Theories	Leadership approach and style specific to the situation	Hersey and Blanchard (1969-93).
A focus on the followers			
Late 1970s	Servant Leadership Theory	Support the notion that the main purpose of leaders is to provide service to others.	Greenleaf (1970).
	Transformational Leadership Theory	Central concept is change and the role leadership is envisioning and transforming organisational performance. Leaders inspire and transform followers. It is in contrast with Transactional Leadership Theory-where an emphasis is on the leader, follower, rewards or recognition in return for commitment.	Burns (1978, 2003), Bass (1998), Bennis and Nanus (1985), Tichy and Devanna (1986), Kouzes and Posner (2002).
A focus back on the individual as a leader			
1990s	Relational Leadership (psychodynamic) Theories	Concentrate on the quality of the relationship of the leader and direct report or group members. Described as leaders-member-exchange (LMX)	Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995).
1990s	Authentic Leadership Theory	A form of transparent and ethical leader behaviour that fosters openness and acting in accordance with true authentic self. The importance of self-awareness and follower involvement is recognised.	Terry (1993), George (2003), Avolio and Gardner (2005).
2000s	Cognitive Theories	Focus on how leaders think, decide and make 'sense' of the situation for followers.	Connelly <i>et al.</i> (2000), Mumford <i>et al.</i> (2007a).

Source: Holroyd (2015:2)

The historical development of leadership theories discussed above introduces some important ideas about leadership. The ideas about leadership have evolved greatly over the years, from trait and behavioural perspectives to situational approaches to now transformational behaviours and outcomes. To understand the effects of leadership on outcomes, the focus of leadership study today involves the relationship between leaders and followers.

The transformational theory has been developed to meet the needs of organisational learning, continuous adjustment and change, creativity, innovation, reinforcement, and human development. Leaders, who subscribe to a transformational leadership style play as role models for employees, encourage and motivate them to fulfill their potential and in turn, the employees give their maximum effort because they feel they are valued and treated fairly. Hence, both the leader and follower find meaning and purpose in their work, growing and developing because of the relationship. The next section will describe different leadership styles and relate each one of them to leadership theories already discussed.

2.5 LEADERSHIP STYLES

Leadership styles are behaviours of leaders towards colleagues, subordinates, clients or peers, focusing on what they do and how they act (Northouse, 2014:89). According to DuBrin (2011:380), a leadership style is a set of behaviours that leaders use to influence employees to achieve organisational goals. The five well-known traditional styles of leadership are discussed below.

2.5.1 Laissez-faire leadership style

A group of Psychologist led by Lewin (1939) focused their Lewin's Leadership Styles Framework on leadership styles and identified three leadership styles: autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire (King & Lawley, 2016:412). According to Cassidy and Kreitner (2010:32), these three leadership styles are associated with Behaviourist Theories. Laissez-faire in particular is a non-directed leadership (Northouse, 2014:92). The employees are at liberty to make own decisions, however, the leader is still accountable for the decisions that are made. Laissez-faire leaders often avoid taking a

stand towards a team purpose, ignore problems, do not follow up and refrain from intervening (Gill, 2011:83). Often employees are unmotivated and at a loss to know what to do. Though passive/avoidant (*laissez-faire*) leadership might look like a weak style of leadership, it can result in creativity and productivity when employees are highly motivated, skilled and self-directed as it allows complete freedom (Marquis & Huston, 2009:39).

Laissez-faire is not ideal in situations where group members lack knowledge, skills, experience or motivation needed to complete tasks and make decisions, since group members receive little to no guidance (Gupta & Van Wart, 2016:39). When goals are not met, the leader can then blame members of the group for not completing tasks or living up to expectations. This style of leadership has been linked to negative outcomes including poor job performance, low leader effectiveness, and less group satisfaction. *Laissez-faire* leadership is generally characterised by failure a leaders to provide regular performance feedback to the group members and the feeling of disconnectedness by group members due to limited interaction between leader and the group members and should therefore be avoided.

2.5.2 Directive leadership style

According to Gupta and Van Wart (2016:40), directive leadership style is demonstrated when the leader lets subordinates know what is expected of them and provides directions and guidance. The leader asks subordinates to follow rules, procedures and schedules and coordinate work activities. Directive leadership style is one of the leadership styles found in Path-Goal Leadership Theory. According to Cassidy and Kreitner (2010:37), this leadership style is appropriate when employees are new, lack experience and need direction. Singh (2015:377) asserts that this form of leadership is used when followers work on highly ambiguous and unstructured tasks as it will increase motivation and performance, but it can create frustrations and not facilitate performance among followers if they work on structured tasks. Ovadje (2014:100) argues that directive leadership style is more of an instructional type of leadership, as decisions are taken at the higher level of the organisational structure and communicated to lower levels for implementation, in the process employees are not consulted to give

their suggestions or feedback. In their study, Higgs and Rowland (2005) as cited by Ovadje (2014:100) found that directive leadership style was not associated with successful organisational change. Organisational leadership need to value feedback from their employees and hear from them about how to improve individual and organisational performance.

2.5.3 Supportive leadership style

Supportive leadership is one of the leadership styles found in Path-Goal Leadership Theory and is characterised by behaviours that are aimed at showing concern and caring for the group members (Jex & Britt, 2014:385). DuBrin (2016:153) asserts that supportive leadership enhances morale when employees work on dissatisfying, stressful or frustrating tasks. Supportive leaders treat employees as equals in a friendly and approachable manner while striving to improve their wellbeing (Cassidy & Kreitner, 2010:37) and motivates them to achieve more through mutual respect (Borland *et al.*, 2014:14).

According to Williams (2015:299), supportive leadership style is associated with employee satisfaction with the job and the leader, improved performance when it increases confidence, lower employee stress and improves relations between the employees and the leaders. Supportive leaders listen to employees, encourage them to express their problems, thoughts, feeling and ideas, and in response, they praise, encourage, reassure, recognise and reward the employees for good performance (Heinke, 2012:71).

2.5.4 Participative leadership style

Participative leadership represents behaviours that are aimed at getting inputs from subordinates on work-related issues (Jex & Britt, 2014:385). Williams (2015:299) argues that participation in decision-making can help subordinates understand which goals are more important and clarify paths to achieving them. Participative leadership style is one of the leadership styles found in Path-Goal Leadership Theory and according to DuBrin (2016:125), it encompasses behaviours that can be divided into three subgroups: consultative, consensus and democratic.

- **Consultative leaders:** confer with the group members before making decisions; however, however, the leaders retain the final decision.
- **Consensus leaders:** encourages group discussions about an issue by inviting inputs from all group members and then make a decision that reflect general agreement that is supported by all.
- **Democratic leaders:** confer final authority on the group. Leaders invite opinions from group members and take a vote before making a decision.

Knowing when it is most effective to apply participative leadership is key to the success of any organisation. To allow every members of a group to make inputs requires more time and this might slow down the process of making decisions and taking actions. This extra time required for this process usually leads to a decision that eventually benefit every member of the group and the organisation as a whole. According to Williams (2015:299), when employees participate in decisions, they become more committed to make them work. Cassidy and Kreitner (2010:37) assert that participative leadership style is appropriate in organisations where the employees understand the culture of the organisation and can contribute creative ideas that will help the organisation grow and succeed.

This leadership style can be effective in organisations because it creates opportunity for group members to demonstrate their creativity, ability and talents, and, thus, improves work processes and makes the organisation more efficient. Allowing employees to play active role in the organisation may result in those employees staying with the organisation to see their plans result in success and thus enhances employee engagement and cuts down on the costs of turnover.

2.5.5 Achievement-oriented leadership style

Achievement-oriented leaders set for subordinates clear, realistic and challenging goals, stress high-quality performance and seek continuous improvement on performance. The leaders display a high degree of confidence that their employees will put forth extraordinary effort to overcome those difficult challenges (Cassidy & Kreitner, 2010:37). Importantly, achievement-oriented leaders set challenging goals for themselves also and lead by example in achieving them (Heinke, 2012:71).

Achievement-oriented leadership style is found in Path-Goal Leadership Theory and according to Denhardt *et al.* (2013:203), this leadership style is appropriate for organisations that are goal oriented and subordinates are performing ambiguous and non-repetitive tasks. According to Heinke (2012:71), the key to this leadership style is that the leader should help the employees to establish goals and set appropriate paths to those goals and should then work with employees to encourage them in task completion and remove obstacles that might stand in the way of their success.

From the literature, one can deduce that there is no one best style of leadership in all situations. Leaders use different leadership styles to achieve their goals. Some leadership styles work better for certain situations and for certain leaders than others. Effective leaders choose leadership styles which best suit the needs of the group and the organisational goal, whilst satisfying the leaders' own needs. In the following section, two transformational models that are considered particularly useful in the context of transformational leadership and employee engagement will be discussed.

2.6 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP MODELS

Transformational leadership theorists have put forward a variety of foundational concepts of transformational leadership. This section will review two, which are: Bass and Riggio transformational leadership and Bennis and Nanus transformational leadership models.

2.6.1 Bass and Riggio Transformational Leadership Model

According to Marshall (2010:4), Rumsey (2013:146) and Nongard (2014:17), Bass and Riggio's Transformational Leadership Model identified four elements of transformational leadership:

- **Idealised influence:** The leader serves as a role model that followers want to identify with and display a charismatic personality that influences others to want to become more like the leader. Actions of the leader are centred on values, beliefs and a sense of mission. Leaders are willing to take risks and are consistent, as a result trust, respect and confidence in their leader is built.

- **Inspirational motivation:** The ability of the leader to inspire confidence, motivation and a sense of purpose in the followers. The leader articulates a clear vision, superbly communicates expectations of the group and demonstrates a commitment to the goals that have been laid out. The leader remains optimistic, enthusiastic and able to point out the positive. Leaders use symbolic language and emotional appeals to build employee commitment and to persuade them to buy into a shared vision of the organisational future. Inspirational motivation helps people to genuinely adopt and embrace new ideas.
- **Intellectual stimulation:** Followers are involved in decision-making processes and are stimulated to be creative and innovative in problem solving solutions. The leader challenges assumptions and solicits ideas from followers without criticising even if they differ from the leaders' ideas.
- **Individualised consideration:** The leader's ability to recognise or determine specific needs or desires of a team member and what motivates a member through observation. Through one-on-one coaching and mentoring, the leader provides opportunities for customised training sessions for each team member. Delegated tasks are monitored to discover whether followers need additional direction or support and assess progress, but followers do not feel they are being checked on. This results in team members growing and becoming fulfilled in their positions.

By reflecting on Bass and Riggio's Transformational Leadership Model above, transformational leadership is seen as leadership approach where a leader works with followers to identify needed change, create a vision to guide the change through inspiration and the change is executed with the commitment of members of the group. The application of this leadership style creates a valuable and positive change in individuals by paying attention to individual needs and development with the ultimate goal of developing individuals into leaders.

Literature on transformational leadership style describes this leadership style as the chosen leadership style to apply in organisations today because groups led by transformational leaders have a higher level of performance and satisfaction than

groups led by other types of leaders (Lussier, 2008:323; Chaparro, 2012:280). The current environment characterised by global economic downturn and organisational instability calls for transformational leadership to prevail at all levels of organisation and all types of organisations (Mathew *et al.*, 2017).

The Likert's 5-point scale is used to measure leadership behaviours of middle managers in the DAFF, which include the four elements of transformational leadership discussed above: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration.

2.6.2 Bennis and Nanus Transformational Leadership Model

Bennis and Nanus (1985) in their study, as cited by Northouse (2015:172) and Rowe and Guerrero (2013:219) asked 90 leaders several questions and from their answers, they developed strategies that can be employed to transform organisations. Bennis and Nanus identified four common approaches that are used by leaders in transforming organisations (Northouse, 2012:197):

- **Vision:** Transforming leaders have a clear, compelling, believable and attractive vision of the future state of their organisations. It was an image of an attractive, realistic and believable future. The vision need to be simple, understandable, beneficial, and energy creating. The compelling nature of the vision touches the experience of followers and pulls them into supporting the organisation. When an organisation has a clear vision, it is easier for people within the organisation to learn how they fit in with the overall direction of the organisation and even the society in general. It empowers them they feel they are significant dimension of a worthwhile enterprise.
- **Social architects:** Transforming leaders are social architects in their organisation. This means they create a shape for the shared meanings maintained by employees within their organisations. These leaders communicate a direction that transforms the organisation's values and norms and are able to mobiles people to accept a new group identity or a new philosophy for their organisations.

- **Trust:** Transforming leaders create trust in their organisations by making their own positions clearly known and then standing by them. Trust has to do with being predictable or reliable, even when situations are uncertain. For organisations, leaders built trust by articulating a direction and then consistently implementing the direction even though there may be a high degree of uncertainty surrounding the vision.
- **Positive self-regard:** Transforming leaders use creative deployment of self through positive self-regard. Leaders know their strength and weaknesses, and they focus on their strength rather than dwelling on their weaknesses. Based on an awareness of their own competence, effective leaders are able to immerse themselves in their tasks and the overarching goals of their organisations. They are able to fuse a sense of self with the work at hand.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) found that to be successful the vision had to grow out of the needs of the entire organisation and to be claimed by those within. Although the leaders play a large role in articulating the vision, the emergence of the vision originates from both the leaders and the followers. Leaders who showed positive self-regard had a reciprocal impact on followers, creating in them feelings of confidence and high expectations. In addition, leaders in the study were committed to learning and relearning, so in their organisations there was consistency emphasis on education.

Bennis and Nanus (1985), Bass and Riggio (2006) and Denning (2007) suggest that a leader should communicate an exciting vision for a future state and that this communication should be reinforced through narratives which model the action required to attain the desired future (as cited by Rahim, 2011:96).

From the above literature, it is evident that transformational leaders in organisations develop a clear, understandable and attainable vision which is widely shared by the employees and through which they are able to find their own roles within the organisation and in larger society. Employees tend to trust leaders with clear values, views and position in relation to the organisation and stand by these even when the going gets tough. Transformational leaders know their strengths and weaknesses and use others to compensate for their weaknesses. Considering all the above it is important

that organisations actively employ transformational leadership as a preferred leadership style in today's' changing global environment.

The Likert's 5-point scale is used to measure leadership behaviours of middle managers which includes three central behaviours: communication, developing a climate of trust and creating empowering opportunities as well as important traits which includes: self-confidence, orientation towards empowerment and vision. The contextual variable, the social architecture or culture will also be measured. The purpose of the study is to determine the relationship between transformational leadership qualities and employee engagement. The next section in the literature review outlines some motivational theories associated with transformational leadership.

2.7 NEED-BASED THEORIES OF MOTIVATION AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Motivational theories are mostly embedded in the concept of needs. Needs are physiological or psychological imbalances that energise and direct behaviour (Wemer & DeSimone, 2011:46). According to Macnow (2016:178), motivation determines which behaviours are critical to pursue, how much effort will be needed and for how long the effort be will be maintained. Montana and Charnov (2008:235) assert that, highly motivated employees can bring substantial increases in productivity and job satisfaction and substantial reduction in absenteeism, tardiness and grievances.

According to Burns (1978), motivation is the driving force behind transformational leadership. Motivation theories, like leadership theories are many and varied. The major ones that are particularly useful in the context of transformational leadership and employee engagement are reviewed below.

2.7.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Abraham Maslow observed that only unsatisfied needs yield a greater influence of motivation and established what is referred to as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Montana & Charnov, 2008:238). Maslow's Theory suggests that needs are arranged in a hierarchy and people are motivated to satisfy certain needs, ranging from basic survival need to complex psychological needs (as cited by Wemer & DeSimone,

2011:48; Marquis & Huston, 2009:424). If the lowest level of need is not met, motivation to meet that need will be the highest priority (Macnow, 2016:178). Maslow's work contributed to the recognition that people are motivated by needs other than economic security in the workplace (Marquis & Huston, 2009:424).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory represented in ascending order of importance as cited by Koontz and Weihrich (2010:289), are the following:

- **Physiological needs.** These are basic needs for sustaining human life itself, such as food, water, warmth, shelter and sleep. According to Maslow, until these needs are satisfied to the degree necessary to maintain life, other needs will not motivate people. The needs are called basic needs because these needs are common to all individuals. They are also called the survival needs because the fulfilment of these needs is necessary for the survival or the existence of all human beings. If these needs are satisfied, then behaviour is aimed at the next level, security needs.
- **Security or safety needs.** People need to be free of physical danger and of the fear of losing a job, property, food or shelter. The organisation can best help employees to satisfy their security needs through good and fair salaries, since it is with these salaries that employees can buy items such as food and housing. When security needs are satisfied then the behaviour tends to be aimed at satisfying social needs.
- **Affiliation or acceptance needs.** Since people are social beings, they need to belong and to be accepted by others. The needs of friendship, intimacy, affection and love from work group, family, friends and romantic relationships. As these needs are satisfied behaviour shifts to satisfying esteem needs.
- **Esteem needs.** According to Maslow, once the people begin to satisfy their needs to belong, they tend to want to be held in esteem both by themselves and by others. This kind of need produces such satisfaction as power, prestige, status and self-confidence. Once esteem needs are satisfied, an individual emphasises satisfying self-actualisation needs.

- **Need for self-actualisation.** Maslow regards this as the highest need in his hierarchy. It is the desire to become what one is capable of becoming. Individuals who have become self-actualised are self-fulfilled, satisfied and have realised all their potential. It is the desire to become what one is capable of becoming to maximise one's potential.

Maslow's Theory suggests that managers may require different motivational techniques to motivate people according to their needs (Albarran, 2016:77). So if the manager wants to motivate an employee, the manager needs first to understand what level of the hierarchy that employee is currently on and focus on satisfying the needs at or above that level (Robbins *et al.*, 2009:145). Maslow's Theory is consistent with the reason people work. In the right environment individuals move from one level to another and do not remain at any level for their entire life (Chesser, 2016:155).

Considering Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, leaders through the *individualised consideration* component of transformational leadership, understand that employees have a variety of needs and their level of motivation in the workplace is determined by the extent to which these needs are met (Gill, 2011:262). The study argues that transformational Leadership Theory suggests that transformational leaders have a clear vision of what needs to be done and are able to communicate it well. Moreover, transformational leaders demonstrate a high level of trust in their employees. By empowering employees to act and take decisions independently, such leaders promote self-actualisation in their employees. In the drive to self-actualisation, the employees move forward towards growth, happiness and satisfaction.

2.7.2 Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

Another extensively discussed need-based theory is the Herzberg Two-Factor Theory. Frederick Herzberg (1959) focused on sources of motivation related to work and work accomplishments (Montana & Charnov, 2008:239). Herzberg (1959) argues that work itself can be a source of motivation for employees and that there is internal or personal need to meet organisational goals (Marquis & Huston, 2009:424). Herzberg (1959) claims that people basic needs can be grouped into two general categories, one focusing on survival needs and another focusing on personal growth needs (Montana &

Charnov, 2008:48). Herzberg (1959) labelled work conditions related to survival needs or dissatisfaction by discomfort as hygiene factors and work conditions related to personal growth needs as motivation factors (Nelson & Quick, 2013:171).

Herzberg (1959) argues that when hygiene factors are met, there is a lack of job dissatisfaction, not an existence of job satisfaction. Likewise, the presence of motivator factors can create feelings of job satisfaction, but absence of motivators does not necessarily cause job dissatisfaction (Wemer & DeSimone, 2011:48). According to Jex and Britt (2014:318-320), the hygiene factors proposed by Herzberg (1959) included aspects of the work environment such as pay, fringe benefits, relations with co-workers and everything else that is distinct from the content of an employee's work and the motivator factors primarily reside in the content of the person's job. Motivator factors included aspects of work environment such as the amount of work inherent in one's work, the amount of discretion one has in carrying out one's job and how intrinsically interesting the work is.

When hygiene factors deteriorate to a level below what an employee considers acceptable, then dissatisfaction is imminent. Bringing the hygiene factors to an acceptable level for an employee can remove dissatisfaction but it will not motivate performance in the long term. When the hygiene factors of policy, supervision, working conditions, relationships and pay are good and adequate, the stage is set for the motivating factors. Motivating factors help create job satisfaction, which in and of itself is the primary motivating factor (Chesser, 2016:156).

The Herzberg Two-Factor theory suggests that leaders should design jobs and policies to satisfy employees' hygiene factors and to design opportunities for growth through challenge and realisable achievement on the motivator level. Factors such as opportunities for advancement, the potential growth, recognitions, achievements, responsibilities and the work itself contribute to good feeling and stimulate employees for better performance. According to Herzberg theory, employees in higher-level positions are more likely to strive for more responsibilities and challenges. Through the *individualised consideration* component, the transformational leaders are able to provide

task structure, if the employee need one or provide nurturance if the employee needs one.

2.7.3 Alderfer's ERG Theory

Following Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Clayton Alderfer developed the ERG Theory, which suggests that individuals have three basic needs: existence, relatedness and growth (Graffin & Moorhead, 2013:95), as further explained below:

- **Existence:** needs that are necessary for human survival, correspond to Maslow's physiological, and security needs.
- **Relatedness:** refers to the need to relate to others and they are similar to Maslow's belongingness and esteem needs.
- **Growth:** refers to the needs of self-development, creativity, growth and competence, which are similar to Maslow's needs for Self-actualisation.

Contrary to Maslow's theory, the ERG Theory suggests that more than one kind of need may motivate a person at the same time. The ERG Theory differs with Maslow's theory in that it has satisfaction-progression and frustration-regression components. Similar to Maslow's Theory, the satisfaction-progression concept of the ERG Theory suggests that after satisfying one category of needs, a person progress to the next level. On the one hand, Maslow's theory suggests that a person remains in the next level until the needs at that level are satisfied, while on the other hand, the ERG theory suggests that a person who is frustrated trying to satisfy a higher level of needs will eventually regress to the preceding level.

According to Kessler (2013:254), the ERG Theory is based on two key components, desire and satisfaction. Employees may desire any or all of the three needs categories mentioned above at any given time. Satisfaction in one category influences the extent to which employees attend to other needs categories. Considering that needs are a relative concept, that is, what fully satisfies the desire of one employee with regards to a needs set, might not satisfy another employee and the order of needs can be different for different employees. What motivates employees and what is most relevant and desired by them, is likely to change over the course of their lives. Effective leaders know

and understand individual employees in order to share and empower them in addition to recognising their achievements. The ERG Theory demonstrates how individualised and varied employees' needs can be and this speaks to the *individualised consideration* component of transformational leadership.

2.7.4 McClelland's Acquired Needs Theory

According to Truxillo *et al.* (2016:329), David McClelland suggests that human motivation is determined by the needs of that person and each person has three basic needs:

- **Needs for achievement:** relates to a person wanting to excel and succeed.
- **Needs for power:** refers to a person wanting to influence others and make an impact.
- **A need for affiliation:** refers to a person wanting to have friendships, to feel accepted and to engage with other. Each individual has a dominant need and that most dominant need is thought to motivate that individual more than the other needs.

Each of these needs is believed to be present in every employee to a certain degree and each is important for leaders to understand and nurture in order to improve productivity. McClelland's Theory suggests that the three needs mentioned above are acquired over time through life experiences. Employees are motivated by these needs, which can be associated with different work roles and preferences. The Theory encourages leaders to identify the presence of these needs in themselves and in employees and to create work environments that are responsive to the respective need profiles of different employees and this relates very well with the *individualised consideration* component of transformational leadership.

The Table in the next page shows a side-by-side comparison of motivation theories discussed, to assist in identifying the similarities.

Table 2.2: A comparison of four need-based theories of motivation

	MASLOW (needs hierarchy)		HERZBERG (two-factor theory)		ALDERFER (two-factor theory)		McClelland (learned needs)
Higher order need	Self-actualisation	Motivators	The work itself -Responsibility -Advancement -Growth		Growth		Need for achievement
	Esteem		Achievement Recognition				Need for power
	Belongingness, social, and love		Quality of inter-personal relations among peers, with supervisors, with subordinates		Relatedness		Need for affiliation
Basic needs	Safety and security	Hygiene factors	Job security	Existence			
	Physiological					Working condition Salary	

Source: (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2012:89)

By recognising that individual needs can be categorised and that there is at least some hierarchical orientation to employees' needs, transformational leaders can begin to understand and even predict what will be motivating to employees. Elegbe (2010:77) asserts that theories of motivation are essentially about employee engagement or commitment. According to Pande and Basak (2015:322), the opportunity to grow and develop is a motivating factor that directly influences employee engagement.

In the next section of the Literature Review, follows the definition of the concept of employee engagement and factors that influence it.

2.8 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Kahn (1990) first coined engagement in an article wherein he discusses psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. Kahn defines personal engagement as "the extent to which people employ and express selves at work and disengagement as the extent to which people withdraw and defend the personal selves at work" (Bridger, 2014:3). Effective leaders are able to identify on time employees who

are disengaged and be able to determine factors that are important to identify areas to improve engagement as low levels of employee engagement can have a detrimental effect on the overall organisational performance.

Employee engagement is drawing attention at the highest levels in organisations today because the challenge facing organisations is not just to keep employees satisfied and retain them, but also to create an environment wherein employees strive to go extra mile and offer discretionary efforts to achieve organisational goals (Cook, 2008:8). In spite of employee engagement receiving this much attention, there is no universally agreed standard definition of this concept, however, words such as involvement, commitment, discretionary effort, collaboration, motivation and performance are commonly used (Bridger, 2014:2).

According to Armstrong (2010:157), “engagement occurs when people are committed to their work and the organisation and motivated to achieve high levels of performance. It has two interrelated aspects: first, job engagement, which takes place when employee exercises discretionary effort because they find their job interesting, challenging and rewarding, and second, organisational engagement, when they identify with values and purpose of the organisation and believe that it is a great place in which to work”. The study deduces that engagement is concerned with employees and their work roles. When employees know how a given job is connected to the overall organisational goal and a sense that everyone is working towards that goal builds a team commitment that results in employees feeling pride in belonging to the organisation.

According to Kahn (1990), the level of employee engagement becomes higher, when employees’ individual needs and their perception of the work context and conditions are aligned (Imperatori, 2017:42). Employees commit to perform duties when they possess the resources necessary to meet their obligations, when the desired benefits are clear and the agreement offers protective guarantees (Truss *et al.*, 2014:58). One study conducted by Xu *et al.* (2011) as cited by Bridger (2014:75) found that leaders who support the team, perform effectively and display integrity more are likely to achieve high employee engagement. Another study by Walumba *et al.* (2011) found that authentic leadership behaviours were significantly related to employee engagement.

According to Dickson (2011:18), employees do not remain engaged without the purposeful effort from the employer to actively address the primary influencers of engagement. Dickson (2011:23) summarises factors that have been proven to influence employee engagement into the following four key categories of engagement:

- **Organisational pride:** An engaged employee will feel pride in the organisation and will recommend it to others as a good employer or business partner.
- **Commitment:** Commitment is influenced by the extent to which an employee is involved in decision making that impact on work role, opportunities for development and the perceived trustworthiness of the leader. Engaged employees are so committed to routinely go “above and beyond” what is expected to help the organisation succeed.
- **Belonging and fit:** An employee’s sense of belonging or fit is influenced by the relationship with co-workers, preparedness to do the work required and values match. Engaged employees feel valued and in alignment with the organisations norms for behaviour.
- **Alignment:** An employee understands the organisational goals and customer value proposition and specifically how his or her role affects them. The level and quality of performance feedback influences alignment.

Dickson (2011:53) asserts that there is no single action that will increase or sustain employee engagement, focusing attention on all four categories of engagement will lead to a higher employee engagement. Phillips and Gully (2014:451) warn managers to be aware that what attract people to join the organisation is not always the same as what keeps them engaged and keeps them from leaving. The next section discusses the three models of employee engagement.

2.9 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT MODELS

This section discusses the three main models that are dealing with the process of employee engagement.

2.9.1 The Personal Engagement Model

According to Truss *et al.* (2014:5), Kahn (1990) identified meaningfulness, safety and availability as the three psychological conditions that underpin engagement models. Kahn (1990) and Hackman and Oldham (1980) as cited by Imperatori (2017:42) assert that psychological meaningfulness occurs when people have a feeling that their work is worthwhile and have a sense of value in their accomplishments at work.

Psychological safety is the ability to recognise one's preferred self and not fearing the negative consequence of engagement on their self-image, status and careers, while psychological availability occurs when people believe they have the right emotional, cognitive or physical resources to engage. These three psychological conditions have various antecedents. Schreuder and Coetzee (2011:276) list the following:

- **Psychological meaningfulness:** work-role fit, job enrichment and relationship with colleagues.
- **Psychological safety:** relationships with supervisors and colleagues, and norm
- **Psychological availability:** physical, cognitive and emotional resources.

Kahn (1990) posits that in order to achieve optimal level of engagement from employees, all three psychological conditions of engagement must be satisfied. According to Ghafoor *et al.* (2011), employee engagement practiced under transformational leadership develops the positivity in behaviour that leads to trust and satisfaction that enhances sense of belongingness.

2.9.2 The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

According to Bauer and Hämmig (2013:44), Demerouti *et al.* (2001) first introduced the JD-R model. The JD-R model suggests that, the main contributing factors to employee well-being can be conceptualised as either job demands or job resources (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:89) and furthermore, engagement is greatest when job demands are challenging but only when matched to adequate job resources (Jawad & Scott-Jackson, 2016:132).

According to Demerouti *et al.* (2001), job demands are physical, physiological or organisational aspects of the job that require sustained effort, for example, work load

and emotional demands and are therefore associated with physiological or psychological costs. Bakker (2011) and Bakker and Demerouti (2007) as cited by Chen and Cooper (2014:45), refer to job resources as those that are physical, physiological or organisational aspects of the job that:

- reduce job demands and associated physiological and psychological costs;
- are functional in achieving work goals; and
- stimulate personal growth, learning and development.

According to Chen and Cooper (2014:44), the JD-R model has been used to predict job burnout, organisational commitment, work enjoyment, connectedness and work engagement. The JD-R model has also been used to predict consequences of the experiences, including sickness absenteeism and job performance. High job demands put a lot of strain on employees' mental and physical resources, and therefore leads to depletion of energy and to help problems and contrary, job resources foster employee engagement and extra-role performance (Oeij *et al.*, 2017:68).

2.9.3 Self-determination Theory

The Self-determination Theory identifies three basic physiological needs, which are (Gagné, 2014:182-188):

- **Competence:** refers to the needs for a sense of proficiency and feeling of effectiveness. Transformational leaders may through the *Inspirational Motivation* component help satisfy employees' needs for competence by encouraging challenging but achievable goals and overcoming obstacles to high performance. When employees remove barriers in their way to achieving goals, they may be more effective at reaching these goals, resulting in feeling of competence, resilience and efficacy.
- **Autonomy:** choosing to engage in behaviour that is compatible with one's values, out of personal interest or expression. Leaders promote autonomy through the *Intellectual Stimulation* component of transformational leadership, whereby leaders encourage employees to think for themselves and develop their own strategies for approaching their work.

- **Relatedness:** feeling connected with others and feeling interdependent with others and feeling a sense of belonging to a group or with other individuals. Employees' need for relatedness may be satisfied through the *Individualised Consideration* component of transformational leadership, whereby leaders develop positive relationship with employees that are characterised by respect, support and caring. Leaders may through the *Idealised Influence* component of transformational leadership, also promote relatedness by communicating a shared vision, which may foster a sense of togetherness among workers.

According to Meyer and Gagné (2008), as cited by Byrne (2015:61), employees become engaged because it makes them feel self-determined that they are competent, in control and intrinsically rewarded by the work they do. The degree to which these three human needs are met determines the quality of one's motivation (Power *et al.* 2008:427). Investigating employee engagement within self-determination theory framework, Wiedemann (2016) found that self-determination- theory –need- satisfaction is positively related to employee engagement. Therefore, through the application of self-determination theory, transformational leaders are more likely to influence employee engagement positively.

2.10 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

According to Sarlak (2010:102), researchers continue to grow awareness of the importance of transformational leadership in nurturing and maintaining employee engagement. Employee engagement practiced under transformational leadership develops the positivity in behaviour that leads to trust and satisfaction that enhances sense of belongingness (Pontefract, 2013:10). Macey and Schneider (2008), as cited by Leonard *et al.* (2016:164), suggest that transformational leadership behaviours would be key driver of employee engagement. A diary study by Tims *et al.* (2011) over 5 days indicated that daily perceptions of transformational leadership related positively to employees' daily engagement, an effect fully mediated by the leaders' optimism (Bridger, 2014:74). According to Xanthopoulou *et al.* (2009) as cited by Schreuder and

Coetzee (2011:246), higher optimism and lower pessimism were found to be positively linked to employee engagement. Vincent-Höper *et al.* (2012), in their examination of gender difference in the effects of transformational leadership on perceived career engagement, found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and engagement and women reported a higher correlation than men (Byrne, 2015:50).

Kahn (1990) identifies meaningfulness, safety and availability as critical psychological conditions that contribute to engagement (Risberg *et al.*, 2016:135). According to Kahn (1990), satisfaction of these three psychological conditions allows employees to employ and express their identity in their work and engage in the work role (Regelberg, 2016:404). The first empirical study to investigate Kahn's theory of engagement conducted by May *et al.* (2004) found that when considered together, the three psychological conditions were significantly and uniquely related to engagement (Truss *et al.*, 2014:72).

In Kahn's definition, psychological meaningfulness is referred to as "a feeling that one is receiving a return on investment of one's self in a currency of physical, cognitive or emotional energy" (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011:246). According to Cartwright and Cooper (2009:422), transformational leaders can promote this meaningfulness through their vision for their teams and the organisation. Judge and Piccolo (2004) argue that by providing this vision and by generating acceptance and awareness of organisational values, transformational leaders help to broaden and elevate the interest of employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group (as cited by Ashkanasy *et al.*, 2011:173). Transformational leaders inspirationally motivate their followers and enhance their wellbeing through giving them a sense of meaningfulness (Joseph, 2015:345).

A study by Arnold *et al.* (2007) as cited by Burke *et al.* (2015: 224) found transformational leadership to be positively associated with meaningfulness at work. Vance (2006) suggests that the experience of meaningful work, opportunities to learn and opportunities for social interaction in the workplace are antecedents of employee

engagement (Denny and Seddon, 2014:79). Rothman and Hamukang'andu (2013) showed that work role fit resulted in the experience of psychological meaningfulness and engagement (Burke *et al.*, 2015:219). Shamir *et al.* (1993) have argued that transformational leaders give meaningfulness to work by infusing work and organisations with moral purpose and commitment (Truss *et al.*, 2014:73). The Likert's 5-point scale is used to measure constructs that theoretically fit the description of psychological meaningfulness which include job challenge, variety, feedback, role fit, opportunities for development, and rewards and recognition.

According to Truss *et al.* (2014:63), transformational leadership corresponds theoretically with Kahn's conceptualisation of psychological safety. Kahn (1990) defines psychological safety as "an employee's sense of being able to show and be one's self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status or career (Castellano, 2013:133). Kahn (1990) found that support, trust and openness in interpersonal relationships at work, group dynamics, management style and organisational norms are likely to promote psychological safety. Consistent with Kahn (1990, 1992), a study by May *et al.* (2004) showed that supportive co-worker interactions are significantly associated with engagement, with this relationship mediated by psychological safety. For the purpose of this study, the Likert's 5-point scale is used to measure constructs that theoretically fit the description of psychological safety which include workplace climates and norms, social support, leadership styles, job security and organisational justice.

Dutton *et al.* (1997) as cited by Cameron and Spreitzer (2013:495) found that middle managers were more likely to speak up about issues to top management based on their assessment of psychological safety. When they viewed the environment as unsafe with ambiguous, unpredictable and threatening conditions, they were likely to disengage from the work and would be more cautious to try things. A study by Detert and Burris (2007) as cited by Wilkinson *et al.* (2014:468) found that managers' openness and transformational leadership were positively associated to employees' level of voice and that these relationships were partially mediated by psychological safety. Shin *et al.*

(2012) suggest that transformational leadership, in particular the *individualised consideration* element, authentic leadership and benevolent leadership may increase employees' perception of psychological safety (Shalley *et al.*, 2015:27).

Kahn (1990) defines the third antecedent of engagement, psychological availability as “the extent to which employees are able to engage themselves at work as a result of the level of various resources they have available to them” (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2014: 469). According to May *et al.* (2004) as cited by Jawad and Scott-Jackson (2016:132), availability of physical, emotional and cognitive resources all contributed to psychological availability and employee engagement. Castellano (2013:134) argues that employees who have a clear understanding about their role, have flexibility regarding how to accomplish the objectives and who have support of managers and co-workers will be more psychologically available and engaged. As Cartwright and Cooper (2009:425) put it, transformational leadership behaviours influence employee engagement by influencing employees' perceptions of psychological availability, relating to psychological insecurities about role performances. Work stress and burnout could be a great challenge to employees' psychological availability and employee engagement and could influence their authentic happiness (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011:276). For the purpose of this study, the Likert's 5-point scale is used to measure the constructs that theoretically fit the description of psychological availability which include role overload, work-role conflict, and family-work conflict, resource inadequacies, time urgency, off-work recovery, individual dispositions and personal resources.

From the literature, it is clear that leaders who display transformational leadership behaviours are more likely to create the highest levels of individual, group and organisational performance and thus fostering employee engagement. Employee engagement may drop when the leader is perceived as someone who avoids responsibility by passing his own tasks to the employees.

Based on the argument above, the hypothesis area in the next page will guide the analysis of data.

H₀: There exists no relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement.

H₁: There exists a relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement.

2.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter was devoted to locating employee engagement and transformational leadership within the Public Administration as discipline and public administration as function. In addition, this chapter has reviewed two research questions:

- The theoretical framework for employee engagement and transformational leadership. In order to address this question, different leadership theories and leadership styles were reviewed.
- Nature of the relationship between employee engagement and transformational leadership. In order to address this question, transformational leadership models, need-based theories of motivation and employee engagement models were reviewed.

Overall, the collective research illustrates that engaged employees give more of what they have to offer and as a result engaged workforce is more a productive one. This relationship could largely be attributed to the effects of transformational leadership behaviours.

The transformational leadership behaviours are likely to positively influence the three psychological conditions as described by Kahn (1990) more than any other types of leadership behaviours. From the literature, it is clear that transformational leaders display four important behaviours: *idealised influence*, *inspirational motivation*, *intellectual stimulation* and *individualised consideration*, which along with followers' positive reactions can create the highest levels of individual, group and organisational performance. Interestingly, transformational leadership has been proven a highly effective leadership style and it can be taught to others.

The key to moving employees to full engagement is the satisfaction of employees' basic psychological needs. This chapter discussed the needs-based theories of motivation and their link to the three psychological conditions (meaningfulness, safety and availability), which when satisfied by transformational leaders can positively influence employee engagement. Understanding and supporting the basic psychological needs of employees by managers play a critical role in promoting a healthy and productive work place.

The next chapter discusses the Research Methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided critical review and evaluation of transformational leadership theory, employee engagement theories and need-based theories of motivation and established the theoretical relationship between these conceptual frameworks. This chapter describes the research design of the study, including the area of study. The characteristics of the population and the sample are also discussed. Furthermore, the Chapter explains the data collection instrument and methods implemented to maintain reliability and validity of the instrument. Research objectives, questions and the hypothesis are also put forward.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Grove *et al.* (2014:45) describe a research design as “a blueprint for the conduct of a study that maximises control over factors that could interfere with the study’s desired outcome”. The research design is the plan that specifies and structures strategies for collecting, analysing data, interpretation and reporting the findings to answer a research question. For the purpose of this study, a quantitative research design was applied. According to Lichtman (2014:9), a quantitative research design focuses on testing the hypotheses, examining cause and effect, and statistical analysis. Quantitative designs can be experimental, quasi-experimental and non-experimental (Andrew *et al.*, 2011:47). This study applied an exploratory non-experimental design with DAFF’s MMS members on post levels 11 and 12.

3.3 AREA OF STUDY

The study was conducted in the DAFF. The Annual Report indicates that the DAFF employs 5 440 employees (DAFF, 2017:141). Table 3.1 in the next page provides an overview of DAFF employees.

Table 3.1: Total number of employees in the DAFF per occupational category as on 31 March 2017

Occupational Category	Male				Female				Total
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White	
Top management (levels 15-16)	6	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	9
Senior management (levels 13-14)	39	6	0	4	33	4	3	8	97
Professionally qualified and experienced specialist and middle management (levels 9-12)	456	32	12	112	370	36	12	81	1111
Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior management, supervisors, foremen (levels 6-8)	540	127	8	93	659	59	12	139	1637
Semi-skilled and discretionary decision making (levels 3-5)	697	71	0	13	353	46	3	16	1199
Unskilled and defined decision making (levels 1-2)	679	28	0	0	658	21	0	1	1387
Total	2,417	264	20	222	2,075	166	30	246	5,440

Source: DAFF (2017:141)

3.4 THE POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

According to Hickey and Brosnan (2012:161), population refers to a group of people who have a common characteristic, such as age, geography, political boundaries, race/ethnicity, religion, environmental exposures, occupation, education, and sexual preference. The population for this study consisted of all members of MMS of the DAFF on post levels 11 and 12. According to the DAFF Annual Plan (2017:29), the population size of study comprises 397 MMS members, 249 members on level 11 and 148 members on level 12. Personnel records on salary levels 11 and 12 were obtained from the Directorate: Human Resource Management of the DAFF. The demographic information that influenced the sampling frame for the study is presented in the Table below.

Table 3.2: Demographic information of middle managers in the DAFF

			Middle Management				TOTAL
			Black	Coloured	Indian	White	
Gender	Female	Count	85	16	5	40	146
		% within Gender	58.20%	11.00%	3.50%	27.30%	100%
	Male	Count	173	14	5	59	251
		% within Gender	69.00%	5.40%	2.00%	23.50%	100%
TOTAL		Count	258	30	10	99	397
		% within Gender	65.00%	7.50%	2.60%	24.90%	100%

Source: DAFF (2017: 29)

Table 3.3: Middle managers of the DAFF per gender and salary levels

			Middle Management		TOTAL
			Salary level 11	Salary level 12	
Gender	Female	Count	91	56	147
		% within Gender	62.20%	37.80%	100%
	Male	Count	158	92	250
		% within Gender	62.90%	37.10%	100%
TOTAL		Count	249	148	397
		% within Gender	63%	37%	100%

Source: DAFF (2017, 29)

The above Table was be used to determine a representative sample for the study based on salary levels, race and gender. The study targeted a sample of 100 MMS members in collecting data. The MMS members were identified by way of a stratified random sampling process to participate in the study. Stratified random sampling is the process of creating mutually exclusive and exhaustive strata according to characteristics such as sex or race and selecting a random sample from each of the strata, and finally combining these into a sample to estimate the population parameters (Hulley *et al.*, 2011:33).

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

A self-administered questionnaire was constructed based on the literature review and was used as data collection method. A self-administered questionnaire consists of questions that individual participants complete by themselves in the absence of the researcher (Phillips *et al.*, 2013:3). This method was chosen because questionnaires could easily be distributed to participants by e-mail.

Mitchell and Jolley (2009:263), however argue that surveys that rely on self-administered questionnaires have a low return rate. To secure a higher return rate for this study, reminders were sent twice by e-mails to participants to respond and several direct phone calls were made to those participants who had not read their e-mails or not indicated their intentions not to participate. The data was collected over a period of two weeks, from 29 September 2017 to 13 October 2017.

The Table below depicts the 78 MMS members who willingly participated in the study, while 22 members declined to participate.

Table 3.4: Response rate by salary levels, race and gender

			Middle Management		TOTAL
			Salary level 11	Salary level 12	
Gender	Female	Count	18	14	32
		% within Gender	56.25%	43.75%	100%
	Male	Count	28	18	46
		% within Gender	60.87%	39.13%	100%
TOTAL		Count	46	32	78
		% within Gender	59%	41%	100%

A response rate of seventy-eight percent (78%) as depicted in the Table above is regarded as relatively high as supported by Maxfield and Babbie (2017:245) who contend that a response rate of 70 percent is good. Jackson (2015:93) asserts that a good response rate is necessary to maintain a representative sample.

3.5.1 Structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised of the following three parts:

- Part A: Biographical details;
- Part B: Multifactor leadership questions; and
- Part C: Employee engagement questions.

The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter detailing the topic of the research, a description of the questionnaire and the consent form outlining the purpose and objectives of the research and pertinent information relating to the rights and expectations of the participants. Participants indicated their voluntary participation by ticking the consent box included in the questionnaire.

3.5.1.1 Part A: Biographical details

This section was dedicated to acquiring specific personal information which participants were required to complete, as dictated by the sampling frame for the study, namely: location of the position, length of service in the government sector, length of service in the position, age, race, gender, salary level, home language, highest level of education.

This information will be used to describe the characteristics of the sample and is provided for in the following chapter.

3.5.1.2 Part B: Multifactor leadership questions

The purpose of this section was to obtain an accurate description of middle managers' leadership style, as they perceive it and to examine how it is related to other styles of leadership using an adapted version of Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). Bass (1985) developed the MLQ around Burns's (1978) thought of transformational and transactional leadership as being at opposite ends of the spectrum. The widespread use of the MLQ over the years and the sufficient feedback from users has helped to improve the MLQ to become increasingly reliable quantitative instrument to measure the transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership constructs.

According to Bryman *et al.* (2011:86), the original Bass (1985) model of the MLQ had only three factors related to transformational leadership, namely, charismatic leadership, individual consideration and intellectual stimulation. The current refined MLQ-Form 5X includes the following four transformational behaviour components as described in Chapter 2:

- Idealised Influence (Attributes and Behaviours);
- Inspirational Motivation;
- Intellectual Stimulation, and
- Individualised Consideration.

These five factors of transformational leadership have been measured because they are associated with the increased employee motivation, satisfaction and results (Belasen *et al.*, 2015:07). In addition to transformational leadership, the MLQ measured transactional leadership, which is mainly based on contingent reinforcement. The following two factors as described in Chapter 2 are related to transactional leadership:

- Contingent reward, and
- Management-by-exception.

Leaders who recognise and reward employees for good performance exhibit contingent reward behaviours (Beauchamp & Eys, 2014:59). According to Woods and West (2010:452), combining all five components of transformational leadership and the contingent reward component of transactional leadership is likely to improve leadership effectiveness, innovation, employee commitment and engagement, and employee wellbeing. The other component of transactional leadership, management-by-exception entails the leader recognising the employees' mistakes. When taken together, contingent reward and management-by exception are concerned with ensuring that things are done right.

To account for all potential Full-Range Leadership (FRL) behaviours, a scale of non-leadership was adopted to indicate an absence of leadership, namely passive/avoidant (*laissez-fair*) leadership (Bass, 1998). Leaders adopt this type of leadership style when they must oversee a large group of employees or where the task is simple, predictable and structured. Central to the FRL model is the assumption that every leader exhibits each style to some extent, and the model represents how often a leader exhibits a particular style of leadership. The passive/avoidant type of leadership has been described in detail in the previous chapter.

Leadership styles immensely contribute to the employees' motivation. The two types of leadership, transformational and transactional, seek to accomplish organisational goals by motivating employees on a continuum that ranges from extrinsic to intrinsic values (Belasen *et al.*, 2015:79). Intrinsic motivation is internally driven and therefore, the focus is in the work itself like the recognition of a task completed. The employees perceive the work content as satisfactory and fulfilling. The four components of transformational leadership are likely to boost the intrinsic motivation of employees by energising them to perform beyond expectations, developing their capabilities, giving direction, and encouraging them to be creative (Shalley *et al.*, 2015:19). In contrast, extrinsic motivation is externally driven and the focus maybe on financial income, promotion, recognition, time off or relation with co-workers.

The adapted version of MLQ used a five-point Likert-type measuring scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) to measure the three types of leadership styles, transformational, transactional and laissez-faire in Part B:

- Items 1, 11 and 17 measured *Idealised Influence* (Attributes), while items 4, 10 and 15 measured *Idealised Influence* (Behaviours). Items 9, 14 and 19, measured *Inspirational Motivation*. Items 3, 16 and 20, measured *intellectual Stimulation*. Items 8, 18 and 23, measured *Individualised Consideration*.
- Items 2, 7 and 22, measured Contingent Reward and Management-by-Exception (Active) was measure by items 6 and 12.
- Management-by-Exception (Passive) was measured by item 21 and items 5, 13 and 24, measured laissez-faire leadership.

The next section discusses employee engagement questions.

3.5.1.3 Part C: Employee engagement questions

The purpose of this section was to obtain an accurate picture of the level of employees' engagement with their job as perceived by the manager. A five-point Likert-type measuring scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) was used to measure the three psychological conditions of employee engagement as described by Truss *et al.* (2014:59-68):

This section measured job challenge, autonomy, job variety, feedback, and work-role fit, opportunity for development, and rewards and recognition as antecedents of Psychological meaningfulness. The items corresponding to these factors were as follows: job challenge (items 26, 31), autonomy (items 12, 29), job variety (item 30), feedback (items 6, 15), work-role fit (items 19, 28), opportunities for development (items 4, 23), and finally, rewards and recognition (items 11, 13, 24). These factors are positively associated with increased engagement because they offer opportunities and incentives for individuals to express more of their preferred self in work role performances (Trust *et al.*, 2014:59).

The following antecedents of psychological safety were measured, leadership, social support, workplace climate and norms, organisational justice, and job security. The items corresponding to these factors were as follows: leadership (items 17, 25), social support (items 2, 7, 18), workplace climate and norms (item 8), organisational justice (items 5, 20), and job security (items 3, 21). These factors are positively associated with increased engagement because they contribute to more supportive, predictable, and non-threatening situations in which individuals perceive they can try and perhaps fail without fearing negative consequences (Trust *et al.*, 2014:59).

Lastly, psychological availability was measured by role overload, work-role conflict, family-work conflict and resource inadequacy. The items corresponding to these factors were as follows: role overload (items 14, 22), work-role conflict (items 9, 16), family-work conflict (items 10, 27), and resource inadequacy (items 1, 32). These factors are positively associated with increased engagement because when employees believe, based on their self-assessment and individual distractions, that they possess the personal energies necessary to fulfil the obligations of their work-roles; they are more likely to be able and willing to invest those energies in the service of their work role performances (Trust *et al.*, 2014:59).

3.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

As was described in chapter 1, reliability and validity are fundamental concerns in all quantitative research designs. According to Muijs (2011:61), reliability is the extent to which scores are free from measurement error. If the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered reliable. A degree of reliability is represented by a reliability coefficient, which is a numerical index of reliability and it ranges between 0 and 1. The closer a reliability coefficient is to positive 1, the more reliable the measure is (Baumgartner *et al.*, 2015:92). According to LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (2014:298), a measurement instrument is considered reliable if the reliability coefficient is 0.70 or above. For this study internal consistency, reliability coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha as depicted in the following chapter. The internal consistency reliability coefficient refers

to the degree to which scores among scale items, and scores among items, correlate with each other (Rubin & Babbie, 2009:83).

The next Table provides a guideline for the interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha as a measure of internal consistency.

Table 3.5: Cronbach's Alpha interpretation guide

Cronbach's alpha coefficient value range	Interpretation
$\alpha \geq 0.90$	Excellent (High-stakes testing)
$0.70 \leq \alpha < 0.90$	Good (Low-stakes testing)
$0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.70$	Acceptable
$0.50 \leq \alpha < 0.60$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.50$	Unacceptable

Source: Sirakaya-Turk *et al.* (2017:338)

The second characteristic of good measurement is validity. Validity determines whether the study truly measures that which it was intended to measure and if there are no logical errors in drawing conclusions from the data (Moutinho & Hutcheson, 2011: 327). There are two types of validity, namely internal and external validity. Carter and Lubinsky (2015: 76) describe internal validity as an extent to which the results of a study demonstrate that a causal relationship exists between the independent and the dependent variables. External validity refers to the extent to which the design produces results that could be generalised to different participants, places, and time periods (Mitchell & Jolley, 2009:55). The quality of the results of a study is related directly to the quality of the instrument used to collect data, it is therefore important to collect data by means of a reliable and valid instrument. Like reliability coefficient, a validity coefficient ranges from 0 to 1. A validity coefficient is acceptable if it is above 0.80 (Thompson, 2013:46). To determine validity, exploratory factor analysis was used and the results are described in the following chapter.

3.7 PILOTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Piloting the questionnaire is important when data are to be collected using self-administered questionnaires because a researcher will not be available to clarify question meaning or probe incomplete answers (Reis & Judd, 2014:428). A pilot

utilising 10 officials of the DAFF, excluded from the final data analysis, with similar characteristics to the sample was conducted to determine the clarity of items and consistency of the responses. All 10 officials answered the questions and no single question was changed following the pilot.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

An excel spreadsheet was used for data organisation and the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software was used to provide in-depth, faster and accurate data analysis. The quantitative data was analysed in cooperation with the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University. Data analysis includes both descriptive and inferential statistics.

3.8.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to organise and summarise the data collected from the sample of study. As stated by Scott and Mazhindu (2014:44), producing the descriptive statistics enables the researcher to understand whether the sort of data wanted has been captured. Descriptive statistics describe the sample using measures of central tendency such as the mean, mode and median, and measures of dispersion such as the range, standard deviation and the variance (O'Donoghue, 2013:33). The standard deviation measures how spread is the data around the mean and it is considered the most important measure of dispersion. The standard deviation results are provided for in the following chapter.

3.8.2 Inferential statistics

Inferential statistics will be used to make inferences from the stratified random sample of members of the MMS to the larger population and to measure how likely it is that the results are due to chance. According to Urdan (2011:60), inferential statistics are “statistics that are generated from sample data that are used to make inferences about the characteristics of the population the sample is alleged to represent”. Inferential statistics are concerned with both the validity of the stated hypothesis and drawing of conclusions based on the observed data (Butt *et al.*, 2009:33). A Chi-Square test for Contingency tables will be used to determine whether a relationship observed in the

study is statistically significant. A finding is statistically significant when the evidence supports the alternative hypothesis rather than the null hypothesis (Johnson & Christensen, 2010:511).

3.9 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses guide the analysis of data.

H₀: There exists no relationship between middle management's transformational leadership qualities and employee engagement.

H₁: There exists a relationship between middle management's transformational leadership qualities and employee engagement.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter was devoted to data collection and it further addresses the research question:

- The leadership qualities that middle managers in the DAFF could use to enhance employee engagement.

In order to address this question, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Employee Engagement Questionnaire were developed. The MLQ is composed of scales that measure the transformational, transactional and passive/avoidant (laisses-faire) leadership qualities of the middle managers in the DAFF. Employee Engagement Questionnaire is composed of scales that measure the three psychological conditions of employee engagement. Measuring these key drivers of engagement helps to assess whether employees within DAFF are engaged or disengaged as perceived by middle managers.

This self-administered questionnaire was pilot tested for data collection with 10 DAFF officials who completed the questionnaire and no changes were suggested. The questionnaire was sent by e-mail to a sample of 100 members of the MMS in post levels

11 and 12, who were identified by way of stratified random sampling procedure. A response rate of 78% was achieved.

This chapter described the population of study, the sample and the data collection instruments. The chapter further described how reliability and validity of the research instruments would be tested by using statistical methods. The rearrangement of data into more useful form will be done by using descriptive statistics, while inferential statistics will enable the researcher to develop generalisations, estimations or predictions concerning the population of interest. The relevant hypotheses were also presented.

The ensuing chapter discusses and reports on the research findings that emanated from the data collection instrument.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided an overview of persons employed by the DAFF per occupational category, the population of study, the sample, data collection instruments and methods. Participants were classified according to salary levels, race and gender. A response rate of seventy-eight percent was achieved. This chapter presents the descriptive statistics, inferential analysis and presents the research findings according to the themes specified in chapter 2.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The study sought to acquire specific personal information which participants were required to complete, as dictated by the sampling frame for the study, namely: location of the position, length of service in the government sector, length of service in the position, age, race, gender, salary level, home language, highest level of education. This information will be used to describe the characteristics of the sample and is provided for in the following sections.

4.2.1 Workstation of the participants

The study sought to find out the workstations of the participants related to where they were employed.

Table 4.1: Workstation of the participants

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Location	Headquarters	59	75.6
	Regions	14	18.0
	Other	5	6.4

From Table 4.1 above, most of the participants were located at the headquarters at 75.6% of the Department, regional placements comprised 18.0% of the participants and participants who are placed at other places contributed 6.4%. Other places could include Beitbridge, Lebombo, Golela, Nakop, Vioolsdrift and Ramatlabama.

4.2.2 Gender of participants

The gender of participants is presented in the Table 4.2 below. Response rate per gender of participants is also presented.

Table 4.2: Gender and response rate of the participants

Item	Category	Population	Sample	Frequency	Resp. rate
Gender	Male	250	63	45	71
	Female	147	37	33	70

The above Table reflects the response rates of males and females to be 71 and 70 percent respectively. Rubin and Babbie (2009:117) consider a response rate of at least 50 percent to be *adequate* for analysis and reporting, a response rate of at least 60 percent as *good*, and response rate of at least 70 percent as *very good*. The representativeness of the sample participants is very good and therefore generalisations of findings to the population can be made.

4.2.3 Language of the participants

The study sought to find out the home language spoken by participants.

Table 4.3: Language of the participants

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Language	Afrikaans	16	20.5
	English	15	19.2
	Sepedi	12	15.3
	Tshivenda	8	10.3
	isiXhosa	7	9.0
	Setswana	7	9.0
	isiZulu	5	6.4
	Xitsonga	5	6.4
	Sesotho	2	2.6
	isiNdebele	1	1.3
	isiSwati	0	0.0
	Other	0	0.0

From Table 4.3 in the previous page, it is evident that most participants spoke Afrikaans, at 20.5% followed by English and Sepedi, at 19.2% and 15.4% respectively. The least spoken language is isiNdebele at 1.3%. The isiSwati language is not spoken at all. However, all African languages combined contribute 60.3% while English and Afrikaans combined contribute 39.7%. The representativeness of the sample participants is very good because Africans contribute 65% of the total population while Coloured, Indians and Whites contribute 35%. The response rate of the participants who use Africa languages as home language and non-African languages (English and Afrikaans) is 88% and 92% respectively.

4.2.4 Race of the participants

Table 4.4 presents the frequency of the participants per race as well as the response rate.

Table 4.4: Race of the participants

Item	Category	Population	Sample	Frequency	Res. rate
Race	African	258	65	50	76.9
	Coloured	30	7	7	100
	Indian	10	3	3	100
	White	99	25	18	72
	Other	0	0	0	0.0

From the above Table, Coloured and Indian groups achieved 100 percent response rate, while Africans and Whites achieved 76.9 and 72 percent respectively. The representativeness of the sample participants is very good and therefore generalisations of findings to the population can be made (Rubin and Babbie (2009:117).

4.2.5 Age of the participants

The study sought to find out the age group of the participants.

Table 4.5: Age of the participants

Item	Category	Population	Sample	Frequency	Res. rate
Age	18-25 years	1	1	0	0.0
	26-35 years	63	14	11	78.6%
	36-45 years	17	42	34	81%
	46-55 years	110	30	24	80%
	56-65 years	44	13	9	69%
	Older than 65 years	0	0	0	0.0%

From Table 4.5 in the previous page, response rate per different age categories is very good. The representativeness of the sample participants is very good and therefore generalisations of findings to the population can be made (Rubin and Babbie 2009:117).

4.2.6 Educational level of the participants

The study sought to know the level of education of the participants.

Table 4.6: Educational level of the participants

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Educational level	Grade 12/ Matric	0	0.0
	Certificate/Diploma	6	7.7
	Advanced Cert/Diploma	1	1.3
	Bachelor's Degree	11	14.1
	Honours Degree	22	28.2
	Master's Degree	33	42.3
	Doctorate	5	6.4
	Other	0	0.0

Table 4.6 above shows that participants who have Master's Degrees contributes 42.3%, followed by participants with Honours Degrees at 28.2%, Bachelor's Degree at 14.1%, Certificate/Diploma at 7.7%, Doctorates at 6.4% and Advanced Certificate or Diploma at 1.3%.

4.2.7 Salary level of the participants

The study sought to know the salary level of the participant. Table 4.3 below also presents the response rates per salary level.

Table 4.7: Salary levels of the participants

Item	Category	Population	Sample	Frequency	Resp. rate
Salary level	Level 11	249	63	46	73
	Level 12	148	37	32	86

In Table 4.7, the response rate of participants on salary levels 11 and 12 to be 73 and 86 percent respectively. The representativeness of the sample participants is very good and therefore generalisations of findings to the population can be made (Rubin and Babbie, 2009:117).

4.2.8 Years of service in government for the participants

The study sought to find out how long the participant had worked in a government sector.

Table 4.8: Years of service in government for the participants

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Years of service in a government sector	0-5 years	8	10.3
	6-10 years	15	19.0
	11-15 years	20	25.6
	16-20 years	14	18.0
	21-25 years	10	13.0
	25+ years	11	14.1

Table 4.8 above shows that most of the participants had worked in a government sector for 11 to 15 years (25.6%), followed by participants who had worked 6 to 10 years (19%). It is evident that only 10.3% of the participants had worked for 5 years or less in government sector. It can be concluded from the Table above that largely the participants have worked for six years or more.

4.2.9 Years of service in the current job

The study sought to find out how long the participants had worked in the current job. Table 19 below presents the frequency and the percentage of years of service in the current job categories.

Table 4.9: Years of service in the current job

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Years of service in current job	0-5 years	26	33.3
	6-10 years	30	38.5
	11-15 years	10	12.8
	16-20 years	4	5.1
	21-25 years	4	5.1
	25+years	4	5.1

Table 4.9 shows that more participants who had worked in the current job for 6 to 10 years (38.1%). Those participants who had worked in the current job for 5 years or less contributed 33.3%. It can be concluded from the Table above that 66.7% of the participants have been in their current job for six years or more.

4.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The objective of the study is to determine an accurate description of the leadership qualities MMS members of the DAFF and to examine how they relate to different styles of leadership, and to obtain an accurate picture of the level of employee engagement associated with different leadership styles as perceived by the MMS members. The means and standard deviations were determined by means of descriptive statistical techniques.

Means for the statements were calculated in order to provide a general perception of the participants. Means greater or equal to 1 and less than 1.5 implied that the participants strongly disagreed with the statement. Means greater or equal to 1.5 and less than 2.5 implied that the participants disagreed with the statement. Means greater or equal to 2.5 and less than 3.5 implied that the participants were undecided on the statement. Means greater or equal to 3.5 and less than 4.5 implied that the participants

agreed with the statement. Means greater or equal to 4.5 and less or equal to 5 implied that the participants strongly agreed with the statement.

The standard deviation (SD) measures the variability of responses around the mean. It measures how far the individual responses to each statement vary from the mean. The SD of less than 0.5 indicates the responses are concentrated around the mean. The SD of greater than 0.5 and less than 1 indicates that the responses are moderately distributed, while the SD greater than 1 indicates that there is no consensus.

4.3.1 Measures of central tendency and the standard deviation for the leadership styles

The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which the statements in the questionnaire applied to them from (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Undecided, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree.

Table 4.10: Measures of central tendency and standard deviation for leadership styles

Statements	Min	Max	Mean	SD
L1. I act in ways that build other's respect for me.	3	5	4.40	0.610
L2. I express satisfaction when others meet expectations.	3	5	4.50	0.619
L3. I get others to look at problems from many different angles.	3	5	4.27	0.617
L4. I emphasise the importance of having a collective sense of mission.	3	5	4.31	0.610
L5. I avoid getting involved when important issues arise.	1	5	1.71	0.927
L6. I keep track of all mistakes.	1	5	3.13	1.177
L7. I provide recognition/rewards when others reach their goals.	3	5	4.47	0.575
L8. I treat others as individuals rather than just as a member of a group.	1	5	4.03	0.882
L9. I express confidence that goals will be achieved.	3	5	4.27	0.574
L10. I talk about my most important values and beliefs.	1	5	3.81	0.981
L11. I instil pride in others for being associated with me.	1	5	3.64	0.882
L12. I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, expectations, and deviations from standards.	1	5	3.18	1.192
L13. I do not impose policies on my subordinates.	1	5	2.63	1.186
L14. I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished.	2	5	4.22	0.595
L15. I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.	2	5	4.32	0.674
L16. I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.	2	5	4.38	0.688
L17. I go beyond self-interest for the good of the group.	1	5	4.37	0.758
L18. I help others to develop their strengths.	3	5	4.58	0.547

L19.	I talk optimistically about the future.	1	5	4.18	0.894
L20.	I re-examine critical assumptions about my employees' work to question whether they are appropriate.	2	5	3.76	0.724
L21.	I show that I am a firm believer in "if it ain't broke, don't fix it".	1	5	3.09	1.119
L22.	I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts.	1	5	3.51	1.159
L23.	I consider an individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.	2	5	4.37	0.647
L24.	I am content to let others continue working in the same ways always.	1	5	2.46	0.976
Leadership styles		3.2	4.6	3.96	0.326
Source: Author (2018)					

Items L1 to L24 measure the three different styles of leadership of MMS members in the DAFF. Firstly, items L1, L3, L4, L8 to L11, L14 to L20 and L23 measure the sub-dimension of transformational leadership style. Secondly, items L2, L6, L7, L12 and L22 measure the sub-dimension of transactional leadership. Lastly, items L5, L13, L21 and L24 measure the sub-dimension of Laissez-faire or passive/avoidance leadership style.

Item L18 has the largest mean of 4.58 which is a clear tendency towards the strongly agree range. Item L18 specifically measures the *Individualised Consideration* part of the transformational leadership. Item L5 has the lowest mean value of 1.71 which is a clear tendency towards the strongly disagree range. Item L5 specifically measures the Laissez-faire leadership.

Only 6.41% of the standard deviation (SD) values in the leadership style section had a value of over 1.000 with the largest being 1.192 for item L12. The smallest measured SD is 0.547 for item L18. Table 4.11 below provides the average means and the SD of the three leadership styles.

Table 4.11: Middle managers' perception of the their leadership styles

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Transformational Leadership	3.08	5.00	4.25	0.411
Transactional Leadership	3.00	5.00	4.49	0.503
Laissez-faire Leadership	1.00	4.67	2.42	0.716
Leadership styles	3.2	4.6	3.96	0.326

Transformational leadership: The mean is 4.25 and the standard deviation is 0.411. This mean value implies that the MMS members agree that they exhibit transformational leadership style. At 0.411, the standard deviation is low against the mean of 4.19. That is, the mean is a typical value, given that the standard deviation is low. Typically, all MMS members agree to have exhibited transformational leadership.

Transactional leadership: The mean is 4.49 and the standard deviation is 0.503. This mean value implies that the MMS members strongly agree to have exhibited transactional leadership. At 0.503, the standard deviation is low against the mean of 4.49, implying that there is little variation around the mean. The mean is a typical value, given that the standard deviation is low. Typically, all MMS members agree to have exhibited transactional leadership.

Laissez-faire leadership: The mean is 2.42 and the standard deviation is 0.716. This mean value implies that the MMS members disagree to have exhibited laissez-faire leadership. At 0.716, the standard deviation is low against the mean of 2.42, implying that there is little variation around the mean. Typically, all participants disagree to have exhibited laissez-faire leadership.

The results presented above favoured the use of transformational and transactional leadership styles as perceived by the MMS members who participated in the study. The following section investigates the same for employee engagement.

4.3.2 Measures of central tendency and the standard deviation for employee engagement

The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which the statements applied to them from (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Undecided, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree.

Table 4.12 in the next page presents the mean and the standard deviation for employee engagement.

Table 4.12: Measures of central tendency and standard deviation for employee engagement

	Statements	Min	Max	Mean	SD
E1.	I have enough people to do the work in my team.	1	5	2.77	1.357
E2.	My employees believe that the management of this organisation is really concerned about their well-being.	1	5	2.65	1.091
E3.	My employees would say that they are able to communicate freely up the line, even when they are communicating bad news.	1	5	3.41	1.178
E4.	Each employee had lots of opportunities to use and develop their skills in this job.	1	5	3.71	1.218
E5.	Each employee would say that they are treated fairly in this organisation.	1	5	2.94	1.155
E6.	My employees frequently ask for feedback to improve their knowledge and capabilities.	1	5	3.41	1.110
E7.	My employees would say that the facilities/equipment/tools provided are excellent.	1	5	2.64	1.116
E8.	I get on well with my employees.	3	5	4.35	0.577
E9.	My employees are hardly confronted with work demands that they find difficult to accept.	1	5	3.19	1.058
E10.	My employees have no problems in achieving a balance between their work and their private life.	1	5	3.50	0.990
E11.	I make sure that each employee understands how his or her performance is linked to my organisation's goals and objectives.	1	5	4.22	0.816
E12.	My employees have a plenty of freedom to decide how to do their work.	1	5	3.69	1.010
E13.	I frequently acknowledge and recognise each employee when he or she goes above and beyond expectation.	1	5	4.46	0.733
E14.	My employees are able to meet deadlines every time.	1	5	3.23	1.005
E15.	I provide informal feedback to each employee on a regular basis.	1	5	4.00	0.790
E16.	My employees hardly are expected to do tasks at work which are against their better judgement.	1	5	3.63	0.968
E17.	My employees would say that they receive enough communication from the management team about what is happening in the organisation.	1	5	3.03	1.195
E18.	Each employee knows exactly what I expect, how he or she is doing, and what he or she can do better.	2	5	3.95	0.820
E19.	Each employee would say that his or her job is a good fit with his or her skills and interests.	1	5	3.55	0.935
E20.	Each employee would say that the workload is evenly distributed across my team.	1	5	3.38	1.154
E21.	My employees would say that they are able to speak up about their concerns without fear of retribution or negative consequences.	1	5	3.86	1.016

E22.	The amount of work my employees are expected to do is fair and reasonable.	1	5	3.69	1.120
E23.	Each employee's job gives him or her opportunities to learn and grow.	1	5	4.15	0.839
E24.	Employee promotions are based on fair and objective criteria.	1	5	3.67	1.192
E25.	My employees would say that they have confidence in this organisation's management team.	1	5	2.91	1.083
E26.	I make sure that each employee finds his or her day-to-day work challenging and interesting.	2	5	3.63	0.758
E27.	Using employee benefits (e.g. annual leave, sick leave, special leave, and e.tc.) will not hurt my employees' career or growth opportunities.	1	5	4.19	0.722
E28.	My employees would say that they feel strong sense of belonging to the organisation.	1	5	3.45	1.002
E29.	My employees would say that their job does not deny them any chance to use their personal initiative or judgement in carrying out the work.	1	5	3.87	0.917
E30.	Each employee does many different things at work, using a variety of skills and talents.	1	5	3.67	0.976
E31.	I make sure that each employee feels challenged in his or her job in a way that results in personal growth.	1	5	3.97	0.738
E32.	My employees have the tools and resources they need to do their job well.	1	5	3.23	1.227
Employee engagement		2.19	4.63	3.56	0.499

Items E1 to E32 measure the three drivers of employee engagement as described by Khan (1990). Firstly, items E4, E6, E11 to E13, E15, E19, E23, E24, E26, and E28 to E31 measure the sub-dimension psychological meaningfulness. Secondly, E2, E3, E5, E7, E8, E17, E18, E20, E21, and E25 measure the sub-dimension of psychological safety. Lastly, items E1, E9, E10, E14, E16, E22, E27, and E32 measure the sub-dimension of psychological availability.

Item E13 has the largest mean of 4.46 which is a clear tendency towards the strongly agree range. Item E13 specifically measures the *Reward and Recognition* part of the psychological meaningfulness. Item E7 has the lowest mean value of 2.64 which is a clear tendency towards the neither agree nor disagree range. Item E7 specifically measures the *Social Support* of the psychological safety part. The average mean is 3.56 which can be seen as a tendency to lean more to the agree range.

Only 23.07% of the standard deviation (SD) values in the leadership style section had a value of over 1.000 with the largest being 1.357 for item E1. The smallest measured SD is 0.577 for item E8.

Table 4.13: Middle managers' perception of the their employees' engagement

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Psychological Meaningfulness	2.36	4.79	3.82	0.542
Psychological Safety	1.70	4.60	3.31	0.635
Psychological Availability	2.25	4.63	3.43	0.546
Employee engagement	2.19	4.63	3.56	0.499

Psychological meaningfulness: The mean is 3.82 and the standard deviation is 0.542. This mean value implies that all participants agree that their employees perceive their job as one that is generally meaningful, valuable, and worthwhile. At 0.542 the standard deviation is low against the mean of 3.82. That is, the mean is a typical value, given that the standard deviation is low. Typically, all participants agree that their employees would say they experience psychological meaningfulness. Constructs measured included job challenge, autonomy, job variety, feedback, work role fit, opportunities for development, and rewards and recognition.

Psychological safety: The mean is 3.31 and the standard deviation is 0.546. This mean value implies that all participants are undecided on whether or not their employees would agree with the perception that they experience social support, transformational leadership, leader-member-exchange, workplace climate, organisational justice and job security. At 0.635 the standard deviation is low against the mean of 3.31, implying that there is little variation around the mean. The mean is a typical value, given that the standard deviation is low. Typically, all participants are undecided on whether or not their employees would say they experience psychological safety. Constructs measured included social support, workplace climate and norms, leadership, organisational justice, and job security.

Psychological availability: The mean is 3.43 and the standard deviation is 0.546. This mean value implies that all participants are undecided on whether or not their

employees would say that they have the ability to engage because of having the cognitive, emotional and physical resources. At 0.5466, the standard deviation is low against the mean of 3.43, implying that there is little variation around the mean. Typically, all participants are undecided on whether or not their employees experience the psychological availability. Constructs measured included role overload, work-role conflict, family-work conflict and resource inadequacy.

Results derived from this study suggest that employees generally feel useful and worthwhile. However, the participants are uncertain whether or not the employees are able to express feelings without fear of negative outcomes or they have the resources to personally engage at the particular moment.

4.4 INFERENCE STATISTICS

The inferential statistics were generated from the sample data using SPSS.

4.4.1 Factors for the leadership styles

As the factors for this study were, already known, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to verify the factor structure of the variables. The three factors were labelled as:

- Factor 1: Transformational leadership style;
- Factor 2: Transactional leadership style; and
- Factor 3: Laissez-faire (passive/avoidance) leadership style.

In order to determine whether factor analysis could be performed, efforts were made to obtain the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index of sampling adequacy. The KMO statistic varies between 0 and 1. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test (KMO) measures the sampling adequacy that should be greater than 0.5 in order to be confident that the factor analysis is appropriate for the type of data at hand. Kaiser and Rice (1974) proposed the guidelines in Table 4.14 in the next page for interpreting the KMO index.

Table 4.14: KMO index interpretation guide

KMO index	Interpretation
$KMO \geq 0.90$	Marvelous
$0.80 \leq KMO < 0.90$	Meritorious
$0.70 \leq KMO < 0.80$	Middling
$0.60 \leq KMO < 0.70$	Mediocre
$0.50 \leq KMO < 0.60$	Miserable
$KMO < 0.50$	Unacceptable

Source: Hahs-Vaughn (2017:367)

Another important aspect in factor analysis is the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity relates to the significance of the study and thereby shows the validity and suitability of the responses collected to the problem being addressed through the study. For factor analysis to be recommended suitable, the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity must be less than 0.05 (Morgan *et al.*, 2013:124).

4.4.2 Factor analysis for leadership styles

This section provides the results of factor analysis for leadership styles.

4.4.2.1 Transformational leadership style

As shown in Table 4.15 below, the factor analysis produced a value of 0.807 through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index, which was a measurement index of sampling adequacy. The value of the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ($\chi^2_{(105)} = 359.147$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.15: KMO measurement value and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for transformational leadership

Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.807
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	359.147
	df	105
	Sig.	0.000

These findings indicated that all transformational leadership variables included in this study met the reliability and validity requirements of the standard survey. The determinant correlation matrix measured 0.006, which indicates that multi-collinearity can be present in the data. The study model and the data were appropriate for factor analysis. Table 4.16 below depicts transformational leadership factor loadings. The higher the loading of an item, the closer is its association to the group items that makes

up the factor (Vogt & Johnson, 2011:139). Variables with factor loadings greater or equals |0.3| were retained as they are regarded as significant (Kline, 2014:52).

Table 4.16: Component matrix of transformational leadership style

Statements	Loadings
L19. I talk optimistically about the future.	0.728
L18. I help others to develop their strengths.	0.708
L16. I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.	0.669
L14. I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished.	0.649
L3. I get others to look at problem from many different angles.	0.642
L15. I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.	0.639
L4. I emphasise the importance of having a collective sense of mission.	0.622
L17. I go beyond self-interest for the good of the group.	0.577
L9. I express confidence that goals will be achieved.	0.570
L10. I talk about my most important values and beliefs.	0.538
L20. I re-examine critical assumptions about my employees' work to question. whether they are appropriate.	0.516
L23. I consider an individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.	0.509
L1. I act in ways that build others' respect of me.	0.402
L8. I treat others as individuals rather than just as a member of a group.	0.253
L11. I instill pride in others for being associated with me.	0.228

The transformational leadership factor embraced 15 items and the loadings as shown in Table 4.16 ranges between 0.228 and 0.728. Items L8 and E11 have loadings below 0.3 were therefore deleted.

4.4.2.2 Transactional leadership style

The factor analysis produced a value of 0.510 through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index, which was a measurement index of sampling adequacy. The value of the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ($\chi^2_{(10)} = 29.504$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.17: KMO measurement value and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for transactional leadership style

Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.510
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	29.504
	df	10
	Sig.	0.001

These findings indicated that the sampling adequacy of data was limited for transactional leadership variables in this study (KMO=0.510). The determinant correlation matrix measured 0.673, which indicates that multi-collinearity can be present in the data. The study model and the data were however appropriate for factor analysis. Table 4.18 below shows the transactional leadership factor loadings

Table 4.18: Component matrix of transactional leadership

Statements	Loadings
L2. I express satisfaction when others meet expectations.	0.827
L7. I provide recognition/rewards when others reach their goals.	0.687
L22. I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts.	-0.565
L12. I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, expectations, and deviations from standards.	-0.286
L6. I keep track of all mistakes.	0.203

The transactional leadership factor contained 5 items and factor loadings for each of the items were from 0.203 to 0.827 in absolute value. Items L6 and L12 with factor loadings of 0.203, -0.286 were omitted because they had loadings with absolute values below the 0.3. Despite item L22 having an acceptable loading of |-0.565|, it was also omitted. As Cappelleri *et al.* (2013:69) suggest, the omission of these items resulted in an increased overall reliability of scale. Table 4.30 shows an increased Cronbach Alpha value of 0.590.

4.4.2.3 Passive/avoidant (*laissez-faire*) leadership style

Referring to Table 4.19 below, the factor analysis produced a value of 0.590 through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index, which was a measurement index of sampling adequacy. The value of the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ($\chi^2_{(6)} = 21.796$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.19: KMO measurement value and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for passive/avoidant leadership

Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin	Measure of sampling adequacy	0.590
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	21.796
	df	6
	Sig.	0.001

These findings indicated that all laissez-faire leadership variables included in this study met the reliability and validity requirements of the standard survey. The determinant correlation matrix measured 0.747, which indicates that multi-collinearity can be present in the data. The study model and the data were appropriate for factor analysis. Table 4.20 below depicts the passive/avoidance (laissez-faire) leadership factor loadings.

Table 4.20: Component matrix of passive/avoidant leadership style

Statements	Loadings
L24. I am content to let others continue working in the same ways always.	0.804
L5. I avoid getting involved important issues arise.	0.657
L21. I show that I am a firm believer in "if it ain't broke, don't fix it".	0.558
L13. I do not impose policies on my subordinates.	0.506

The passive/avoidant (laissez-faire) leadership factor embraced 4 items L5, L13, L21 and L24 and the factor loadings ranged between 0.506 and 0.804. All Items were retained except item L13, despite its acceptable loading of 0.506. The inclusion of item L13 would have dropped the Cronbach's Alpha to a value below 0.5 in Table 4.30. The omission of item L13 improved reliability coefficient to a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.503 (Cappelleri *et al.* 2013:69).

4.4.2.4 Leadership styles total variance explained

Table 4.21: Leadership styles total variance explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	4.859	32.391	32.391	4.859	32.391	32.391
2	1.597	31.931	31.931	1.597	31.931	31.931
3	1.645	41.133	41.133	1.645	41.133	41.133

Factor 1 consisted of 15 items, reflecting the transformational leadership style of the MMS members of the DAFF and it accounted for 32.4% of the total variance explained in the sample. Factor 2 consisted of 2 items, reflecting the transactional leadership style of MMS members of the DAFF and it accounted for 32% of the total variance explained in the sample. Factor 3 consisted of 3 items, reflecting the passive/avoidant (*laissez-faire*) leadership style of the MMS members of the DAFF and it accounted for 41.1% of the total variance explained.

The three factors have eigenvalues that exceeds 1.0 and each of them explains at least 10% of the total variance. This is a sufficient evidence for a 3-factor solution. Minkov and Hofstede (2012:190) suggest that such factors are meaningful and worth retaining for analysis. Higher percentages of total variance explained is an indicator that a strong relationship exists among a group of variables under study.

4.4.3 Factors for employee engagement

This section provides the results of factor analysis for employee engagement. The three factors for employee engagement were labelled as:

- Factor 1: Psychological meaningfulness,
- Factor 2: Psychological safety, and
- Factor 3: Psychological availability.

4.4.3.1 Psychological meaningfulness

Referring to Table 4.22 below, factor analysis produced a value of 0.786 through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index, which was a measurement index of sampling adequacy. The value of the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ($\chi^2_{(91)} = 406.109$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.22: KMO measurement value and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for psychological meaningfulness

Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.786
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	406.109
	df	91
	Sig.	0.000

These findings in Table 4.22 indicated that all variables included in this study met the reliability and validity requirements of the standard survey. The determinant correlation

matrix measured 0.003, which indicates that multi-collinearity can be present in the data. The study model and the data were appropriate for factor analysis. Table 4.23 depicts factor loadings of the psychological meaningfulness.

Table 4.23: Component matrix of psychological meaningfulness

Statements	Loadings
E29. My employees would say that their job does not deny them any chance to use their personal initiative or judgement in carrying out the work.	0.791
E23. Each employee's job gives him or her opportunities to grow and learn.	0.755
E31. I make sure that each employee feels challenged in his or her job in a way that results in personal growth.	0.692
E28. My employee would say that they feel strong sense of belonging to the organisation.	0.688
E24. Employee promotions are based on fair and objective criteria.	0.666
E11. I make sure that each employee understands how his or her performance is linked to my organisation's goals and objectives.	0.659
E13. I frequently acknowledge and recognise each employee when he or she goes above and beyond expectation.	0.626
E26. I make sure that each employee finds his or her day-to-day work challenging and interesting.	0.601
E4. Each employee had lots of opportunities to use and develop their skills in this job,	0.561
E19. Each employee would say that his or her job is a good fit with his or her skills and interest.	0.556
E30. Each employee does many different things at work, using a variety of skills and talents.	0.534
E12. My employees have plenty of freedom to decide how to do their work.	0.407
E6. My employees frequently ask for feedback to improve their knowledge and capabilities.	0.355
E15. I provide informal feedback to each employee on regular bases.	0.258

The psychological meaningful factor embraced 14 items and the loadings as shown in Table 33 ranges between 0.258 and 0.791. Item E15 omitted because of its low factor loading.

4.4.3.2 Psychological safety

As shown in Table 34 below, factor analysis produced a value of 0.762 through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index, which was a measurement index of sampling adequacy. The value of the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ($\chi^2_{(45)} = 218.162$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.24: KMO measurement value and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for psychological safety

Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.762
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	218.162
	df	45
	Sig.	0.000

These findings indicated that all variables included in this study met the reliability and validity requirements of the standard survey. The determinant correlation matrix measured 0.050, which indicates that multi-collinearity can be present in the data. The study model and the data were appropriate for factor analysis. The next Table shows the psychological safety factor loadings.

Table 4.25: Component matrix of psychological safety

Statements	Loadings
E5. Each employee would say that they are treated fairly in this organisation.	0.719
E17. My employee would say they receive enough communication from the management team about what is happening in the organisation.	0.719
E18. Each employee knows exactly what I expect, how he or she is doing, and what he or she can do better.	0.658
E3. My employee would say that they are able to communicate freely up the line, even when they communicating bad news.	0.646
E25. My employees would say that they have confidence in this organisation's management team.	0.635
E21. My employees would say that they are able to speak up about their concerns without fear of retribution or negative consequences.	0.629
E20. Each employee would say that the workload is evenly distributed across my team.	0.623
E8. I get on well with my employee.	0.496
E2. My employees believe that the management of this organisation is really concerned about their well-being.	0.487
E7. My employees would say that the facilities/equipment/tools provided are excellent.	0.422

The psychological safety factor contained 10 items and the loadings as shown in Table 4.25 ranges between 0.4.22 and 0.719. All Items were retained because their respective loadings were above 0.3 and the reliability coefficient was found to be relatively good, with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.826 as presented in Table 4.30.

4.4.3.3 *Psychological availability*

As presented in Table 4.26 below, factor analysis produced a value of 0.643 through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index, which was a measurement index of sampling adequacy. The value of the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ($\chi^2_{(28)} = 68.738$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.26: KMO measurement value and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for psychological availability

Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin	Measure of sampling adequacy	0.643
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	68.738
	df	28
	Sig.	0.000

These findings indicated that all variables included in this study met the reliability and validity requirements of the standard survey. The determinant correlation matrix measured 0.393, which indicates that multi-collinearity can be present in the data. The study model and the data were appropriate for factor analysis. Table 4.27 below shows the psychological safety factor loadings.

Table 4.27: Component matrix of psychological availability

Statements	Loadings
E10. My employees have no problems in achieving a balance between their work and their private life.	0.712
E22. The amount of work my employees are expected to do is fair and reasonable.	0.700
E14. My employees are able to meet deadlines every time.	0.685
E1. I have enough of people to do the work in my team.	0.556
E32. My employees have the tools and resources they need to do their job well.	0.428
E9. My employees are hardly confronted with work demands that they find difficult to accept.	0.382
E27. Using employee benefits (e.g. annual leave, sick leave, special leave, and etc.) will not hurt my employees' career or growth opportunities.	0.321
E16. My employees hardly are expected to do task at work which are against their better judgment.	0.147

The psychological safety factor embraced 8 items and the loadings as shown in Table 37 ranges between 0.147 and 0.712. Item L16 omitted because of its low factor loading.

Table 38 presents the employee engagement total variance explained.

4.4.3.4 Employee engagement total variance explained

Table 4.28: Employee engagement total variance explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	5.048	36.055	36.055	5.048	36.055	36.055
2	3.733	37.332	37.332	3.7333	37.332	37.332
3	2.229	27.860	27.860	2.229	27.860	27.860

Factor 1 consisted of 14 items reflecting the psychological meaningfulness construct of employee engagement at the DAFF and it accounted for 36.05% of the total variance explained in the sample. *Factor 2* consisted of 10 items reflecting the psychological safety construct of employee engagement at the DAFF and it accounted for 37.33% of the total variance explained in the sample. *Factor 3* consisted of 3 items reflecting the psychological availability construct of the employee engagement at the DAFF and it accounted for 27.86% of the total variance explained. Higher percentages of total variance explained is an indicator that a strong relationship exists among a group of variables under study. Therefore, there is sufficient evidence that the 3-factor model is perfect for the data set.

4.4.4 Reliability analysis

Sirakaya-Turk *et al.* (2017:338) used several different sources (Hair, 2000; Ho, 2006; Pituch and Stevens, 2006; & Pallant, 2007) to produce Cronbach's Alpha interpretation guide as shown in Table 4.29 below.

Table 4.29: Cronbach's Alpha interpretation guide

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value range	Interpretation
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent (High-stakes testing)
$0.70 \leq \alpha < 0.90$	Good (Low-stakes testing)
$0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.70$	Acceptable
$0.50 \leq \alpha < 0.60$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.50$	Unacceptable

Source: Sirakaya-Turk *et al.* (2017:338)

According to Sirakaya-Turk *et al.* (2017:338), an Alpha value of below 0.60 is also acceptable in exploratory research, such as the study at hand. In such cases, Sirakaya-

Turk and his associates suggest that the mean inter-item correlations be reported. According to Robins *et al.* (2009:251), the mean inter-item correlations between 0.15 and 0.5 indicate that the items measure similar content. The reliability indicators are summarised in Table 4.30 below.

Table 4.30: Reliability indicators

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean inter-item correlation	No. of Items
Leadership Styles	0.763	0.172	18
Transformational leadership	0.845	0.257	13
Transactional leadership	0.590	0.420	2
Passive/Avoidant leadership	0.503	0.259	3
Employee Engagement	0.900	0.226	32
Psychological Meaningfulness	0.844	0.292	14
Psychological Safety	0.805	0.296	10
Psychological Availability	0.594	0.153	8

The reliability indicators as depicted in Table 4.30 above excluded items L6, L12, L13 and L22 as explained previously. The values of Cronbach's Alpha for all factors ranged between 0.503 and 0.845, while the mean inter-item correlations ranged between 0.153 and 0.420. These values therefore suggest a satisfactory internal consistency of the questionnaire. The next section discusses correlations between leadership and employee engagement variables.

4.5 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The relationships between the three leadership styles and the three dimensions of employee engagement were investigated by using the Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient. The Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient is a statistical measure of the strength and the direction of a relationship between two variables (Allen, 2017:273). Christmann and Badgett (2009:98) produced guidelines for the interpretation of correlation coefficients as depicted in Table 4.31 in the next page.

Table 4.31: Interpretation of correlations

Correlation	Interpretation
0.800 $\leq p \leq 1.000$	Very strong relationship
0.600 $\leq p \leq 0.800$	Strong relationship
0.400 $\leq p \leq 0.600$	Moderate
0.200 $\leq p \leq 0.400$	Weak
0.000 $\leq p \leq 0.200$	Very weak

Source: Christmann and Badgett (2009:98)

The numerical values of a correlation coefficient range between -1.00 (perfect negative correlation) and +1 (perfect positive correlation); a zero value indicates no relation between the two variables. It should be noted that the numerical values in the Table above could be plus or minus.

Table 4.32: Spearman's rho correlation coefficient between variables

Variables		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Transformational leadership	Correlation Coefficient	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)							
2. Transactional leadership	Correlation Coefficient	0.543**	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000						
3. Passive/Avoidance leadership	Correlation Coefficient	-0.145	-0.117	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.204	0.307					
4. Psychological Meaningfulness	Correlation Coefficient	0.296**	0.384**	-0.122	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.009	0.001	0.288				
5. Psychological Safety	Correlation Coefficient	0.333**	0.431**	-0.173	0.759**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003	0.000	0.131	0.000			
6. Psychological Availability	Correlation Coefficient	0.158	0.416**	-0.013	0.485**	0.585**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.167	0.000	0.907	0.000	0.000		
7. Employee Engagement 1	Correlation Coefficient	0.317**	0.468**	-0.130	0.910**	0.919**	0.737**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	0.000	0.255	0.000	0.000	0.000	
0.003								

** , Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level (2-tailed)

4.5.1 Correlation between transformational leadership style and employee engagement dimensions

Table 4.32 indicates that the strength of association between transformational leadership style and psychological meaningfulness is relatively weak ($\rho=0.296$). There is a statistically significant positive relationship between transformational leadership behaviours and psychological meaningfulness ($p<0.01$). Furthermore, 8.7% of the variation in psychological meaningfulness can be explained by transformational leadership behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.087$) is taken into consideration. Coefficient of determination measures the portion of the variation in the dependent variable that is accounted for by the movement in the independent variable (Keller, 2015:135).

The strength of the association between transformational leadership style and psychological safety is relatively weak ($\rho=0.333$). There is a statistically significant positive relationship between transformational leadership behaviours and psychological meaningfulness ($p<0.01$). Furthermore, 11% of the variation in psychological safety can be explained by transformational leadership behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.110$) is taken into consideration

The strength of the association between transformational leadership style and psychological availability is very weak ($\rho=0.158$). Since $p>0.01$ the positive relationship is not statistically significant and the two variables are not linearly related. It can also be concluded that only 2.5% of the variation in psychological availability can be explained by transformational behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.025$) is taken into consideration.

The strength of association between transformational leadership style and employee engagement is relatively weak ($\rho=0.317$). The sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.005, which is less than 0.01. However, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between transformational leadership behaviours and employee engagement. Furthermore, only 10% of the variation in employee engagement can be explained by

transformational leadership behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.100$) is taken into consideration.

These findings are supported by earlier studies. A study conducted by Tims *et al.* (2011) investigated how leadership style enhances employee engagement. Forty-two employees from two different organisations in Netherlands participated in the study. Eighty-four percent (84%) of participants worked as consultants at an agency for temporary work while sixteen percent (16%) worked at an industrial consultancy agency. Participants first completed a general questionnaire, then a daily survey for five consecutive workdays. The results of the study showed a positive relationship between daily transformational leadership and employees' daily engagement.

Devi and Narayanamma (2016) conducted another study among 55 participants in a beverages company. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale developed by Schaufeli *et al.* (2002) was used to measure employee engagement and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass and Avolio, 2000) was used to measure leadership style. The results of their study showed a relatively stronger relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement when compared to the relationship between transactional leadership and employee engagement.

4.5.2 Correlation between transactional leadership style and employee engagement dimensions

As seen from Table 4.32 the strength of association between transactional leadership style and psychological meaningfulness is relatively moderate ($\rho=0.414$). Since ($p<0.01$), there is a statistically significant positive relationship between transformational leadership behaviours and psychological meaningfulness. Furthermore, 17% of the variation in psychological meaningfulness can be explained by transformational leadership behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.17$) is taken into consideration.

The strength of association between transactional leadership style and psychological safety is relatively moderate ($\rho=0.404$). The positive relationship observed is statistically significant ($p<0.01$) and the two variables are therefore linearly related. It can be

concluded that 16.3% of the variation in psychological safety can be explained by transactional behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.163$) is taken into consideration.

The strength of association between transactional leadership style and psychological availability is relatively moderate ($\rho=0.411$). The sig. (2-tailed) value is less than 0.01 and therefore, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between transactional leadership behaviours and psychological availability. Furthermore, 16.9% of the variation in psychological availability can be explained by transformational leadership behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.169$) is taken into consideration.

Table 4.32 indicates that the strength of association between transactional leadership style and employee engagement is relatively moderate ($\rho=0.486$). Since ($p<0.01$), there is a statistically significant positive relationship between transactional leadership behaviours and employee engagement. In addition, 23.6% of the variation in employee engagement can be explained by transformational leadership behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.236$) is taken into consideration.

The results of this study confirm some earlier findings that transformational leadership enhances employee engagement. However, it shows that transactional leadership is a stronger predictor of all three dimensions of employee engagement. This is in line with the study conducted by Khan *et al.* (2016), which revealed that transactional leadership also positively predicts employee engagement.

4.5.3 Correlation between passive/avoidant leadership style and employee engagement dimensions

The strength of association between passive/avoidant leadership style and psychological meaningfulness in Table 4.32 is seen as very weak ($\rho=-0.176$). Since ($p>0.05$), therefore the relationship between passive/avoidant leadership behaviours and psychological meaningfulness is not statistically significant. A negative correlation between these two variables was observed. In addition, only 3% of the variation in

psychological meaningfulness can be explained by transformational leadership behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.030$) is taken into consideration.

The strength of association between passive/avoidance leadership style and psychological safety is relatively moderate ($\rho=-0.193$). The negative relationship observed is not statistically significant ($p>0.05$) and the two variables are therefore not linearly related. It can be concluded that only 3.7% of the variation in psychological safety can be explained by transactional behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.037$) is taken into consideration.

The strength of association passive/avoidance leadership style and psychological availability is relatively moderate ($\rho=-0.017$). The sig. (2-tailed) value is greater than 0.05 and therefore, it can be concluded that the relationship between passive/avoidance leadership behaviours and psychological availability is not statistically significant. Furthermore, a very marginal amount of the variation (0.028%) in psychological availability can be explained by passive/avoidance leadership behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.00028$) is taken into consideration.

Table 4.32 indicates that the strength of association between passive/avoidant leadership style and employee engagement is relatively moderate ($\rho=-0.160$). Since ($p>0.05$), there is no statistically significant relationship between passive/avoidance leadership behaviours and employee engagement. In addition, only 2.56% of the variation in employee engagement can be explained by passive/avoidance leadership behaviours when coefficient of determination ($\rho^2=0.0256$) is taken into consideration.

Passive/avoidant leadership style has been linked to negative results including poor job performance, low leader effectiveness, and less group satisfaction. A study conducted by Manning (2016) found that passive/avoidant leadership style in nurse managers is negatively associated relationship with staff nurse engagement.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the descriptive and inferential statistics and data analysis methods employed. This chapter specifically addressed the research question:

- The leadership qualities that middle managers in the DAFF could use to enhance employee engagement.

In order to address this question, correlations between the three leadership styles (transformational, transactional and passive/avoidant) and the three psychological conditions of employee engagement (meaningfulness, safety and availability) were calculated to determine the strength and the direction of association between these constructs.

Hypotheses were generated and tested, and have been reported on. Results from this study have been found to be consistent with the findings of related studies done previously. The next chapter focuses on the interpretation and considerations of the results and the drawing of inferences. The findings will also be compared to other studies conducted in this field. The limitations to this study and the recommendations will also be presented.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the descriptive and inferential statistics, and the data analysis methods employed. Hypotheses were generated, tested and reported on.

This chapter provides the overview of the study, summary of the findings and conclusions that were drawn based on the results of this study. Furthermore, the chapter offers the recommendations for the organisation on the types of leadership qualities that could be applied to enhance employee engagement. Limitations of the study are highlighted and recommendations for future studies are made.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The overriding purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between middle management leadership qualities and employee engagement in the DAFF. The basic research questions were formulated as follows:

- What theoretical frameworks describe employee engagement and transformational leadership?
- What is the nature of the relationship between employee engagement and transformational leadership?
- What are the leadership qualities that middle managers in the DAFF could use to enhance employee engagement?

The subsequent chapters examined leadership, leadership styles and models, need-based theories of motivation, employee engagement and employee engagement models. Furthermore, the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement were tested.

CHAPTER ONE: This chapter outlined the background to the research problem, by stating the problem, specifying the research objectives and questions critical to the study, and laying out the research approach. The chapter had detailed the importance of the study to the DAFF as an organisation, managers, leaders, academicians and

researchers and further defined the key terms of this study. The proposed methods and structure of the research were also described.

CHAPTER TWO: The chapter provided a review of the research literature relating to leadership and leadership style as well as employee engagement. The chapter further reviewed the literature on the relationship between different leadership styles and employee engagement. Interestingly, transformational leadership has been proven a highly effective leadership style and it can be taught to others.

This review was undertaken mainly to establish a theoretical understanding of and a basis for developing the research instruments used.

CHAPTER THREE: This chapter discussed and examined the rationale for the research design and methodology. This chapter described the population of study, the sample and the data collection instruments. The chapter further described how reliability and validity of the research instruments would be tested using statistical methods.

CHAPTER FOUR: The chapter dealt with data presentation and the statistical analyses and interpretation of the results. Results from this study have been found to be consistent with the findings of related studies done previously.

CHAPTER FIVE: The chapter summarized the research and the conclusions to be drawn and made recommendations for further research.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The target population for this study comprised of 397 MMS members, of whom 249 were members on post level 11, while 148 were members on post level 12. A sample of 100 MMS members was identified by way of a stratified random sampling process to participate in the study. An overall response rate of seventy eight percent (78%) participation was achieved, while twenty two percent (22%) declined.

A self-administered questionnaire to collect the primary data was e-mailed to the sampled participants. An excel spreadsheet was used for data organisation and the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software was used to provide in-depth data analysis which included both descriptive and inferential statistics. For the purpose

of this study, the inferential statistical test was used to examine linear relationship between variables while the descriptive statistics were used to describe simple summaries about the sample, measures of central tendency and measures of dispersion.

As presented in Table 4.11, the means of the three leadership styles, transformational, transactional and passive/avoidant are 4.25, 4.49 and 2.42 respectively. On average, the mean for the transactional leadership is slightly higher than the mean of transformational leadership. This implies that participants agree to have exhibited both these styles of leadership. This is in line with the view of Bass and Avolio (1995) as cited by Cameron and Green (2017:17), that every leader exhibits a combination of transformational and transactional leadership. This implies that participants adopt either a more transformational approach or a more transactional approach in how they structure their relationship with their employees.

Table 4.13 depicts the means for the three dimensions of employee engagement psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety and psychological availability as 3.82, 3.31 and 3.43 respectively. Participants agreed that their employees would say that they have experienced psychological meaningfulness. They were however uncertain whether or not their employees would say that they have experienced psychological safety and psychological availability. Reliability of the primary data was investigated by using Cronbach's Alpha. For leadership styles, the reliability coefficients for the transformational, transactional and passive/avoidant leadership are 0.845, 0.590 and 0.503 respectively. The reliability coefficients for the three dimensions of employee engagement (psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety and psychological availability) are 0.844, 0.804 and 0.594 respectively.

According to the results as shown in Table 4.32, there exists a positive correlation between both transformational leadership and transactional leadership and employee engagement while passive/avoidant leadership influences negatively on employee engagement.

5.4 HYPOTHESES

In order to verify the afore-formulated hypotheses in section 3.9, a Spearman's rho correlation test was adopted with the results presented in Table 4.32. The following hypotheses guided the analysis of data:

H₀: There exists no relationship between middle management's transformational leadership qualities and employee engagement.

H₁: There exists a relationship between middle management's transformational leadership qualities and employee engagement.

The Cronbach's Alpha value for transformational leadership is 0.845, as indicated in Table 4.30 and this implies that the measuring instrument is reliable. Table 4.32 depicts that the Spearman's rho correlation coefficient ($p=0.317$) between transformational leadership and employee engagement is relatively weak and reflects the sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.005, which is less than 0.01. It can be concluded that there exists a statistically significant correlation between transformational leadership behaviour and employee engagement. Considering all these deliberations, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Similar results were obtained by Bakker and Bal (2010) in their study investigating the relationship between the daily transactional and transformational leadership and daily employee engagement in starting teachers in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Tims *et al.* (2011) in support of Bakker and Bal also found that daily transformational leadership related positively to employees' daily engagement. Bezuidenhout and Schultz (2013) confirmed a significant relationship between the transformational leadership and employee engagement in a mine in the North West Province of South Africa.

5.5 DISCUSSIONS

Although the results of this study confirmed some earlier findings that transformational leadership style enhances employee engagement, they however revealed transactional leadership style as a stronger predictor of employee engagement in the organisation.

According to Odumeru and Ifieanyi (2013) transformational leadership enhances motivation, morale and performance of subordinates thorough different mechanisms such as setting goals and incentives to push the subordinates to higher performance levels, while providing opportunities for personal and professional growth for each employee. In this style, the transformational leader works in partnership with the subordinates to ascertain the desired change in the organisation. A transactional leadership, also known as the managerial leadership, is often concerned with making sure that the day-to-day operations run smoothly and not looking forward to strategically guiding the organisation to the next level of performance and success. The leader in this instance promotes compliance through both rewards and punishments.

The choice of a particular leadership style can have a great impact on employee engagement within the organisation. Engagement is characterised by employees' emotional commitment to the organisation and the energy and the discretionary effort they put into their work. Engaged employees actually care about their organisation and are prepared to go up and above the call of duty to achieve their organizational goals. A forward-looking organisation should therefore not only rely on a single leadership style but also on applying a particular type of leadership as per its needs and prevalent conditions.

According to Kahn (1990) the combination of the three psychological conditions of engagement (meaningfulness, safety and availability) creates a state of psychological presence in which employees are able to employ and express themselves more completely physically, cognitively and emotionally in their work role performances.

Employees who experience psychological meaningfulness feel useful and worthwhile. Furthermore, employees who experience psychological safety are able to express feelings without fear of negative outcomes. In addition, employees who experience psychological availability have a sense that they have the resources to personally engage at the particular moment.

The results of this study reveal an overall mean score of 3.56 for employ engagement. The psychological meaningfulness as one the drivers of employee engagement

obtained a mean score of 3.82 as presented in Table 4.13, the results of which are good. However, the individual mean scores for measurement items “My employees frequently ask for feedback to improve their knowledge and capabilities” and “My employees would say that they feel strong sense of belonging to the organisation”, that measure *feedback* and *work-role fit* were 3.41 and 3.45 respectively.

In their work, May *et al.* (2004) demonstrated that *work-role fit* predicted psychological meaningfulness and work engagement. The results as low as these, raise some concerns because May *et al.* found that individuals will experience more psychological meaningfulness, and invest more of the self to achieve organisational goals when they experience greater congruence between the self and work-role demands. In support of May *et al.*, Crawford *et al.* (2010) and Bakker and Bal (2010) furthermore found a positive relationship between performance feedback and engagement.

The uncertainty perceived by the participants with regard to the other two drivers of engagement, psychological safety and availability raises a red flag. Kahn (1990) posits that in order to achieve optimal level of engagement from employees, all three psychological conditions of engagement must be satisfied. He identified transformational leadership as one of the antecedents of psychological safety.

With *idealised influence* element of transformational leadership, leaders willingly take risks and are consistent, as a result, trust, respect and confidence in the leader is built. When leaders apply *inspirational motivation* element of transformational leadership, they articulate a clear vision, superbly communicate expectations of the group and demonstrate a commitment to the goals that have been laid out. Through *inspirational motivation*, followers genuinely and enthusiastically adopt and embrace new ideas. With *intellectual stimulation* element of transformational leadership, leaders involve followers in decision-making processes and are stimulated to be creative and innovative in problem solving solutions. When leaders display *individualised consideration* element of transformational leadership, they are able to recognise or determine specific needs or desires of a team member and what motivates a member through observation. The application of these four elements of transformational leadership model may results in

team members growing and becoming fulfilled in their position, thus experiencing psychological safety.

The low individual mean scores for measurement items, “*My employee would say they receive enough communication from the management team about what is happening in the organisation*” and “*My employees would say that they have confidence in this organisation’s management team*”, which measure *leadership* as 3.03 and 2.91 respectively, is the major concern of this study. Ghafoor *et al.* (2011) posit that employees become at ease when proper leadership supports and guides them. Proper leadership among others ensures effective communication. Karanges *et al.* (2015) found that internal communication (organisational and supervisor) have a significant role to play in developing and maintaining optimal employee engagement. Ghafoor *et al.* (2011) further suggest that employee engagement practiced under transformational leadership develops the positivity in behavior that leads to trust and satisfaction that enhances sense of belongingness.

Psychological availability, however, as observed by Kahn (1990) can be influenced negatively by factors such as *role overload*, *work-role conflict*, *family-work conflict* and *resource inadequacy*. *Role overload* occurs when employees execute multiple roles at the same time and do not have the resources to perform them. *Role overload* may also be due to the difficulty of the work demands relative to the skills and the abilities of the employee. Measurement items relevant to *role overload* in this study are “My employees are able to meet deadlines every time” and “The amount of work my employees are expected to do is fair and reasonable”. The individual mean scores for these two items are 3.23 and 3.69 respectively. The mean score of 3.23 is relatively low and this could signal problems when coming to employees in the organisation meeting the deadlines. Missing deadlines could happen when the employees are subjected to unrealistic deadlines or do not find meaning in their work. Crawford *et al.* (2010), who in their study, found a negative correlation between *role overload* and engagement confirmed this.

Work-role conflict occurs when an employee is given different and incompatible roles simultaneously or his/her role overlaps with another employee or work group. The

measurement items in this study relevant to *work-role conflict* are “My employees are hardly confronted with work demands that they find difficult to accept” and “My employees hardly are expected to do tasks at work which are against their better judgement”. The individual mean score for these items are 3.19 and 3.63 respectively. A mean score of 3.19 is relatively low and that raises a concern, since Crawford *et al.* (2010) found that employees who reported receiving inconsistent requests from two or more people at work, exhibited sharply lower levels of engagement because it is not possible to meet conflicting demands.

Family-work conflict as defined by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) is “a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect”. That means demands placed on the employee by the family interfere with the performance of roles associated with work. The measurement items in this study relevant to *family-work conflict* are “My employees have no problems in achieving a balance between their work and their private life” and “Using employee benefits (e.g. annual leave, sick leave, special leave, and etc.), will not hurt my employees' career or growth opportunities”. The individual mean scores for these items are 3.5 and 4.19 respectively, which are good results. Halbesleben *et al.* (2009) found that engaged employees who are highly conscientious experience lower levels of work interference with family than engaged employees who are less conscientious.

Resource inadequacy occurs when resources needed by an employee to effectively perform the role are not available. The resources may be information, human capital, material, finance or facilities. The measurement items in this study relevant to *resource inadequacy* are “I have enough people to do the work in my team” and “My employees have the tools and resources they need to do their job well”. The individual mean score for these statements are 2.77 and 3.23 respectively. Such low mean scores raise a concern because Crawford *et al.* (2010) in their study found that *resource inadequacy* impact negatively on engagement. Failure by an organisation to provide the necessary resources to an employee to perform his/her duties may lead to organisational goals not met. This may also lead to frustrations and disengagement.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The empirical evidence is in favour of a stronger relationship between transactional leadership style and employee engagement. Investing energy, time and money on transactional leadership style without considering transformational leadership style will be a futile exercise. In order to increase the level of employee engagement, transformational leadership style is more desirable as many studies have shown. However, if both leadership styles are exhibited correctly, the highest level of engagement can be achieved.

The results from this study have important implications for middle managers and the organisation as a whole in cultivating employee engagement behaviour. The results displayed a satisfactory balance by employees between family and work demands (*family-work conflict*). Nonetheless, the results exposed *leadership, role overload, and work-role conflict* and *resource inadequacy* as factors that needed special attention.

This study recommends that in order to achieve the highest level of employee engagement, more use of transformational leadership style should be encouraged. Coaching in transformational leadership could help middle managers to learn skills necessary to lead in a transformational way (source).

Since transformational and transactional leadership styles are complimentary, middle managers should be trained on the right combination and application of both these leadership styles. However, applying the appropriate leadership style without making available the necessary resources to the employees could be futile. Other than *leadership, role overload, work-role conflict* and *resource inadequacy*, middle managers need to identify other factors that may be of hindrance to employee engagement by conducting employee engagement surveys and regularly soliciting feedback from the employees.

Meanwhile, cowering surreptitiously on the other end of dysfunctional leadership spectrum is the passive/avoidant leader. This type of a leader takes corrective action only after a problem becomes significant and obvious. Important decision-making responsibilities are passed onto subordinates and more often, these leaders are

reluctant to express views on important or controversial issues. Like other leadership styles, the passive/avoidant leadership style has both a number of benefits and shortcomings. Sometimes this style can be effective for motivated groups with high expertise and skills. Creative groups may value the independence that comes with this type of leadership. The passive/avoidant leadership work well when the leaders provides needed information and the resources.

The results of this study display a significant and negative relationship between passive/avoidant leadership style and employee engagement. Skogstad *et al.* (2007) found that passive/avoidant leadership otherwise known as laissez-faire leadership positively correlated with *role conflict*, *role ambiguity*, and *conflict with coworkers*. Skogstad *et al.* perceive passive/avoidant leadership behaviour as destructive leadership behaviour. In order to increase employee engagement to achieve organisation's strategic objectives, this type of leadership style should be avoided. The managers should rather provide clear expectation for the work, appropriate information and resources, fair performance evaluations and recognition when deserved.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A replication of this study should be conducted by using two larger samples. One sample should measure leadership qualities of officials in the management positions and the other should measure employee engagement level of non-managers. This envisaged study could be based on the same variables in order to draw a comparison in the research findings. It is recommended that the whole organisation be included in the study to determine if the same results would be obtained to check consistency. It would also be interesting and befitting to examine gender differences in the effects of transformational leadership on engagement. Furthermore, the study could be extended to all other South African government departments. The results of such studies could be helpful for developing new understanding of leadership styles and employee engagement among employees in government sectors.

5.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

One of the two limitations of this study is that the MLQ and the Employee Engagement Questionnaires were self-administered, and this could have enhanced the subjectivity of the responses, thereby affecting the outcome of the study.

In addition, the participation in the study was voluntary, therefore the responses of the participants could have differed considerably from the possible responses of the non-participants thus limiting the possibility of generalising from the study.

Again, the study targeted only the MMS members of the DAFF, therefore the findings could not be generalised to the whole organisation or all other South African government departments.

Finally, some leadership measurement items that do not exhibit a strong correlation with the factors, were omitted in order to enhance the reliability and consistency of the measure, the omission potentially increases the non-response bias and limits the generalisability of the findings.

5.9 CONCLUSION

The present study is set out to determine the relationship between middle management's leadership qualities and employee engagement at the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF). Statistically, the study revealed that transactional leadership style is practiced more in the DAFF, although transformational leadership and laissez-faire leadership styles are still co-existing. Transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles on the one hand are positively and significantly associated with the overall dimensions of employee engagement, with transactional leadership style being the stronger predictor of employee engagement. Laissez-fair leadership style on the other hand is negatively and not significantly associated with employee engagement. The results from this study added a new body of knowledge to the literature on the topic and supports directions for future study.

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ANNEXURE A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Informed consent for participation in an academic study

School of Social and Government Studies

Determining the relationship between middle management leadership qualities and employee engagement: The case of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Research conducted by:

Bafana Kungoane (27966550)

Cell: 082 859 8258

Dear Respondent

You are invited to participate in an academic study, conducted by Bafana Kungoane, a Masters student at the School of Government Studies at North West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The study is approved by Faculty Ethics Committee as well as the Committee for Advanced Degrees.

The problem statement for the study is to determine the nature of the relationship between transformational leadership as exhibited by middle managers and employee engagement in the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The study seeks to explore how middle managers can use transformational leadership to enhance employee engagement in order for the Department to deliver on its mandate.

Please note the following:

- This study involves an anonymous survey. Your name will not appear on the questionnaire and the answers you give will be treated as strictly confidential. You cannot be identified in person based on the answers you give.
- Your participation in this research is extremely important and will provide invaluable information in the field of leadership in a South African Public Service context. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. Participants in this research will receive upon request, a summary of the completed study.
 - ✓ Please contact my supervisor, Prof Gerda van Dijk (Contact number: 018 299 1627 and/or e-mail: Gerda.VanDijk@nwu.ac.za) if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.
- Please answer the questions in the attached questionnaire as completely and honestly as possible. It should not take more than 30 minutes of your time.
- Please print out the questionnaire to complete the survey, scan and email the completed questionnaire to Bafanak@daff.gov.za **not later than the 13th of October 2017.**

Thanking you in advance for the important contribution you are making to research in our country!

CONSENT

Please circle the appropriate response:

I hereby confirm that I have been adequately informed by the researcher about the nature, conduct, and benefits of the study. I have also received, read and understood the above written information. I am aware that the results of the study will be anonymously analysed in a research report. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may, at any	Yes	No
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stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study. I had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and of my own free will declare myself prepared to participate in the study		
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	2017/____/____
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Please continue to Part A: Biographical Information

PART A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please indicate your response by placing a cross over the applicable answer.

1. Please indicate the location of the position where you are currently employed											
Headquarters	01	Regional Offices	02	Other (Please specify) _____				03			
2. Please indicate your gender											
Male	01	Female	02	Other (Please specify) _____				03			
3. Please indicate your home language											
Afrikaans	01	English	02	Sepedi	03	Sesotho	04	Setswana	05	siSwati	06
Tshivenda	07	isiZulu	08	isiNdebele	09	isiXhosa	10	Xitsonga	11		
4. Please indicate your race (for statistical purposes only)											
African	01	Coloured	02	Indian	03	White	04	Other (Please specify) _____		05	
5. Please state your age (in years)											
18 - 25	01	26 - 35	02	36 - 45	03	46 - 55	04	56 – 65	05	66+	06
6. Please state your highest level of education											
Grade 12 / Matric	01	Certificate / Diploma	02	Advanced Certificate / Diploma	03	Bachelor's Degree	04	Honours degree	05	Master's degree	06
Doctorate	07	Other (Please specify)	08	Please provide the name of your certificate/diploma/qualification:							
7. Please state your salary level											
Level 11			01	Level 12					02		
8. How many years have you been working in the Government Sector?											
0-5 years	01	6-10 years	02	11-15 years	03	16-20 years	04	21 - 25 years	05	25+ years	06
9. How many years have you been working in your current job?											
0-5 years	01	6-10 years	02	11-15 years	03	16-20 years	04	21 - 25 years	05	25+ years	06

Please continue to Part B: Middle managers' perception of their leadership qualities

PART B: MIDDLE MANAGERS' PERCEPTION OF THEIR LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

The purpose of this part of the questionnaire is to obtain an accurate description of your leadership style as you perceive it and to examine how it relates to other styles of leadership. Please read each statement carefully and indicate the extent to which the statement applies to you from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree. The word "others" may mean your followers, peers, clients, or group members.

Indicate your response for each question by placing a cross over the most applicable answer on this 5-point rating scale.

	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Un-decided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I act in ways that build others' respect for me.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I express satisfaction when others meet expectations.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I get others to look at problems from many different angles.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I emphasise the importance of having a collective sense of mission.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I avoid getting involved when important issues arise.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I keep track of all mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I provide recognition/rewards when others reach their goals.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I treat others as individuals rather than just as a member of a group.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I express confidence that goals will be achieved.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I talk about my most important values and beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I instil pride in others for being associated with me.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, expectations, and deviations from standards.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I do not impose policies on my subordinates.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	I go beyond self-interest for the good of the group.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	I help others to develop their strengths.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	I talk optimistically about the future.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I re-examine critical assumptions about my employees' work to question whether they are appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	I show that I am a firm believer in "if it ain't broke, don't fix it".	1	2	3	4	5
22.	I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	I consider an individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	I am content to let others continue working in the same ways always.	1	2	3	4	5

Please continue to Part C: Middle managers' perception of their employees' level of engagement

PART C: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

The purpose of this part of the questionnaire is to obtain an accurate picture of your employees' level of engagement in their job. Please read each statement carefully and decide if the statement applied to you from (1) Strongly Disagree (5) Strongly Agree.

Indicate your response for each question by placing a cross over the most applicable answer on this 5-point rating scale.

	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Un-decided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I have enough people to do the work in my team.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	My employees believe that the management of this organisation is really concerned about their well-being.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	My employees would say that they are able to communicate freely up the line, even when they are communicating bad news.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Each employee had lots of opportunities to use and develop their skills in this job.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Each employee would say that they are treated fairly in this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	My employees frequently ask for feedback to improve their knowledge and capabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	My employees would say that the facilities/equipment/tools provided are excellent.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I get on well with my employees.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	My employees are hardly confronted with work demands that they find difficult to accept.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	My employees have no problems in achieving a balance between their work and their private life.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I make sure that each employee understands how his or her performance is linked to my organisation's goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	My employees have a plenty of freedom to decide how to do their work.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I frequently acknowledge and recognise each employee when he or she goes above and beyond expectation.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	My employees are able to meet deadlines every time.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I provide informal feedback to each employee on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	My employees hardly are expected to do tasks at work which are against their better judgement.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	My employees would say that they receive enough communication from the management team about what is happening in the organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Each employee knows exactly what I expect, how he or she is doing, and what he or she can do better.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Each employee would say that his or her job is a good fit with his or her skills and interests.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Each employee would say that the workload is evenly distributed across my team.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	My employees would say that they are able to speak up about their concerns without fear of retribution or negative consequences.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	The amount of work my employees are expected to do is fair and reasonable.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Each employee's job gives him or her opportunities to learn and grow.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Employee promotions are based on fair and objective criteria.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	My employees would say that they have confidence in this organisation's management team.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	I make sure that each employee finds his or her day-to-day work challenging and interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Using employee benefits (e.g. annual leave, sick leave, special leave, and e.tc.) will not hurt my employees' career or growth opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	My employees would say that they feel strong sense of belonging to the organisation.	1	2	3	4	5

29.	My employees would say that their job does not deny them any chance to use their personal initiative or judgement in carrying out the work.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	Each employee does many different things at work, using a variety of skills and talents.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	I make sure that each employee feels challenged in his or her job in a way that results in personal growth.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	My employees have the tools and resources they need to do their job well.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your participation