

**PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGERS' READINESS TO MANAGE CHANGE DURING
MERGERS**

by

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DECLARATION

I, **RONALD YIGA** hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own efforts, and that it has not been submitted in part or full for any degree at any University.

I confirm that:

- 1 This work was done entirely while in candidature for the Master's in Business Administration Degree at the North-West University (South Africa).
2. The content of this mini-dissertation was tested for plagiarism through the Turn-it-in programme.
3. Where published works of others have been used, I have acknowledged it accordingly.
4. Quotes from previous authors are clearly distinguished and likewise acknowledged. With the exception of such quotations, I affirm the entire dissertation to be my own work.
5. All sources of assistance have been declared.

Signature

Date

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

- My precious mother, Gertrude who toiled and strove hard to educate all her children,
- My beloved children, Thendo and Benjamin-Mannasseh,
- My loving and supportive wife Tshililo for the incredible love and strength shown to me in this journey.

Words are never sufficient to express my gratitude.

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ABSTRACT

It is well accepted that if we want to progress we need to change. Though we all rationally recognise that progress means change, not everyone is ready and willing, or indeed able, to embrace the change. On the contrary, it is widely believed that most people would resist change.

The purpose of the study was to investigate whether managers had been prepared and ready for implementing a merger (change) within the North West Provincial Government as part of a planned change process.

One of the most important traits in any organisation that ensures successful change is the state of readiness of its staff to embrace and accept change. To achieve the state of readiness of employees there is a great need for senior management to create a rallying vision to galvanise and convince employees to embrace the change. The vision will represent some future image to strive for which then makes it simpler for management to make everyone in the organisation focus on the vision (Kotter, 1995). If there is buy-in from all employees involved or affected by the change and management makes appropriate efforts to conscientise them, chances of resistance to the change will be quite minimal and any form of resistance displayed can be well and satisfactorily managed.

Because the research involved dealing with human experience, the methodology that was adopted for this research was qualitative and exploratory in nature. The population for this study was deemed to be homogenous and only employees of the two North West provincial government departments formed the research population. A sample size of 10-15 participants from departments that merged, which included staff, supervisors/managers and senior managers, was decided upon. However, qualitative sampling depends on data saturation that is at the point where any further collection of new data does not provide any further additional information or details on the issue under investigation. The data collection for this study was done through in-depth interviews conducted on a face to face basis. The in-depth interviews questions were open-ended questions useful when a researcher wants detailed information about thoughts, views and behaviours or wants to explore responses in depth.

Analysis of the main findings from both the literature review and primary research indicated that senior management of the North West Provincial Government overlooked

the importance of planning the change process ahead of implementation. As a result the entire process was not handled properly, expertly and professionally. First and foremost, there seems to have very little time between planning and implementing the changes, which may suggest that the change process was a knee-jerk decision. There was no change management team put in place to drive the process from planning to crafting persuasive communications and creating platforms and environments where employees would discuss the issue and raise their views and suggest ways of carrying out the change process as prescribed in Kotter's eight-step model.

The main findings from the literature review are that managers as well as employees have to be ready for change in order to make it happen. Change readiness needs to be created through proper communication and involvement. The findings from the primary research survey indicated that senior management of the North West Provincial Government overlooked the importance of planning the change process (merger of departments) ahead of implementation. As a result the entire process was not managed and led properly. First and foremost, they seem to have allowed for very little time between planning and implementing the change which may suggest that the merger (change) was a knee jerk decision. The managers who had to implement the change were also not well prepared - if prepared at all and mentioned the effect of the lack of preparation on their readiness and ultimate success of the merger. There was no change management team put in place to drive the process from planning to crafting persuasive communications and creating platforms and environments where employees could discuss the issue and raise their views and suggest ways of carrying out the change process as prescribed in Kotter's eight-step model.

Overall, there is great need for the public sector at large to realise that any change, especially mergers which are often overlooked as major change initiatives, follows a proper change management process and that managers need to be prepared and made ready for the change implementation.

Key words: Change management, mergers, change readiness, public sector, managerial implications

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1.0 CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction to the study

In his 2014 State of the Nation Address, the South African President, Mr Jacob Zuma, directed government departments both at national and provincial levels to embark on a strategic change process in which some departments would be merged. This merging led to organisational change.

Organisational change does not involve only processes, technology and organisational structures, however, but people too. To facilitate the achievement of the desired results intended by change it is crucial to have a good understanding of the basic human dynamics of change. Successful implementation of change within organisations is considered an effort that entails physical changes in how things are done and different emotional stimulation experienced by all employees involved or affected by the change (Bernerth, 2004). Successfully managing change will result in shorter implementation timelines, more widespread ownership of the change, and an organizational environment more conducive to future changes (Organisational Change Management Readiness Guide, 2014). Change results in actual physical changes as to how operations are run as well as emotional stimulation that can be painful in the workplace with going from what is assured and known to the unknown (Bernerth, 2004).

Employees affected by change are quite anxious and uncertain due to the fear of losing the comforts of all they were used to and have strenuously built, be it status, networks or financial security (Bernerth, 2004). Reasons for embarking on change processes are mainly informed by a number of strategic pursuits and decisions (Schilling & Steensma, 2001), among some of them is the need for more harmonised ways of working (Rugman & Hodgetts, 2001) and also the need to increase operational efficiencies and performances (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008). Naturally such contemplations usually result in well thought out change programmes established on assumptions that in change management one looks for incremental changes that are considered objective and measurable and can be achieved in the short term. Scholars on resistance to change advocate for research beyond top-down organisational change. Jones *et al.* (2004) and Dibella (2007) states that

“studies should pay attention to the dynamics of change processes and thereby contribute to the understanding of resistance”. Quinn and Dutton (2005) and Di Virgilio and Ludema (2009) indicated that resistance to change is significantly present in the high failure rate of change programmes

Paulsen *et al.* (2005:463) states that “generally changes affect the very structure of organisational life with regards to employee relationships, reporting lines, employee and work unit status”. Social lines and interactions related with group memberships also get to be disrupted when changes happen (Terry & Jimmieson, 2003). As much as change may be intended to take advantage of certain prevailing conditions, such as to strategically position the organisation or to shield the organisation against certain adverse environmental conditions (to minimise the adverse impact of a recession) employees generally dislike changes and respond negatively towards it and resist any kind of change efforts (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; McHugh, 1997). Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) and McHugh (1997) further states that “such negative reaction to change is largely because change brings with it increased pressure, stress and uncertainty for employees”.

Most change efforts by organisation fail due to resistance by employees (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993; Eby, Adams, Russell, and Gaby, 2000). It is therefore imperative that organisations that think of making major changes should first involve building positive employee beliefs, perceptions and attitudes as a precursor to ensuring successful change processes (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993; Eby *et al.*, 2000). To have a better understanding of how to successfully manage change, researchers have concentrated on what causes employee resistance. Nord and Jermier (1994) and Oreg (2006) have indicated that “critics of resistance studies have argued that researchers need to address employees’ subjective experiences of change in order to understand what resistance to change actually entails”.

George and Jones (2001) and Piderit (2000) have states that “the subjectivity in the experience of change is particularly evident when abstract models of resistance emphasise the fact that change has multiple concepts”. It is argued that maybe by examining employees’ subjective experience of change it may emerge that employees are not necessarily resisting the actual change itself, rather they resist the perceived unwanted outcomes of change or the process of implementing the change (Dent & Goldberg, 1999). An employee’s viewpoint is that any structural change may impact

directly or indirectly upon both his/her personal social life and the nature of his/her work. Fullan (1997:27) states that “the impact of organisational change can be experienced through changed working conditions, benefits and future aspirations”. It is for this reason that it is important that employees are able to understand the change process, analyse its effectiveness, locate their place in it and act by influencing those factors that affect them. According to Clarke (1999:70) “while most employees may have been given limited opportunities to be involved in the development of organisational change practices, it has not necessarily hindered them from observing and thereby formulating their own views regarding change and change management in their work environment”. The viewpoints of employees, especially operational managers or supervisors, form the greater contribution to a smooth transition and change process.

In view of the much publicised failures of change and change management it is imperative that senior management in organisations seriously consider their approaches and focus on the management and spur on employees to positively identify and embrace change (Daft & Marcic 2004). This is important because the organisation may need to move away from structures that are hierarchical and mechanistic to the ones that are much flatter and which may cause retrenchments of staff and therefore loss of jobs (Burnes, 2000).

Statistics have revealed that one-third of organisational change efforts were considered successful (Meaney & Pung, 2008; Beer & Nohria, 2000). On the other hand, two-thirds were viewed as having failed, so apparently change in some organisations is a process misunderstood by many employees, who do not have a step-by-step process in place which can be followed. On the other hand, however, organisations have to continuously change and engage in change management processes in order to acclimatise to the environmental changes so as to remain relevant and survive (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2008).

Fullan (1997:27) indicates that “employees have to struggle to understand and modify practices and processes that are complicated, in a constant state of renewal, and difficult to comprehend”. It is for this reason that Dunphy and Stace (1992) emphasises “the role of the employees in the factors influencing the forces of change, which also include leadership style requirements”. In this study the focus is on establishing the readiness of managers to champion change processes with minimum resistance from employees towards successful implementation of the change.

1.2 Background to the study

The president of the Republic of South Africa in his state of the nation in 2014 issued an instruction that certain provincial government departments had to merge. The provincial government of North West Province decided to implement the instruction of the president by merging the former departments of Public Safety & Liaison and that of Transport into one new department now known as the Department of Roads, Community Safety & Liaison. The change process experience seems not to have been welcomed by those managers and employees who were involved. The merger process seemed to have been done in a manner that was devoid of proper planning and proper preparation as the management of the change process by senior management left a lot to be desired.

Organisational Change Management (OCM) is a framework for managing the effect of business processes, changes in organisational structure or cultural changes within an enterprise. In a nutshell, OCM addresses the people side of change management.

Bridges (1991) points out that “the more mature an organisation’s change management ability the more comprehensive, structured and cyclical the change process will be. This helps an organization implement change strategically, dynamically and ultimately more successfully”.

Abramson and Lawrence (2001), Rossotti (2005) and Young (2001) indicates that literature contains evidence of the importance of determining the need for change and persuasively communicating it through a continuing process of exchange with as many participants as possible” For instance, Kemp *et al.* (1993) and Bingham and Wise (1996) concluded that effective communication of information regarding a change or change process by senior management in an organisation is pivotal to the convincing of employees to positively embrace the change and more importantly to the successful implementation of new programmes.

1.3 Problem statement

The problem in organisations is that change is often implemented without the necessary preparation or preplanning to get people (employees and management) ready for the change. Furthermore, if managers who play a critical role in the successful implementation

of change do not have the competencies to deal with change effectively they might also resist the change, due to their perceived negative impact of the outcomes of change as a possible result of not being prepared for the change. Thus a manager who is not ready to manage and lead the change and who resists change, will negatively reflect change (Kotter, 1995).

Willingness to change reflects strong beliefs, feelings, perceptions and intentions of individuals and the organisational aptitude and ability to successfully implement those changes (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993). The discipline and practice of readiness are the most important ingredients in creating successful change. Consulting firm A.T. Kearney has determined that 75% of all changes fail to deliver the intended benefits due to ignoring or poorly managing the human aspects of change (Oklahoma Department of Human Services Enterprise Systems, 2009).

Therefore the problem statement this study wishes to address is: Detailed change planning and preparation for implementation over time, which is crucial for successful change implementation, is often neglected, resulting in managers and supervisors responsible for driving the change process not receiving the necessary training that enables them to be ready to deal with change and the possible challenges that may arise during the process of change implementation.

1.4 Purpose of study

The purpose of the study was to investigate whether public sector managers had been prepared and ready for implementing a merger (change), within the North West Provincial government as part of a planned change process, in departments at both the provincial and national levels as had been directed by the President in 2014.

1.5 Research questions

1.5.1 Main research question

The main research question for this study is: Are managers in the public sector adequately prepared for change in order to be ready for change implementation and to successfully manage and lead change with minimal resistance?

Major changes require detailed planning and processes to be followed to be put in place prior to implementation, whereby senior managers verify and convincingly communicate the compelling reasons for the changes to the employees. Previous researches have since indicated that the implementation of planned change often requires that leaders spell out the reasons for changes and coax employees that it is indeed necessary to implement the changes (Armenakis *et al.*, 1999; Burke, 2002; Judson, 1991; Kotter, 1995; Laurent, 2003 and Nadler & Nadler, 1998).

1.6 Research sub-questions

- How did the organisation prepare managers for the change, in this instance the merging of Departments?
- Was a process of verifying and persuasive communication of the need for change to the managers put in place prior to the change taking place?
- Were the managers of the merging departments afforded opportunities to contribute their expectations prior to, during and after the merging of the departments?
- How did managers of the merging departments view change processes and practices within the current work dynamics of their departments?
- To what degree did managers in the merging departments resist change?
- How ready were they for the change and how ready are they now?

1.7 Research objectives

- To investigate and establish whether managers were adequately prepared/trained to manage and lead change.
- To establish whether prior processes of verifying and persuasive communication of the need for change to the managers had been done prior to the change.
- To determine whether the managers of the merging departments were afforded opportunities to contribute their expectations prior to, during and after the change.
- To evaluate the views of the managers within the merging departments, about the changes within the current work dynamics of their departments.
- To establish whether managers resisted the change and why.

1.8 Research assumptions

The assumptions underlying this study are that the respondents will answer the questions truthfully and not provide answers that they believe the researcher wants to hear. It is also assumed that the sample of respondents is representative of the population the researcher wishes to make inferences to.

1.9 Limitations and delimitations

Limitations are matters and occurrences that arise in a study which are out of the control of the researcher. They limit the extent to which a study can go, and sometimes affect the end results and the conclusions that can be drawn.

Marshall and Rossman (2011) stated that a discussion of the study limitations demonstrates that the researcher understands that no research project is perfectly designed, consequently, the researcher makes no conceited claims about generalizability or conclusiveness about what has been taught. They further indicated that every study, no matter how well it is conducted and constructed, has limitations. This is one of the reasons why the words “prove” and “disprove” are not used with respect to research findings. It is always possible that future research may cast doubt on the validity of any hypothesis or conclusion from a study”. As limitations a study might have access only to certain people in an organisation and not others, access only certain documents and certain data and not be able to access certain documents and data. The delimitations of a study are those characteristics that limit the scope of the inquiry and define boundaries for the study (Ledez, 2008). Although the study will assist future mergers at both national and provincial governments, this particular study focuses only on one Provincial Government (North West Provincial Government – focusing on the merger of two Provincial Government Departments into one Department).

1.10 Significance of the study

In the process of implementing the strategic changes (merging of public departments) at both the National and Provincial governments, it is imperative that proper standards and processes be put in place and followed. In such processes top management and in this case heads of departments should first verify and convincingly communicate the

compelling reasons for the changes to the employees and train the change management team to improve their readiness to champion and drive the change.

The contribution of this study is to create an awareness on the importance of managerial readiness for change and provide a benchmark for carrying out changes which ensures that those tasked with driving the changes (change management team) are well trained and prepared to deal with the challenges of this process.

1.11 Chapter overview

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic, provides the background to the study and states the research problem statement, the objectives and formulates the research questions. It also emphasizes the significance of the study and provides the chapter layout.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter reviews existing literature on agile methodologies with a focus on the contemporary issues and challenges found in the research, and shows how a research model is derived from the reviewed literature. The aim and objectives of the study are linked with other studies to identify the gaps and justify the need for the study.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter presents an overview of the important areas that need to be considered when undertaking research study. It outlines the type of research, the rationale for choosing the methodology for this particular research, defines and describes the target population, sampling, research instrument, data analysis, validity and reliability and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4: Results and discussion of findings:

The summary of the findings and the interpretation are done in this chapter. The findings of the study are presented and are discussed and interpreted. Emerging patterns identified are also discussed. Findings are linked to the reviewed literature to identify similarities with or divergences from existing theory.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter presents the conclusion of the research, and recommendations made to the organisation. The scope for future research is discussed.

2.0 CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the existing literature on organisational change management and resistance to change with a focus on the contemporary issues and challenges experienced by both management and employees when implementing change management.

Kotter (1995:59) states that “the process of convincing employees of the need for change often begins with crafting a compelling vision for it. A vision presents a picture or image of the future that is easy to communicate and that employees find appealing. The vision also provide an overall direction for the change process and serves as the foundation from which to develop specific strategies for arriving at a future end state”. Kets de Vries and Balazs (1999:640) point out that “Some research has indicated that it is easier to convince employees of the need for change when leaders put together a vision that offers hope and relief from stress or discomfort”.

2.2 Organisational change and its importance

Change is important in coping with emerging technological advancements in the society as well as adapt to environmental challenges. Organisational change is both the process in which an organisation changes its structure, strategies, operational methods, technologies or organisational culture to effect change within the organisation and the effects of these changes on the organisation. Organisational change can be continuous or occur for distinct periods of time (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/organization-change.html>). According to Gilley (2005) “organisational change occurs when a company makes a transition from its current state to some desired future state. Managing organisational change is the process of planning and implementing change in organisations in such a way as to minimize employee resistance and cost to the organisation while simultaneously maximizing the effectiveness of the change effort. Merger or amalgamations often results in changes that affect the structure, technologies and the processes used”.

Change is inevitable and important to any organisation because, without change, businesses would likely lose their competitive edge and fail to meet the needs of what most hope to be a growing base of loyal customers.

2.3 Understanding change and Change process

How one undertakes change, how one plans for it, and how the people affected are engaged by it are as important as the desired outcome of the change. The process is critical to the long-term success of the change and the long-term health of the organisation. Each change and its processes leave an organisational legacy in its wake. Does it support and promote a healthy organisational culture and climate, or does it leave behind bruised feelings, mistrust, and animosity? It is therefore important that change and change process be thoroughly understood prior to it being implemented (Janov, 1994).

2.3.1 Different types of change – what is the reason for change?

Jacobsen (2004:79) indicates that “one can find four different models for change that represent major different sequences of happenings and causal mechanisms which explain how and why change occurs”. The four models to be discussed are planned change, change as life-cycle, change as evolution and change as dialectic process and power. The change models indicates various triggers of change and how to go about implementing the change.

2.3.1.1 Planned (deliberate) change

The first model is a teleological model (*the use of a non-natural purpose or design to explain an occurrence.*) which shows deliberate change. Planned change mainly focuses on increasing effectiveness in organisational performance. Approaches to planned change rely on theories that describe the various stages and process of implementing change (Hartzell, 2003). Planned change management involves sequential steps for altering organisational and individual behaviour using behavioural - science knowledge (Beckhard, 1972). This method is typically employed once decision-makers identify a need for change (Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009; Burns, 2006) after analysing the environment's inhibiting and enabling forces (Burns, 2005). Lewin (1951), the father of planned change in organisational studies, developed the three-stage model that has become the classic way of thinking about change in organisations. The model was based on field theory, group

dynamics and action research. As such, change involves pre-prescribed, group based steps aimed at a goal (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010).

Planned change occurs when deliberate decisions are made in an organization, as opposed to a change that is unplanned where the change is a result of unforeseen occurrences. When a need for change is envisaged, it is usually planned change that occurs and mainly because people have identified some challenges they need resolved. Planned change is an intended, purposeful attempt or proactive plan by an individual or group to create something new. It is usually well thought out, deliberate, initiated and coordinated, require well developed leadership, vision and expert planning skills.

Jacobsen (2004) illustrates planned change as follows:

“Phase 1: Diagnosis: recognition of need for a change such as experienced problems / possibilities

Phase 2: Solution: descriptions of a future ideal state of mind for the organisation and a plan to further execution.

Phase 3: Execution of planned action – interventions in the organisation

Phase 4: Evaluation of planned actions and stabilisation of the new “improved” state.”

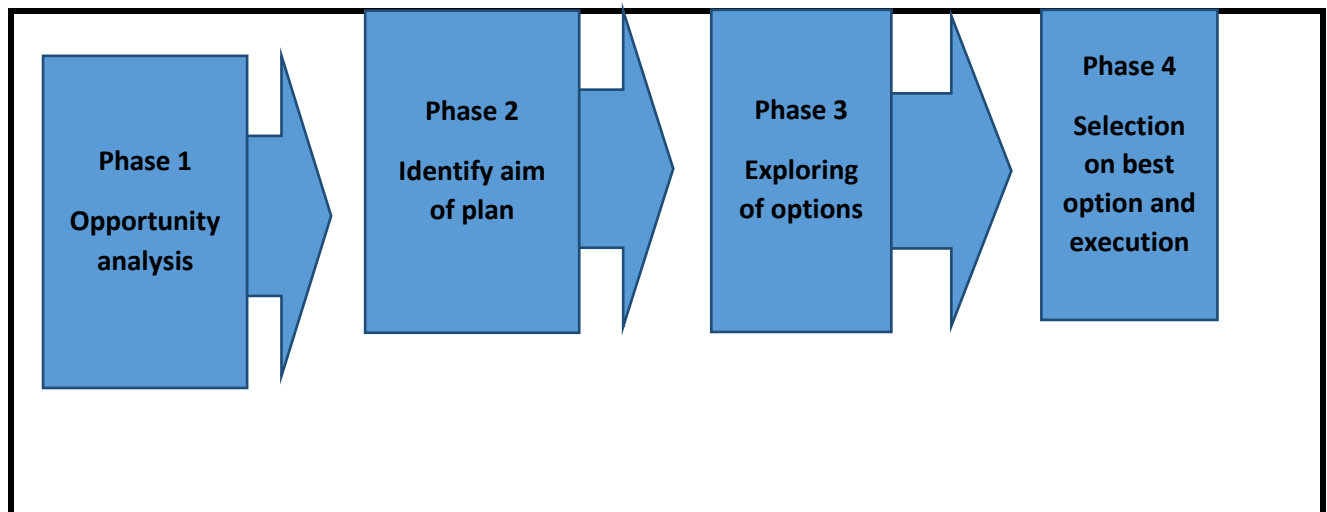


Figure 2.1: The four central phases in a planned change process (Jacobsen, 2004:20)

It is best to think of planned change as a cycle, not a straight-through process, the stages are indicated as follows,

In phase 1, analyse for opportunities and identify what needs to be done, e.g. analysing the current position of the organisation (Chand, 2003).

In phase 2, identify what the plan is aimed to do and decide on what exactly it is supposed to achieve, be it perhaps to stem the decline in sales.

Phase 3, look at options exploring where the focus is and planning a generation of as many options and ideas as possible.

Phase 4, one evaluates and selects the best option and decides upon its execution.

2.3.1.2 Change as life-cycle

A life-cycle model depicts the natural process of change such as progressing through a sequence of stages. An institutional, natural, or logical program prescribes the specific contents of these stages (Cameron & Whetten, 1983).

Explaining the reasons for need for a change is critical to the success of implementing the change, as it encourages buy-in from those involved as well as galvanising them towards embracing the change. It gives them an opportunity to air their opinions and views. It is quite important that leaders involve those people who are more affected by the change and the change process in implementing the change (ESI International, 2008)

Jacobsen (2004: 79) states that “in the lifecycle model change can happen due to intentional choices, but there is a perception that organisations develop in a special and a pre-determined way. The change follows a particular development pattern, so that every organisation, from birth, has an underlying form, logic, program or code which regulates the process of change, and moves the units from one start point to a finished form”. This means that changes happen because every organisation goes through a set of phases in their “life”. Mintzberg (1992) says that “when organisations are established, i.e. born and they often have a simple structure, they are small and consist of a few number of people. However, once t the organisations grow larger and more people start working there, a need for more formalities arises and this often means that the organisation develop a more sophisticated systems. As the organisation grow bigger problems due to the divided structure start to emerge and the result is the organisation start having difficulties coordinating the different areas and keeping it together”. Mintzberg (1992) further

suggests that “in such situations, the possibilities to make a structure matrix, where one could integrate the different division by creating more lateral connections where several units work together for example in projects”.

Greiner (1972) and Greiner (1998) describe how companies go through a series of phases as they grow and develop. Greiner (1972:37) suggests that “organisations that grow, always go through five phases, where there is always a possibility that the organisation makes it from one phase to another”. The phases are the creativity phase, management phase, delegation phase, coordination phase and cooperation phase.

Creativity phase – organisations are directed and driven by the creative force of the founder and the new products and services that create value for customers. Innovation is natural and people do whatever is needed to make things work.

Management phase – to begin with, when the organisation is still small, the founder is still capable of coping with the demands of leading; however as the company grows it becomes increasingly difficult as the different parts and divisions of the company need to be managed. The founder or the start-up team gets pulled in all different directions until they are unable to fulfil their duties. The complexities of the organisation lead to challenges which strain the leader's ability who could find that management and leadership of the organisation are proving to be quite a difficult challenge. The response to the leadership crisis is to hire managers who have competency, education and experience to do the various jobs suited to their experience and qualifications.

Educated and experienced managers are knowledgeable about planning, tactics and professionalism and capable of helping out with strategic thinking and operational plans. At this stage, rather than rushing around doing what seems to be needed at the time, a longer-term view starts to emerge, giving direction and focus to proceedings.

Delegation phase – as the organisation grows there is no option to autonomy leadership except to divide and conquer with greater structure and deeper hierarchy, where individual departments and operational units have individual managers and are delegated greater autonomy. At this stage middle management starts to appear in charge of multiple operational departments where they manage managers rather than giving direct orders to the front line.

Coordination phase - at the coordination phase the focus is on additional efforts to put reporting mechanisms and communication in place so as to be able to effectively communicate in all directions of the organisation. In general organisational reporting becomes more streamlined and sophisticated with increasing demands on business units for information about all aspects of the business.

Cooperation phase - human cooperation, connection and more collaborative, supportive approaches are the main features of this phase. Red tape and bureaucracy are simplified and trust is built with a greater focus on common organisational imperatives. Various structures are put in place to connect people in various dimensions, e.g. the use of matrix management. Reward systems may also be realigned to promote team and organisational success rather than just individual performance.

2.3.1.3 Change as evolution

Evolution is a key component of much of our understanding of biology and of life. Evolution is basically change over time (Weber, 2003). Jacobsen (2004:79) states that “his change evolution model is inspired by natural development, a viewpoint that gets its vision from theories on evolution amongst living things”. The model focuses on “survival of the fittest” where competition for resources is the chief characteristic amount the population. The organisations compete for resources to survive. In organisations change can be resisted from within as well as in the environment in which the organisation operates, and this ensures stability (Jacobsen, 2004). The main process cycle within the evolutionary change is that it evolves as a recurrent progression of variation, selection, and retention activities which is depicted in the diagram below.

Variations: creation of new developments are often seen as developing by random chance.

Selection: happens mainly through competition among organisations for customers or higher level decision makers select those decisions that are best suited for the resource base of an environmental niche.

Retention: involves the forces and routines that continue and maintain certain organisational developments (Aldrich & Ruef, 2006; Baum & McKelvey, 1999).

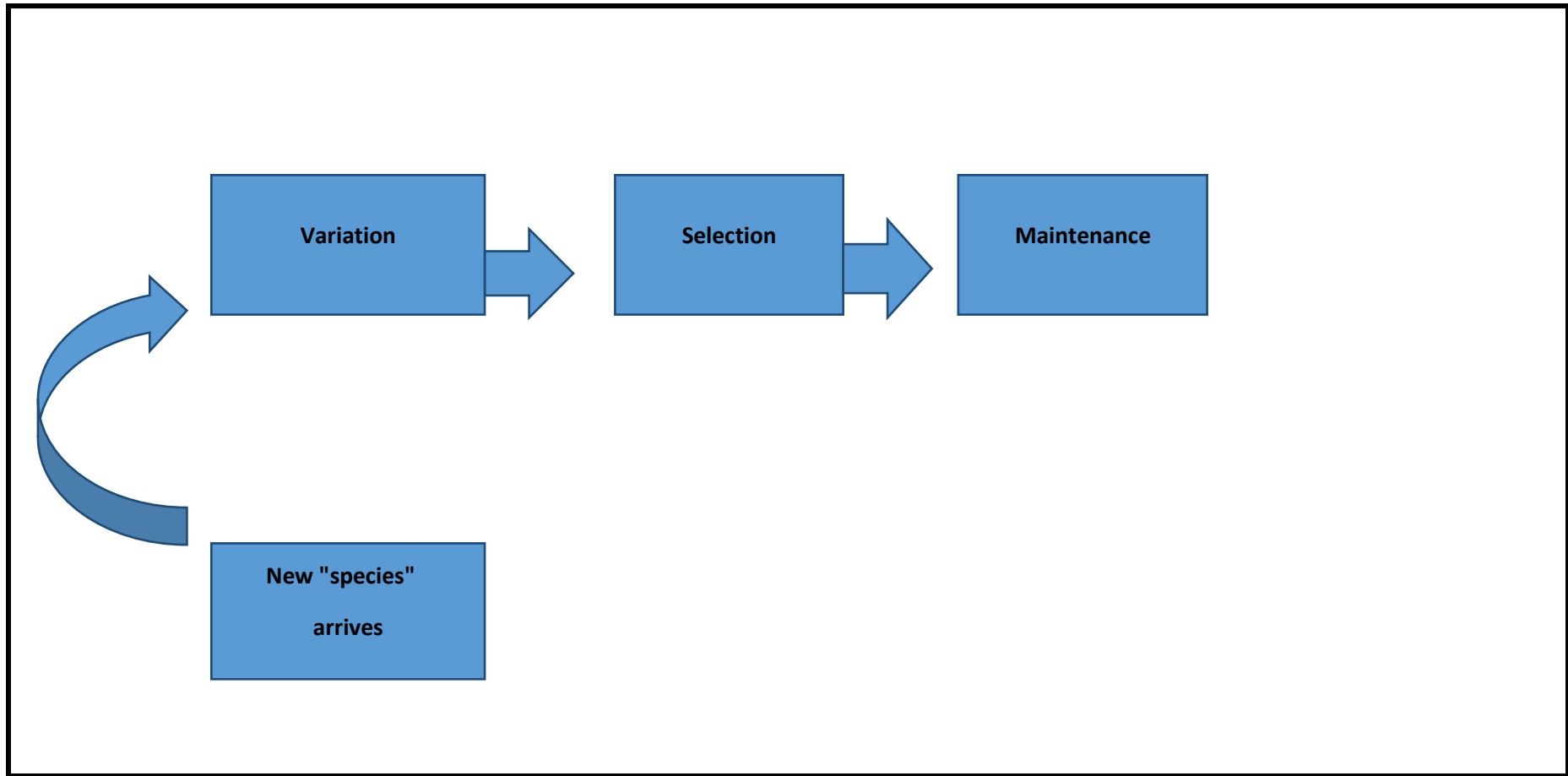


Figure 2.2: Central elements in evolutionary change (Jacobsen, 2004:26).

The idea behind this model is that it is only those organisation that are best suited to their environment that will thrive in the cut-throat competitive market. Those organisations that fail to adapt to their environments will perish. This is true mainly of small to medium businesses that do not have adequate resource to fight competition.

The process of change is seen in this model as normal and a natural selection where the fittest survives, that is the environment decides who “lives” and who “dies”. Those who want to be the best, have to make adjustments (change) along the way to adapt to their surroundings (Jacobsen, 2006). The factors that cause evolutionary changes are competition for scarce resources and legitimacy. Organisations that transmit these messages to their customer and clients in the best possible way will get most support from their environments. In this way it creates a pressure which is called “isomorphic”, which means the organisations are becoming quite similar trying to satisfy and fulfil the dominating values and perception of their surroundings. Changes are replicated in different organisations with a view of becoming similar to the others and benefit from their environment which often happens like imitation, where organisations imitate other organisations that are considered as “the best”. Either way, organisational changes are seen as a reflection of the changes which exists in the environment.

Should change emerge from within the organisation, it is planned change and systematic and management has some control. Gmehlin (2005) states that “if change comes from inside the organisation management has a certain amount of control over these internal driven changes, which can cause negative reactions towards the organisation from affected employees”. However, if the change emanates from an external source it creates different responses from organisations.

2.3.1.4 Change as dialectic process and power (conflictive change)

Van de Ven and Sun (2011:358) states that “dialectical theories focus on explaining permanency and change in relation to the balance of power between opposing entities”. The typical dialectic change process is associated with confrontation, conflict, and synthesis between opposing interest. The situations in which the model can apply (generating mechanism) is where conflict between opposing forces exists such as in an organisation in which organisational challenges are tackled head on.

The typical breakdown of dialectic change includes destructive conflict, power imbalance and differences that cannot be resolved. Remedies for conflicts and opposing forces include, among others, conflict management which may include mediation by third parties. Once that happens, change takes place (Jehn & Bendersky 2003; Peterson & Behfar, 2003). The other remedy involves negotiation skills and political shrewdness in resolving conflicts.

Gelfand, Leslie and Keller (2008:137) states that “a collaborative conflict culture can foster adaptation to change, given that there is an emphasis on active listening to others’ points of view and seeking the best solutions for all parties involved”. However, an organisation that has a culture that does favour avoiding conflicts and such an organisation is likely to be less adaptive to change because norms against open discussion and the lack of information sharing are likely to stop effective resolutions to disagreements, and therefore may impede conflictive change processes (Gelfand *et al.*, 2008).

2.3.1.5 Change as a contingency or coincidence

Jacobsen (2004:79) indicates that “This “model” views change as a result of mere coincidences which is something that happens without any life phases, or being an answer to a problem or even a response to competition for scarce resources, or politics and power battles. James March quotes that “organisations are in a continuous process of change, routine, practical and respondent, but not always controllable. Organisation seldom do what they been told to do” (Jacobsen, 2004:31). The assumption of James March’s above quotation is the supposition that organisations are multifaceted and multiple things take place without anyone’s control and at the same time. Because of uncertainty and ambiguity it can be concluded that change takes place as a result of temporary concurrence of different organisational streams.

It is essential that participants meet each other on a decision where everyone has a separate set of ideas and ways to resolve a problem. Who meets where and when, will determine how the connections of problems and solutions happens. It is not the best solution to the existing challenge which is the main choice but nonetheless, an

available and viable solution at that point in time (Jacobsen, 2004). Jacobsen, (2004:31) points out that “the main point in coincidence change model is that it is where and when the different participants connect, which creates the outcome”. Change can take the form of changes in employees’ daily working routines or it could be a change in organisational systems, structures, routines, which may not have the particular function which the participant wants, so he or she changes it. These small adjustments takes place on an individual level, but summed together it makes a difference in total, for the organisation

Jacobsen (2004:79) also states that “another source to a more incoherent development in an organisation comes from the number of turnovers, e.g. some people resign and new ones begin”. It may often be thought that when a new employee fills a new position, he or she would perform as near to the same as the previous person did; however, studies have revealed that this is untrue. A job position will never be totally defined and there will always be room for execution of assessment which leads to personification of the position in favour of the new employee. Change can occur during periods of high recruitment where an organisation employees a large group of people with a similar educational qualification, e.g. lots of women or men, or many young people. In such a scenario the power balances between the different groups vary, and may lead to changes in important operations within the organisation. This may be part of a large plan for the company, but in many cases these changes will occur without a plan and without being a solution to a defined problem (Jacobsen, 2004).

2.4 Understanding Readiness for change, climate of change and process factors of change

Resistance to organisational change and change processes reduces with the level change readiness that prevails and resides within the organisation. If the readiness of the members or employees involved is low the change can be refuted and members display total indifference to the change process altogether. Armenakis *et al.* (1999:631) state that “readiness for change reflects beliefs, feelings, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and perceptions of individual and organisational capacity to successfully enact those changes”.

Readiness for change is viewed as a complex conception that has an emotional side to it and a rational side as well as an emotive part to change. This complex view of readiness for change as a triadic approach as opposed to viewing it as not complex is much better at capturing the complexity of the phenomenon. George and Jones (2001: 419) and Piderit (2000:783) points out that “it is assumed that emotional, rational and emotive responses toward change come into play at various stages in the change process, and do not necessarily coincide”. Scientists have made attempts to group together the factors that shape change recipients’ readiness to embrace change (Armenakis & Bedeian 1999; Holt *et al.*, 2007). The results by researchers identified numerous factors responsible for the change recipients’ readiness to embrace change; however, only two have been singled out as important and that can make or break a recipient’s readiness for change and these are (a) climate of change and (b) the way change is dealt with (i.e., process of change).

2.4.1 Defining readiness to change

According to the work of Armenakis *et al.* (1993:683), readiness is defined as “The ‘cognitive precursor to the behaviour of either resistance to, or support for, a change effort”. Armenakis and Fredenberger (1997:144) define readiness as “A mind-set that exists among employees during the implementation of organisational changes”. They further say change readiness consists of strong beliefs, attitudes and intentions of organisational employees or members that are involved or affected by the change regarding both their ability and capability of implementing organisational change’ process successfully. This widely-used definition of readiness to change applies to the change that does not differentiate between three levels of readiness to change, namely micro-level or individual readiness, meso-level or group readiness, and macro-level or organisational readiness.

2.4.1.1 Individual readiness to change

Change recipients’ readiness and willingness are paramount to the successful and effective implementation of changes or change processes. Without the change recipients’ willingness, those involved or affected by the change will display resistance and the change is bound to fail (Prochaska *et al.*, 1997:60). Involvement of employees in organisational changes will facilitate buy-in from them and create an atmosphere of willingness on the part of the employees to change themselves and

embrace the change initiatives. Increased levels of individual or organisational willingness to accept change facilitates successful implementation of changes (Prochaska et al., 1994:39).

Markus and Kunda (1986:858) states that “to explain the malleability of the self, social psychologists argued for an integrationist approach to behaviour, which is based on the view that the self is influenced by both personality and situational characteristics”. Markus and Kunda (1986:858) also explains that “The malleability of the self is dynamic, which means that a particular set of traits must be activated when the person decides to take up a particular role in a situation”. It has been found that relating to organisational change, dispositional traits like willingness and openness to change, self-regard, effectiveness and positive feeling, act as experiences of positive attitudes to change (Oreg, *et al.* 2011). Activating the dispositional traits before the change actually happens makes the traits accessible being triggered by past experiences, e.g. previous change events (Oreg *et al.*, 2011).

When made accessible, the dispositional traits are later formed by other traits like level of trust, level of commitment in the organisation, chances of getting involved early in the planning phase and implementation as well as the impact of success of organisational change or change process. Individuals who are ready to change, display hands-on and willing attitudes in order to see the change initiative succeed (Bennis, 2000). The level of willingness to embrace change may differ on the basis of the situational factors of the change event. Change recipients can be willing to support change according to what they evaluate and consider as the balance between costs and benefits of maintaining a certain behaviour and the costs and benefits of change (Holt et al. 2010).

Describing an individual as being ready to change means that he/she exhibits a proactive and positive attitude that can be translated into willingness to support and confidence in succeeding in such an initiative. The readiness level may then vary on the basis of the situational characteristics of the change event (Holt et al. 2010). To illustrate, a change recipient may be willing to support change according to what he/she perceives to be the balance between costs and benefits of maintaining a behaviour and the costs and benefits of change (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). Should the benefits of change dwarf the expected dangers for change, readiness of

those involved to change is based on the interaction of entrenched inclinations or predispositions and responses stimulated by the prevailing situation which are affected by each individual's rational and emotive processes.

The resultant effect of the interaction is development of encouraging or non-encouraging conduct towards change. Is a person's readiness and willingness to change different from resistance to change and supportive or non-supportive attitudes to change? Schein (1979:144) argued that "the reason so many change efforts run into resistance or outright failure is usually directly traceable to their not providing for an effective unfreezing process before attempting a change induction". However, Armenakis *et al.* (1993:682) explained that "readiness for change may act to pre-empt the possibility of resistance to change, increasing the potential for change efforts to be more effective". Based on arguments of Schein (1996) and Armenakis *et al.* (1999) it may be concluded therefore that resistance and supportive or non-supportive attitudes towards change are thought of as a result dependent upon the level of either high or low individual readiness to change.

2.4.1.2 Group readiness to change

Coghlan (1994:18) states that "articles that focus on how individuals resist change tend to be deficient or one sided in that they deal with individual in isolation from the groups with which an individual may identify". Therefore willingness to embrace change at a group level is centred upon shared views and beliefs that such as (a) the need for the change, (b) ability and capability of the organisation to cope with change or change process effectively, (c) whether the group benefits from the results of change or change process and (4) whether the group possesses the capacity to be able handle change requirements. The readiness of a group to embrace change needs to be evaluated and considered along with individual readiness and organisational readiness mainly for two reasons: Pond *et al.* (1984:167) state that "although there are some empirical evidence linking groups and readiness to change there is no clear definition and analysis of this concept". The second reason is that readiness and willingness to embrace change for individuals and groups has to be investigated together in future.

Studies have indicated on the contrary that groups and their resistance to change have previously been analysed. Research by King and Anderson (1995:167), for example, singled out the following as sources of group resistance

- group cohesiveness;
- social norms;
- involvement in decision-making; and
- dependence on self-determination of actions.

They have also identified team unity, denial of outsiders, compliance with norms, conflict and team insight as ways in which groups function to resist change (King & Anderson, 1995, 2002). To surmount resistance and prepare groups to accept institutional change, the change management literature suggests many insights such as explaining the compelling reasons for wanting to change and getting members directly involved as well as allowing them to express their opinions and suggestions, empowering them with allowing them to be closely involved with the crafting of the processes to be followed and designing how to implement the change (Cummings, 2004).

2.4.1.3 Change recipients' perceived organisational readiness to change

Organisational level of readiness and willingness to change is essential because failure to evaluate the state and level of readiness within an organisation may bring about unsuccessful organisational change development effort (Beer, 1980:80). Eby *et al.* (2000) stated that “employees’ perception of an organisation’s readiness and willingness to change may influence their attitude toward change”. Previous studies have indicated that supportive attitudes to change have been identified as critical to the accomplishment of organisational objectives and achievement of implementing changes (Gilmore & Barneyt, 1992; Iacovini, 1992; Oreg *et al.*, 2011)

Table 2.1: Individuals change; organisations must change, too

Changing priorities at an individual level	
From	To
Acquiring skills	Learning to learn
Few needs satisfied by belonging to the Organisation	Various needs satisfied by belonging to the Organisation
Socializing within a narrow and stable set of roles that can last a lifetime, like being born in a certain caste	Socializing within a wide range of roles that can be activated as the individual grows and develops
Getting satisfaction mainly out of identifications, attitudes or skills that are more or less permanent	Getting satisfaction mainly out of identifications, attitudes or skills that may quickly appear and disappear
Changing priorities at an organisation level	
From	To
Stability	Change or choice
Predictability and loyalty to the organisation	Creativity and dedication in fulfilling the tasks
Hierarchy and constraint from few to control many	Freedom materialized in self-direction and self-control
Stable work relationships, but hard to develop and present even after their conclusion	Work relationships that bring satisfaction, but can be destabilized rapidly and disappear together with their importance

Source: Golembiewski (1969:11)

Schweiger and Denisi (1991:127) indicates that “non-supportive attitudes to change are associated with the low levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment” Organisational readiness to change is seen on a scale ranging from observing the

organisation as having the ability to successfully undertake change an indication on one hand that the organisation is perceived as having a high readiness to change whilst on the other hand an organisation is viewed as not ready and incapable of pulling off a change effort thereby indicating a low perceived organisational readiness to change Eby *et al.* (2000).

2.5 Environments determine change - the need for change?

Christensen and Laegreid (2002:15–16) commented that “it is therefore no revelation that managers within the public sector are increasingly subjected to the increasing pressures of managing their organisations”. Change efforts were mainly associated with private organisations in their pursuit for profits, however, as a result of the need to adapt to fast-changing environmental conditions and as a way of remaining relevant, public organisations have also caught up. Changes and advancements in technology that seek to enhance operational efficiency and cost cutting have necessitated public institutions to embark of change efforts.

Fernandez and Rainey (2006:168) assert that “journals on public administration are much less likely to include articles on “organisational change” or similar topics than research journals that focus on general management or organisational theory”. It can be pointed out that the differences highlighted in the literature between the sectors indicate a difference a susceptibility to change initiatives. Public institutions are less susceptible to change initiatives. This overlooks the overwhelming similarities of the two sectors. Meyer (1994:28) states that “organisational theory fully acknowledges the differences and sees organisations as affected by environments, stressing significance on differing types of technical and institutional environments”.

Meyer and Rowan (1991:44) state that “In modern societies, the elements of rationalised formal structure are deeply ingrained in and reflect, widespread understandings of social reality. Many of the positions, policies, programs and procedures of modern organisations are enforced by public opinion, by the views of important constituents, by knowledge legitimated through the educational system, by social prestige, by the laws and by definitions of negligence and prudence used by the courts”.

Jepperson and Meyer, (1991:205) indicates that “asserting that environments are directly involved in formal organisations is by default positioning them within social ideologies and making them susceptible to a much wider description”.

2.6 Interpersonal dimension of change: The human relations movement

Schneider, Brief and Guzzo (1996:7) states that “in times of change, interpersonal interaction with peers and superiors is highly valued, making the nature of such relationships a salient feature in shaping people’s readiness for change”. Naturally, especially during periods of uncertainty, e.g. during organisational change, employees bank on trust, support, and cooperation to function effectively and feel that all shall be well and there is nothing to worry about. For this reason managements need to reassure and empower employees and involve them in all the aspects of the change from planning and designing the change to implementation of the change initiative. As long as they feel part of the process and empowered to champion the change, buy-in will be achieved and the implementation of the change has a greater chance of succeeding (Schneider, Brief & Guzzo 1996). Therefore it is imperative for management to focus on creating supportive and trusting relationships and continuous communication. Emery and Trist (1965) and McGregor (1960) stated that “also creating commitment within the organisation is equally central to the human relations movement because organisational effectiveness can be achieved by successfully managing the interpersonal relationships in organisations”.

Zammuto and O’Connor (1992) indicated that “a growing body of research evidence has indicated that the human relations orientation mobilizes the forces and energies necessary to create an employee’s confidence and capability to undertake new workplace challenges and changes”. Supportive structures and conducive atmospheres within organisations facilitate the creation of commitment and positive attitudes that are favourable towards change (Jones *et al.*, 2005 and Zammuto & O’Connor, 1992). Where there is buy-in, supportive involvement of the employees will follow. Burnes and James (1995) observed that change resistance was low and is in keeping consistent the human relations philosophy. Lastly, Tierney (1999:120) notes that “the psychological atmosphere of trust, participation, and support are preconditions for an environment conducive of change”. These elements that embodies this interpersonal aspect resides at the atmosphere-of-change level (e.g.,

employees need trust in the leadership) and process-of-change level (e.g., involvement and participation in decision making).

Contrary to the plethora of general definitions of organisational climate, the change literature lacks good conceptualizations of change climate. In her research, Tierney (1999) defined climate or atmosphere of change as “employees’ perceptions of which organisational change plans in an organisation are expected, supported, and rewarded for”. In this study, atmosphere of change is conceived in terms of overall perspective traits that favouring change. It refers to employees’ understanding of the internal circumstances under which change takes place. The process part of change has a more transient character and refers to the actual approach of how a specific change project is dealt with. Holt, Armenakis and Harris *et al.* (2007:289) states that “the context and process of organisational change have both been identified as major favourable contributors of employees’ readiness for change”.

2.7 Change management team

There are factors that may worry employees during the period of an organisational change, for example poor leadership where everyone is unsure and uncertain of how to go forward. In times of organisational change strong leadership should be observed to give direction and confidence to all involved. Leaders are expected to provide and facilitate the vision of the change and lead from the front as well as support all employees involved (Covin & Kilmann, 1990; Lewis, 2000). Such actions from leadership help to create stability and steadiness of the change process and above all increase employees’ commitment to the organisational change (Schweiger *et al.*, 1987; Covin & Kilmann, 1990).

When a change is envisaged, it is the responsibility of management to communicate and furnish as much information to employees about the change as possible. It is also imperative that the reasons for the need to implement the change and details of how the change shall be executed are communicated to employees in good time (Ashford, 1988; Lewis, 2000; Terry *et al.*, 2001). Opportunities for the employees to raise their concerns and contributions to the change should also be afforded to them. Uncertainties relating to employees’ careers, possible new roles, fear or anxieties

they may be experiencing should be explained and clarified (Terry *et al.*, 2001; Lewis, 2000).

Amiot *et al.* (2006:552) and Nadler (1987) indicates that “during change some employees may also have trouble disengaging from the old ways of doing things, as they feel a sense of loss with having to “let go” of the old and highly-valued structures, methods and rules. This is especially so if people have been socialised to appreciate the values, norms and organisational history and if beliefs and values are shared throughout the organisation. Organisational change may disrupt the structure of the organisation and with the change certain practices and ways of operations cease. At times with organisational change comes rebranding and some socialised organisational cultures and treasured history disappears with the change. New cultures and mission and vision statements are created and so are new value systems for the organisation. Employees may perceive these changes as a loss to the organisation’s status or prestige (Amiot *et al.*, 2006; Elsbach & Kramer, 1996).

Once the need for change has been envisaged, it important during the period of crafting of the change strategies to also consider forming a “change management team”. Such a team should be tasked with championing and helping with driving the changes, from planning to implementation as well as crafting the communication messages. An ideal change management team should comprise and represent a variety of the organisation’s functional areas and levels. The attributes of the team are that it needs to have excellent communication skills, have business influence, be fully committed to the change, know and understand the business quite well, members of the team should be players who understands teamwork and should also have some change management experiences (Change Implementation Plan for Government of Queensland, Australia, p6) (http://www.nrm.wa.gov.au/media/10528/change_management_plan_workbook_and_template.pdf).

The team does not have to be working on the project full time but must be able to commit some time to the project. Since the change management team comprises members from various levels and areas of the organisation it may be essential that the team have an orientation and training to ensure that everyone on the team understands their roles and responsibility and level of commitment required of the members (Change Implementation Plan for Government of Queensland, Australia,

p6).(http://www.nrm.wa.gov.au/media/10528/change_management_plan_workbook_and_template.pdf).

2.8 Change models and change management process: The two main models

2.8.1 Kotter's eight step model

The first model was developed by John P. Kotter (<http://www.kotterinternational.com/8-step-process-for-leading-change>) and it has eight steps that have to be executed in the specific order for the implementation of the change to be successful.

“The eight steps are as follows:

- a) Establish an experience of necessity:** Investigate the market and the situation of competition. Identify possible and potential crises and significant opportunities. Provoke any emergency or set unreachable goals, if this is necessary. Change does not happen until at least 75 % of the management in the organisation are convinced that business-as-usual are not acceptable.
- b) Create a governing coalition:** Establish a group of people with sufficient competence, knowledge and power, to execute the change. The group conduct several meetings and workshops, where the problems are analysed and the opportunities are explored. The top manager is always a part of the team.
- c) Develop a vision and a plan:** Create a vision which can manage the work of change. The vision should be easy to communicate and attractive to the stakeholders. Formulate plans that can make the vision a reality.
- d) Convey and communicate the change vision:** Use every term and conditions to communicate the new vision and the strategies. Use the controlling coalition as role models.
- e) Create a fundamental for action on broad basis:** remove obstacles in systems, structure and humans, which may block the change. Encourage risk taking and action.
- f) Generate short-term benefits:** Plan and realisations of fast and visible victories. Reward those who make the victories possible.

- g) Consolidate the results and produce more change:** Use the change increased credibility to change all systems, structure and policies that does not harmonise with the vision. Hire and promote employees that live the vision.
- h) Anchor the new approaches in the culture:** Achieve new results through successful behaviour and more effective management. Clarify the connection between new behaviour and results. Recruit and develop management after the vision.”

2.8.2 Visionary/ideological approach

Guldbrandsen (2010:243) states that “the visionary / ideological approach to strategic management is inspired by ‘best practice’ from other organisations and with this create an attractive vision for the future, which can be the driving force in the organisations strategic development”. Models of change were inspired and influenced by consideration of the thoughts of using an ideal or a vision when one creates the future. Details about how the focus shifted from the rational approach to the ideological approach have been explained in one of John P Kotter’s books called *Heart of change*. In this book Kotter still talks about the his eight-step model and the linear approach it builds on, but he emphasises that the biggest challenge when change happens, is to get the people to change behaviour. It is therefore imperative for management or the change management team that during a change their efforts and communication should focus creating the desired behaviour change within employees. In addition the desired behaviour change on can be achieved by transfer of focus from rational analysis approach to a more emotional, see-feel approach, appealing to employees’ feelings, emotions and not their cognitive dimensions. The most effective and important tool to do this is through creating communication messages that galvanise and rally the vision of the change.

It is critical that focussed communications should do the selling of the change and capture feelings and create assumptions such that the new behaviour can emerge. Guldbrandsen (2010:243) states that “the vision model can be used to explain the different phases in a change course and also as inspiration in relation to facilitations to practical measures that can be implemented to support the process of change”. To be able to rally employees and make them to accept change, there is need to see

the critical need for the change. Reasons and needs for the change have to be meaningful to employees for them to accept and embrace the change. Advantages for the change should outweigh and improve the current way of doing things. The needs for change should clearly show that it will solve the current challenges faced in the operation of the organisation. What do the stakeholders get out of it? And what is in it for employees? In the rational approach to strategic change one emphasized hard analytic thinking and a small dream, whereas in the school of vision it is 80% of the dream that gives the change meaning and that the dream creates positive feelings. The positive feeling again is the way to create new paths and changed behavioural patterns (Balfour and Clarke (2001:44).

2.9 Employee perceptions of change

Paulsen *et al.* (2005:463) states that “generally changes affect the very structure of organisational life with regards to employee relationships, reporting lines, employee and work unit status”. Social lines and interactions related with group memberships also get to be disrupted when changes happen (Terry & Jimmieson, 2003). As much as change may be able to take advantage of certain prevailing conditions, such as to strategically position the organisation or to shield organisations against certain adverse environmental conditions (to minimise the adverse impact of a recession) employees generally dislike changes and respond negatively towards the and resist any kind of change efforts (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; McHugh, 1997). Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) and McHugh (1997) further state that “such negative reaction to change is largely because change brings with it increased pressure, stress and uncertainty for employees”.

Armenakis *et al.* (1993:681) and Eby *et al.* (2000:419) points out that “one of the main reasons why change efforts fail is employee resistance to change, the significance of resistance is compounded by the high rate of change failure. Thus, building positive employee beliefs, perceptions and attitudes is critical for successful change interventions”.

Most change efforts by organisations fail due to resistance by employees (Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder, 1993; Eby, Adams, Russell & Gaby, 2000). It is therefore imperative that organisations that think of making major changes should first build positive employee beliefs, perceptions and attitudes as a precursor to ensuring successful change processes (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993; Eby *et al.*, 2000). To

have a better understanding of how to successfully manage change, researchers have concentrated on what causes employee resistance. Nord and Jermier (1994) and Oreg (2006:73) have indicated that “critics of resistance studies have argued that researchers need to address employees’ subjective experiences of change in order to understand what resistance to change actually entails”.

2.10 Resistance to change

Any change or change process encounters some form of resistance. This is because resistance is a natural and unavoidable part of any change process. It is viewed as a means of challenging either the proposed change or how the change is to be carried out. It’s actually a survival mechanism within organisations. Management needs to be aware of the reasons employees resist change in order to be able to understand and manage the root causes of the resistance (Piderit, 2000). Identifying the root causes of change resistances can be done in a number of ways, such as through employee feedback, supervisor input, project team issues, and compliance audits. It is therefore essential to consult the employees afford them opportunities to raise their concerns and contribute their views to the change and change process Kotter (1995).

Carr (1999:573) states that “employees’ emotional reactions to change are similar to the experience of grief”. It is therefore important that management understands that some employees view change as a loss and loss creates emotions that can result in stress and anxiety.

2.10.1 Defining resistance

Due to rapid changes that take place in the modern environment, organisational changes can occur continuously. Many employees view change as a loss therefore it is normal for the employees to resist change because resistance itself is a defence mechanism to maintain the status quo. Hultman (1995:15) maintains that “some employees are predisposed to resist change, even though the change effort ultimately may be to their benefit”. According to Waddell and Sohal (1998:543), resistance could be described as “a multifaceted phenomenon because it introduces unanticipated delays, costs and instabilities into the process of a strategic change”.

Hultman (1995:15) further maintains that “resistance to change that is evident in employee behaviour falls into two categories namely, active and passive resistance. In the case of active resistance, employees engage in behaviours associated with manipulation, ridicule, fault-finding and fear. On the other hand, passive resistance is associated with withdrawal of information, ignorance and lack of action following verbal compliance”.

Dent and Goldberg (1999:34) define resistance as “the conduct that employees adopt in order to preserve the status quo when faced with pressure or if they feel that their security or status is threatened”. By doing so, the status quo is maintained. In other words, employees engage in behaviours that serve to disrupt, confront, challenge, test levels of authority and engage in critical discourse when confronted with change management practices”.

Robbins (1998:394) states that “resistance could serve to test the commitment of those initiating the change, if the resistance is based on valid viewpoints, then important truths could be heard, understood and taken into account by the change initiators if the wanted change is to succeed, resistance can assist to weed out bad ideas that have not been thoroughly vetted by the change initiators or ideas that might have been impulsive reactions to external events. Resistance could provide an outlet for employees’ emotions and energy during times of intense pressure. Resistance becomes negative when it hinders employee adaptation to change and organisational progress”.

2.10.2 The nature and causes of resistance

In many instances resistance to change is caused by a feeling of uncertainty on the part of employees. Some of the reasons identified as sources of resistance relate to (a) fear of losing something which is valued e.g. job security, (b) lack of understanding the change and its implications, (c) no buy-in from employees regarding the need for the change or they struggle to cope with either the level or practice of change (Zander, 1950; Skoldberg, 1994; Kotter, 1996; Maurer, 1998; Robbins, 1998; Bolognese, 2002; Dunn, 2002; Schuler 2003).

From the works of Zander (1950) and Dent and Goldberg (1999) some common reasons have been identified that nurture employee resistance to change such as

that the nature of the change is not clearly explained to the employees involved, the change is susceptible to wide interpretations due to lack of clarity and direction from senior management; employees negatively influenced feel strong forces discouraging them from embracing change; employees who have embraced the change are instead pressured to toe the line and comply rather than allowed to make their input in the nature or the direction of the change; the change viewed as a personal issue where the rest have not bought into it.

Dunn (2002:331) states that “other causes of resistance by employees in organisations worthy of mention include, lack of confidence in the management; loss of status; loss of job security; pressure from co-workers; dysfunctional group relationships; interruption of cultural customs and traditions; personality clashes; and a lack of diplomacy and timing”.

Kotter (1996:22) states that “resistance to change can be linked to issues associated with employees being incredulous to the value of change, the ambiguity of change, leadership styles, the internal dynamics of the organisation; and an unfavourable work environment”.

Adding to this list of causes, Schuler (2003:1-5) has maintained that resistance is most likely to surface when employees feel connected to other employees who are identified with the ‘old ways of doing things’; have no role models for the new activity; fear they lack the competence to change; feel overloaded and overwhelmed; and fear hidden agendas resultant of the change”.

It must be noted that Schuler’s (2003) list outlines the emotional aspects associated with resistance. He maintains that in order to obtain commitment for change, employees must actively participate in the change processes at both the rational and emotional level. Furthermore, he states that “an understanding of the emotional aspects responsible for resistance is poorly understood by those implementing change”. Management should make an effort understand the emotional determinants of resistance to be able to manage them as failure to do so may make matters worse by mismanaging employee resistance (Waddell & Sohal 1998).

In a study done by Waddell and Sohal (1998) where employees’ extent of resistance was assessed, the outcome revealed that management failed to identify the kind of resistance to establish whether there was a benefit to be derived from its usefulness.

Research has indicated that if resistance is managed well with a focus to derive usefulness from it rather than choking it, resistance can contribute favourably to successful change in an organisation. In support to this view, Goldratt (1990:4) states that “resistance in any organisation is a necessary and positive element because it allows for participation by employees involved in the change process. This in turn, results in the successful implementation of change”.

Other forms of resistance as indicated by Maurer (1998) include immediate disapproval and complaints about the change, silence and not even pay attention the announcement of change, sabotage, that is shoot the idea, non-agreement and compliance with malicious intent. Skoldberg (1994:219) indicated that “resistance is at times displayed by the loss of commitment, increased errors on the part of employees, high rates of absenteeism and loss of motivation among employees”.

2.10.3 Categories of resistance

Mabin *et al.* (2001:168) indicated that “resistance to change can be categorised into three groups of factors namely, organisational, group and individual”. Threats caused by the situations both inside and outside of the organisation cause resistance because of uncertainty and the creation of unwelcome organisational structural and process changes.

Bernerth (2004:36) indicated that “Individual factors related to the personality impose different emotional reactions to change”. Harris 2002 stated and divided individual resistance factors into the following:

Lip service: Sabotage by disregarding, as an instrumental compliance in that in recognising the legitimate authority of the hierarchy and the benefits of the continued employment, employees overtly and orally conform but covertly resist attempts to be subjugated.

Prolonged argument: Sabotage by erosion, involving the tenacious use of vociferous and protracted oral arguments upon all possible occasions to erode enthusiasm, support, or argument with the management-espoused change,

Hijacking: Sabotage by transformation, where employees endeavour to transform the adopted change into something more acceptable to their function, or simply something more personally palatable,

Scarcity creation: Sabotage by undermining, including the purposeful behaviour of a more confrontational form.

Direct conflict: Sabotage by battle, reflecting extremely pronounced personal opposition to change that could result in resignation”.

Conner (1998) and Cheng and Petrovic-Lazarevic (2005b:1-20) developed an approach that emphasises eight distinctive phases when they feel trapped in a change they do not want but cannot control, and which are,

“**stability** as a stage prior to any announcement to change,

- **immobilization** where shock is considered the initial reaction to a negatively perceived change,
- **denial** characterized by the inability to assimilate new information into the current frame of reference,
- **anger** followed by frustration and feelings of being hurt,
- **bargaining** indicating that people can no longer avoid confronting with the reality,
- **depression** expressed by an emotion stage in a form of resignation to failure feeling,
- **victimized**, a lack of emotional and physical energy and disengagement from one’s work,
- **testing** with signal of acknowledgment of one’s limitation, the attempt to regain
- **control**, and freeing oneself from the feelings of victimization and depression,
- **acceptance** where people respond realistically, are more grounded and productive relative to the previous phases within the new context”.

Kurt Lewin developed a change model that had only three steps which are unfreezing, changing and refreezing. His simple explanation of the three-step model was that the process of change involved developing a view that change is needed,

and then moving toward the new, desired level of behaviour and finally, freezing that new behaviour as the standard to follow (Hartzell 2003).

Hertzell gave an analogy of cooking a frozen piece of meat where one is required to defrost so as to thaw it before cooking. The same should apply with change, before change can be implemented it must go through the initial step of unfreezing. This is because naturally people do not like change and will resist it. The unfreezing period is to create awareness that the current state of affairs have challenges which can only be resolved by going through a change process.

Lewin indicated that change can now only be implemented when the people have been unfrozen and understand the need for a change and will not resist. The new desired state can only be achieved by transitioning to it. At this stage the change becomes very real and during this period employees may struggle with the ways of doing things. It is a time marked with uncertainty and fear, making it the hardest step to overcome. During the changing step people begin to learn the new behaviours, processes and ways of thinking.

The last stage is the refreezing stage. Lewin called the final stage of his change model freezing, but many writers refer to it as refreezing to represent the act of buttressing, steadying and hardening the new state after the change. The new changes made to organizational processes, goals, structure, offerings or people are accepted and refrozen as the new way of operation and doing things within the organisation. Lewin found the refreezing step to be very important to ensure that people do not revert back to their old ways of thinking or doing things prior to the implementation of the change.

2.10.4 Build internal support for change and overcome resistance

Fernandez, Sergio, Rainey and Hal (2006:170) quoted that “managerial leaders must build internal support for change and reduce resistance to it through widespread participation in the change process and other means”. Fernandez and Rainey write that a “crisis, shock, or strong external challenge” real or manufactured “can help reduce resistance to change”. They caution that managers run the risk of “playing it too safe” if the urgency rate is not pumped up enough.

It is imperative that management understands that successful implementation of organisational change often resembles a hybrid where employees participate and take direction from top management. Management should also understand that at times they have to follow a political process where they develop and nurture all stakeholders through an ultimate goal of achieving the change buy-in and overcome resistance.

2.11 General uncertainty effects of change

In general scientists have established a connection between a number of factors regarding change namely, the manner in which the process of change within an organisation is handled, the extend of readiness within the organisation to understand what exactly needs to be done in order to achieve success in implementing the change and the internal circumstances of the organisation which include among others things leadership in managing the process and commitment (Armenakis *et al.*, 1999; Kotter, 1995; Mento *et al.*, 2002; Sashkin & Burke, 1987).

Change is inevitable such that at times it is more of the rule than the exception and in such situations the success of the change is dependent on the employees' ability, and willingness to accept and embrace the change. Issues like uncertainty caused by lack of knowledge, lack of details about the change and lack of consultation and participation by with being receptive and open to change has become paramount. Because the future is often uncertain in terms of change, people in general are not motivated to change unless there are compelling reasons to do so (Van de Ven 1993).

To avoid uncertainty it is imperative that management and the change management team plan thoroughly and communicate effectively at every turn to keep all stakeholders informed and galvanising employees in the same direction. Knowledge is power such that all information needs to be constantly supplied to employees and assurance about job security is paramount (Armenakis *et al.*, 1999; Kotter, 1995; Mento *et al.*, 2002; Sashkin & Burke, 1987).

2.11.1 Uncertainty about job performance

With change comes other changes that may result in some employees being excess to requirements and may not necessarily be retrenched but may be side-lined and be given superficial roles as compared to what they used to do. The likelihood of that happening causes anxiety and fear among employees especially where they find themselves without adequate skills to match what now is required or the new operations requirements. Studies done by Sagie *et al.* (1985:157) indicated that “employees with experience to perform a specific task one way or the other are likely to resist change more than those employees with less experience”. This is usually because employees with more experience have a higher degree of confidence in their ability to do the job in the old way and do not want to abandon the old ways of doing things. They are also the ones more rooted and entrenched in the old culture and norms of the organisation and relinquishing all that becomes a big challenge and they would want to resist any change that forces them out of their comfort zone.

2.11.2 Employee participation in change

Change should not be imposed on people (employees), they need to be empowered to find their own solutions and responses, with facilitation and support from managers, and tolerance and compassion from the leaders and executives. If change is imposed it is most likely to be resisted. Management can lessen resistance to change by involving employees in planning and implementation process. Involvement of employees during a change increases knowledge about the change, it compels employees to research and brainstorm how to do it. Involvement of employees in change processes intrinsically fulfilling to the employees and increases their commitment. It invokes a sense of belonging and ego on the part of the employees. Gratchel and Proctor (1976:27) state that “even a small amount of individual control over adverse stimuli (change) will reduce a person's opposition to these stimuli”.

2.12 Conclusion

Rationally progress means change, and everyone welcomes progress, however, not even the prospect of getting benefits from change would make everyone ready and willing, or indeed able, to embrace change. Generally change is resisted unless

there is buy-in and it is clear to everyone involved that it solves their existing challenges. Duck (1993:109) points that “change is intensely personal” and Pietersen (2002:32) reckons that “for many people, the threat of change produces what is sometimes called the Factor - Fear, uncertainty and doubt”. There are factors that may worry employees during the period of an organisational change, for example poor leadership where everyone is unsure and uncertain of how to go forward. In times of organisational change strong leaderships should be observed to give direction and confidence to all involved. Leaders are expected to provide and facilitate the vision of the change and lead from the front as well as support all employees involved (Covin & Kilmann, 1990; Lewis, 2000). Such actions from leadership help to create stability and steadiness of the change process and above all increase employees’ commitment to the organisational change (Schweiger *et al.*, 1987; Covin & Kilmann, 1990).

Understanding the basic human subtleties of change will facilitate bringing about the desired results. Successfully managing change will result in shorter implementation timelines, more widespread ownership of the change and an organisational environment more conducive to future changes. Kotter (1995:59) states that “it is therefore imperative that the implementation of any planned changes should begin with the crafting of a compelling vision for it presents a picture or image of the future that is easy to communicate and that employees find appealing”. It provides overall direction for the change process and serves as the foundation from which to develop specific strategies for arriving at a future end state. Overall, there is great need for the public sector at large to realise that any change, especially mergers which are often overlooked as major change initiatives, follow a proper change management process and that managers need to be prepared and made ready for the change implementation.

3.0 CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the methodology and methods that are necessary to answer the research questions and reach the research objectives are discussed. It will include the research design, research strategy, the target population, sampling, research instrument for data collection, data analysis, research rigour as well as ethical considerations.

The research methodology is the approach taken to acquire the necessary information (McNabb, 2010). It is a strategy of enquiry which moves from the underlying assumptions to research design and data collection (Myers, 2009). According to Oliver (2004), methodology is the part of research that shows the ways and approaches of collecting the data. The most common categorisation of research methods is into qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative and quantitative methods refer to how one understands the world and the ultimate purpose of the research. The other meaning of the terms has to do with research methods, that is, the way in which data are collected and analysed, and the type of generalizations and representations derived from the data.

3.2 Research design

Gatrell, Bierly and Jensen (2005) define research design as “the critical process that transforms an idea, interest, or question from *just a thought* into a meaningful and purposeful investigation of social or physical process”. The choice of research in this study was done keeping with in mind the objectives of the research. Hair *et al.* (2000) indicate that “Most research objectives can be achieved by using one of the three types of research designs, namely exploratory, descriptive and explanatory or casual research”.

For this study a qualitative method was adopted because the research focused on a better understanding how the public sector managers felt about their readiness to manage change during a merger, thereby understanding their meanings. Since this is a qualitative study, the participants were purposely chosen rather than at random.

The participants were chosen based on the criteria that they are employees of the North West Provincial government and were staff of the two departments that merged.

Two main approaches of doing research are quantitative and qualitative. The qualitative method generally favours the view that the world is holistic and that there is not a single reality. Burns *et al.* (1991:412) support the view that “reality which is based on perceptions, is different for each person, changes over time and derives meaning primarily from context”. Both approaches are said to be systematic and having a system or following a process is a critical principle of research. Quantitative research is thought to be objective, whereas qualitative research is considered more subjective. In using the quantitative method, it is thought that in gaining, analysing and interpreting the collected data, it is possible for the researcher to remain detached and objective.

Often this is challenging to do with qualitative method, where the researcher may actually be involved in the situation of the research (Patton, 2001). The research method selected for this research is qualitative as it deals with subjectivity, that is what the managers perceive and feel is the level of their readiness to manage changes during mergers and how organisational change affects them. The managers expressed their opinions regarding their experiences about mergers they have been involved with.

3.3 Research strategy

Saunders *et al.* (2003:90) point out that “research strategy refers to the general plan of how a researcher goes about in answering research questions”. There are various strategies from which a researcher guided by research objectives can select a strategy. For this research study an in-depth interview research strategy that was conducted face-to face was adopted. In-depth interviews allowed the participants to describe their experiences and the meanings of changes brought about by the merger of the departments and lessons they learnt from the whole process. The strategy also allowed the respondents to explain what they felt should be done differently in order to ensure the merger process went smoothly and made it a good experience for all involved. Exact words or quotations by respondents capture the language and meaning expressed by participants. Interviews are flexible and allow for probing and observation of body language.

For this study a qualitative method was adopted because the study is mainly about human beliefs, perceptions and views, thus dealing with human factors. A qualitative study helps in understanding the participants' behaviours, and identify the unknown and never explored scenarios (Creswell, 2008). A qualitative method was selected because it helped to explore the experiences of the employees during the period of the merger. It allows the employees who were involved in the merger of the two departments to re-live their experiences and reflect on what they thought should have been done differently.

Quantitative studies were considered inappropriate for this nature of study because they focus on phenomena that are quantifiable (i.e. can be counted) and are represented statistically (numbers or percentages). With quantitative studies the emphasis is placed on predicting a hypothesis. With qualitative studies, the emphasis centres on phenomena that can be qualified (or interpreted), and often highlight lived human experience through personal accounts. A naturally qualitative approach is more focused on better understanding of meaning instead of measurement, as a result its flexibility is much higher (Gordon & Langmaid 1988). The qualitative method is best suited for hermeneutics theory as it mainly deals with the complexity of a certain research questions (Cassell *et al.*, 1994). Qualitative strategy can be explained as a strategy for collecting data and analysis by having concentration in words (Bryman & Bell, 2007). A qualitative method focuses on understanding the experiences and attitudes of humans. Basically, a qualitative method seeks to answer questions about the '**what**', '**how**' or '**why**' of a phenomenon rather than '**how many**' or '**how much**', which are answered by the quantitative method (Bricki, 2007).

While data-collection procedures for each method can involve interviews as well as direct observation, the main difference is that quantitative data are usually "closed-ended" while qualitative are often "open-ended" (Creswell, 2008:6). This means that quantitative observations may include lists of behaviours or multiple choice surveys while the same procedures in a qualitative study yield audio-recording interviews and long descriptions written by the researcher. For this research, the researcher had to interview participants and write down their responses.

Generally there is a misconception among students that qualitative research is easier to conduct because it involves working with smaller populations and with words rather than numbers. However, there is a greater amount of data to analyse in qualitative studies than quantitative studies (Sandelowski, 1995). A qualitative study also requires a deeper level of interpretation while quantitative research requires skill in computing and reading statistics.

3.4 Target population

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) define a research population as “a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to a specific criteria and to which it is intend to generalize the results of the research”. While Bryman (2008) defines population as “the universe of units from which a sample is to be selected”. The study population for this study consisted of all employees (composed of staff, supervisors/managers and senior managers) of the two North West Provincial government departments that merged in response to the call from the President.

3.5 Sampling

Altinay and Paraskevas (2008) describe sampling as “the process through which a representative subset or part of the total population is selected and studied so that researchers will be able to draw conclusions regarding the entire population”. A sample is the segment of the population that is selected for research, it is a subset of the population (Bryman, 2008). Sampling is important in the sense that it is almost impossible to study the entire population hence by sampling a smaller but representative elements are considered for studying. The smaller number of elements to be studied makes the research more manageable and time efficient, less costly, and potentially more accurate. It is much easier to maintain control over a small number of elements.

Saunders *et al.* (2003:151) state that “it is not easy to survey the entire population therefore it is necessary to survey a sample of the population as an alternative in order to then generalize about the entire population”. For this study, non-probability sampling was adopted because it groups participants according to a pre-selected criteria (only staff, supervisor/managers and senior managers of the two merging departments qualified to be participants) relevant to research questions. In this study

only employees of the two North West Provincial government departments that merged were included as participants.

3.6 Sample size

The determinant of a sample sizes is based mainly on three factors. Zikmund and Babin (2007) indicate that the three factors that determine sample size are (a) the level of precision (closeness to the proximate population) or, confidence level (how sure the researcher can be) and degree of variability (margin of error). Zikmund and Babin (2007) also submitted that the sample size depends on the variability within the sample, that is, heterogeneity or homogeneity. The population for this study will be deemed to be homogenous and only employees of the two North West Provincial government departments that merged which include staff, supervisors/managers and senior managers were selected to form the research sample. There is a point of diminishing returns to a qualitative sample, as the study goes on more data do not necessarily lead to more information. Qualitative samples must be large enough to ensure that most or all of the perceptions that might be important are uncovered, but at the same time if the sample is too large data become repetitive and, eventually, superfluous (Ritchie & Elam 2003). Given the limitations and delimitations of the study, a sample size of 22 participants will most probably be sufficient in deciding the number; however, qualitative sampling depends on data saturation, i.e. when the collection of new data does not shed any further light on the issue under investigation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

3.7 Data collection

Data collection for this study was done through in-depth interview questions (**Appendix A**) conducted in a face-to-face manner. In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, programme, or situation. An interview guide was prepared to guide the researcher. In the process of preparing the interview guide a list of open-ended questions to be used for applicants were crafted in such a way that they collected information that would answer the research questions and objectives. After a process of reviewing the open-ended questions the final set was reduced to 15 questions. The first nine interview questions were for interviewing senior managers

and questions 10 to 15 were for interviewing staff and managers of the two departments of the North West Provincial governments.

The next stage was to pilot whether the questions were correctly structured for collecting the wanted information. The researcher consulted friends and colleagues to pilot the questions. After a series of pilot tests and adjustments to the wordings of questions, it was decided the questions would elicit the appropriate information.

In carrying out the structured (open-ended) interviews, it was important that the researcher refrained from asking any questions relating to age, sex, ethnic origin, race, religion or political beliefs, and medical conditions/disabilities and adhere closely to the below interview instructions, by

1. preparing for the interview;
2. introducing himself and explaining why the study was being done to establish rapport with the respondent;)
3. re-assuring the respondent of their confidentiality or anonymity and informing them that their identities would not be revealed in the aggregated findings;
4. always following the correct order of questions;
5. being systematic and consistent in the way you interact with each respondent;
6. refraining from giving personal opinions;
7. if you are recording the interview, advising respondents that this would be the case at the outset, and
8. writing down open-ended responses in full.

The key advantage of in-depth interviews is that they extract and elicit much more detailed information than what is available through other data-collection methods, such as surveys and questionnaires. The researcher has the ability to probe for more information by following up on a question or answer and providing yet another question so as to clarify responses given. They also provide a more relaxed atmosphere as participants feel more comfortable having a conversation as opposed to filling out a survey questionnaire.

3.8 Data-collection administration and process

Electronic mails attaching Letter of Introduction and Informed Consent (**Appendix B**) were sent out to all the staff of the two merging departments which included employees, supervisors/managers. The researcher went personally to request the senior manager to participate in the research. All were given three days to respond and all those who had responded by end of the third day were confirmed as participants. Those who responded after the deadline were left out.

All respondents were prepared for the interviews and the researcher confirmed the interview times and the place of the interview in writing. The summary of the questions was provided to the respondents in advance with a week to go to the interview date. Interviewing was very methodical, paced, and focused on the participant to the exclusion of everything else. Any external influences that could distract the interview process such as telephone calls were switched off. The actual interview commenced after introductions and the researcher briefed each participant once again on the general purpose of the research, the role that the interview would play, as well as the approximate time required to complete the interview, and the fact that the information would be treated with utmost confidence. To remain objective and focused the researcher ensured that the questions were asked in the same order for each interview.

The responses were written down as opposed to being recorded as many respondents had indicated they were not comfortable with being audio-recorded. Writing down the interviewee responses provided the interviewer with something to do while the respondent formulated answers, and it slowed the pace of the interview, allowing the interviewer to ensure that all the key points were covered. Taking notes also sent a message to respondents that their responses were important.

The researcher sought informed consent of the interviewees/participants as well as explaining that the collected information was to be kept confidential. If an interviewee consented, the researcher would go ahead to conduct the interview. All in all 22 interviews, composed of six senior managers and sixteen supervisors/managers were conducted. However, the last three interviewees were giving responses that had been given before and at that point it was clear to the researcher that saturation

point had been reached. Immediately after the interview, the researcher summarized key data and verified information given in the interviews as necessary.

3.9 Data analysis

Hanuman (2006:63) states that “data obtained through questionnaires, interviews and observation or through secondary sources needs to be analysed for deductions to be made”. Data analysis can be defined as the conversion of raw data into useful information that will provide the most value (Brassington & Pettit, 2003).

After the data had been collected, the researcher reviewed it by “getting to know” the data. This was done by reading over and over the written responses that were supplied by respondents. To get a deeper meaning of the data the responses were written down on a single excel spreadsheet and then marking the underlying ideas in the data and grouping similar kinds of information together in categories and assigning a single numerical point. Data analysis is a way of gathering, modelling and transforming data with the aim of highlighting information (Ader *et al.*, 2008). It is also possible to identify responses that seem to have been given with lots of passion and interest, as opposed to those that the participants answered for the sake of supplying a response.

3.10 Trustworthiness and credibility

Trustworthiness and credibility, as opposed to the positivist criteria of validity, reliability and objectivity, are key considerations and relate to qualitative method of research.

Ulin, Robinson and Tolley (2004:101) state that “positivists use validity, reliability, objectivity, precision, and generalizability to judge the rigor or thoroughness of quantitative studies as they intended to describe, predict, and verify empirical relationships in relatively controlled settings”.

Qualitative research that aims to explore, discover, to understand and is subjective cannot use the same criteria as positivists to judge research quality and results. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that “the fundamental criterion for qualitative reports is trustworthiness”. They further ask “how can a researcher be certain that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to and worth taking account of”? It

should be noted that for a research study to be considered credible and authentic studies should be based on sound reasoning that validates the use of a chosen methodology and the processes involved in data collection and analysis.

The objective of trustworthiness in a qualitative study is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) which is quite different from the conventional experimental precedent of attempting to show validity, soundness, and significance. For any qualitative research project, four issues of trustworthiness require attention, namely, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a "credible" conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants' original data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility matches roughly to the positivist concept of internal validity. Transferability is the degree to which the findings of this inquiry can apply or transfer beyond the bounds of the project. It is a form of external validity. Dependability is an assessment of the quality of the integrated processes of data collection, data analysis, and theory generation. It relates more to reliability. Confirmability is a measure of how well the inquiry's findings are supported by the data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.11 Ethical considerations

It is crucially important for a researcher to consider prudently the environment in which the researcher will be working, the objective of the research and how delicate the topic might be. The researcher applied to the University Ethical Committee and was granted permission through the issuance of an "Ethical Clearance Certificate" (**Appendix C**) to proceed with the research. Considering that the questions that would be put to participants might be alarming or might make the participants feel distressed/worried about the results, this was an essential step. A researcher must always remember that asking a person to talk about experiences that were frightening, humiliating and painful can cause or increase anxiety. It may not only create distress during an interview, but may also emerge after. It is therefore very important that researchers take care in how they ask questions and where they choose to ask questions.

Ethics is rooted in the ancient Greek philosophical inquiry of moral life. Johnstone (2009) defines ethics as “a system of principles which can critically change previous considerations about choices and actions”. A researcher has responsibilities to the research participants and the people to whom the findings will be presented. One starting point in considering ethical concerns is the four principles of Beauchamp and Childress (1983):

- Autonomy; respect the rights of the individual.
- Beneficence - doing good.
- Non-maleficence - not doing harm.
- Justice, particularly equity.

Some of the key ethical issues that should be considered in any project are as indicated below.

i) **Informed consent**

Speziale, Streubert and Carpenter (2011:61) indicates that informed consent is a prerequisite for research involving identifiable subjects. Speziale *et al.* (2011:61) describes informed consent “as the provision of adequate information regarding the research to the research participants”. The researcher ensured this by explaining the rights of the participant such that every research participant who took part in the research did so of his or her own free will. Each participant was requested to sign a consent form that explained the purpose of the research and the participant’s rights.

ii) **Ensuring no harm to participants**

The researcher ensured that no harm occurred to any of the participants by conducting the interviews at work with the permission of their senior managers. According to O’Leary (2010:41), researchers must ensure that no physical as well as emotional harm occurs to respondents. Should such risks be carelessly allowed, it can lead to legal challenges. By conducting the research interviews at work it was intended to give the participants a sense of security and relaxation, thereby minimising the risks of potential psychological harm and maximising the quality of responses. To ensure that no psychological harm occurred (such as stress, anxiety, loss of reputation or fear of job loss), consent forms were signed indicating that, inter

alia, all information shared was not to be used anywhere else without their permission.

iii) **Confidentiality and anonymity**

The researcher explained to the research participants that commitment to respecting the confidentiality of all who were participating in the research was paramount and would be respected. Information relating to the participants' names or any piece of information that would be deemed confidential or would result in the participants being personally identified would not be solicited in the research. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured through the fact that no names or any identifying information was requested of the participants. According to Babbie (2014:67), a research project ensures confidentiality when the researcher can identify a given person's responses but promises not to do so in public. On the other hand, anonymity refers to concealing the identity of the participants in all documents resulting from research, therefore actively protecting the identity of research participants (King & Horrocks 2010:117). Private contact numbers and names would not be recorded during the interviews. Hence, the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents would be highly regarded. Importantly the study would abide by the rules of the Data Protection Act 1998, which states that information must be processed fairly and lawfully at all times (Burchell, 2009:2).

iv) **Permission to conduct study**

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the North West Provincial Government and was sanctioned. According to Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2010:12) one of the core ethical issues in research is obtaining permission to conduct a research. Failure to obtain such permission may lead to legal complications.

3.12 Conclusion

An overview of the important areas of the methodology will need to be considered when undertaking a research study. It outlines the type of research, the rationale for choosing the methodology for this particular research, defines and describes the target population, sampling, research instrument, data analysis, validity and trustworthiness as well as dealing with ethical considerations.

4.0 CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION NGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter shows the analyses of data and presents the research findings. The results and findings are presented in this chapter according to the layout and sequence of the interview questions.

The responses that were the most common amongst the participants have been selected as the key themes emerging from the data. The answers are not presented verbatim according to the interviews but have been summarised by taking grouping together similar or responses that were similarly close and next the researcher rephrased the meanings of the various grouped responses in very few words so as to integrate its overall meaning.

The results of each question are stated and discussed immediately. The findings are linked to literature review discussed in chapter two of the study.

4.2 Data analysis: steps followed

Step 1: Organised and prepare the data for analysis.

Step 2: Read through all the written notes over and over again to obtain a general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning.

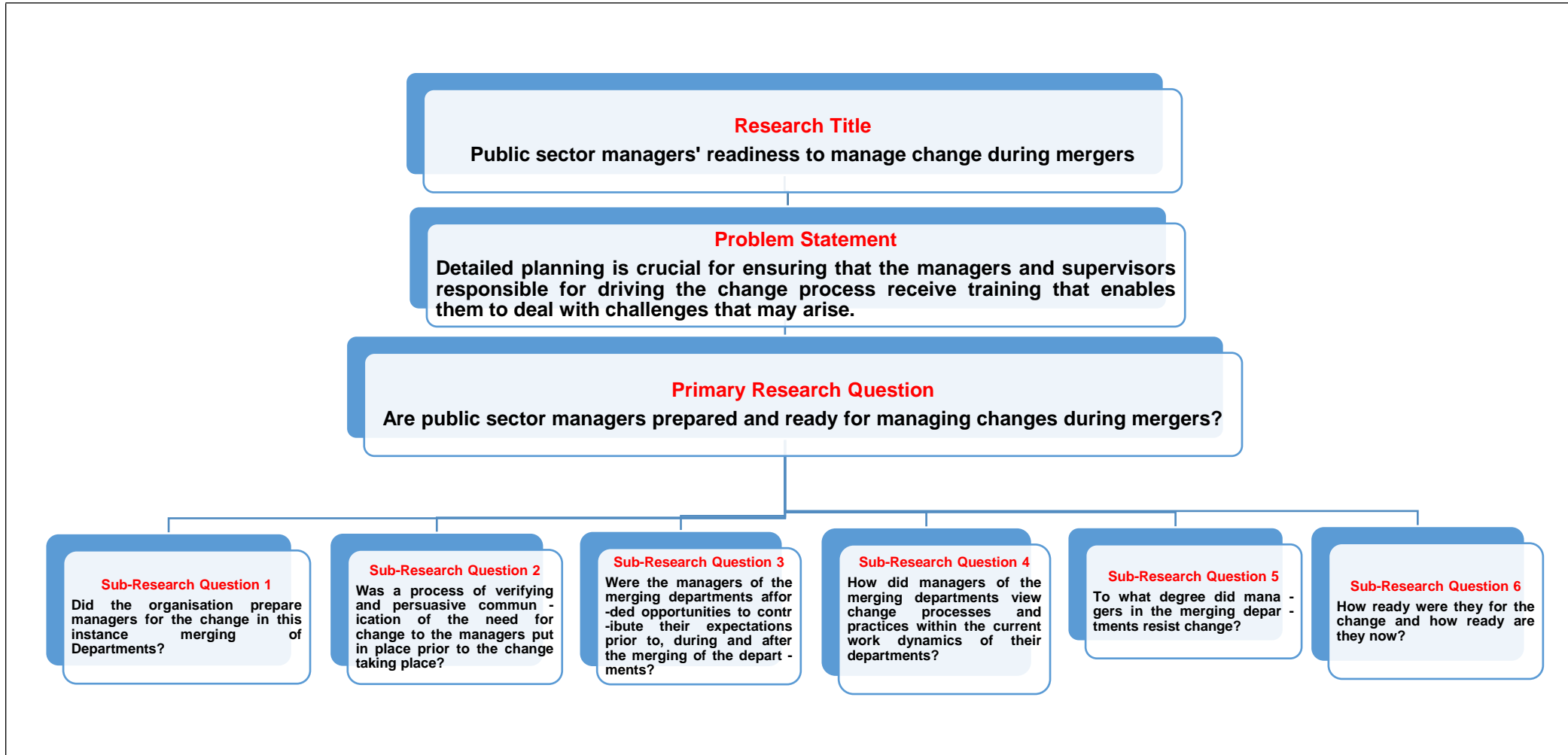
Step 3: Begin detailed analysis with a coding process, where all summarised responses that were grouped together were allocated a single unit. The single units for similar responses would then be added and expressed as a percentage.

Step 4: Use the codes to generate a description of the setting or categories or themes for analysis. Description involves a detailed rendering of information in a setting.

Step 5: Advance how the descriptions and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative and represented by an ordinal/ numerical character to facilitate numerical analysis.

Step 6: Evaluate the lessons learned from the data and make interpretations or meaning of data.

Figure 4.1: Diagrammatic depiction of the research



4.3 Data Analysis: Results and interpretation

4.3.1: In your opinion do you think managers in the departments that merged were well prepared and trained to manage changes during the merger?

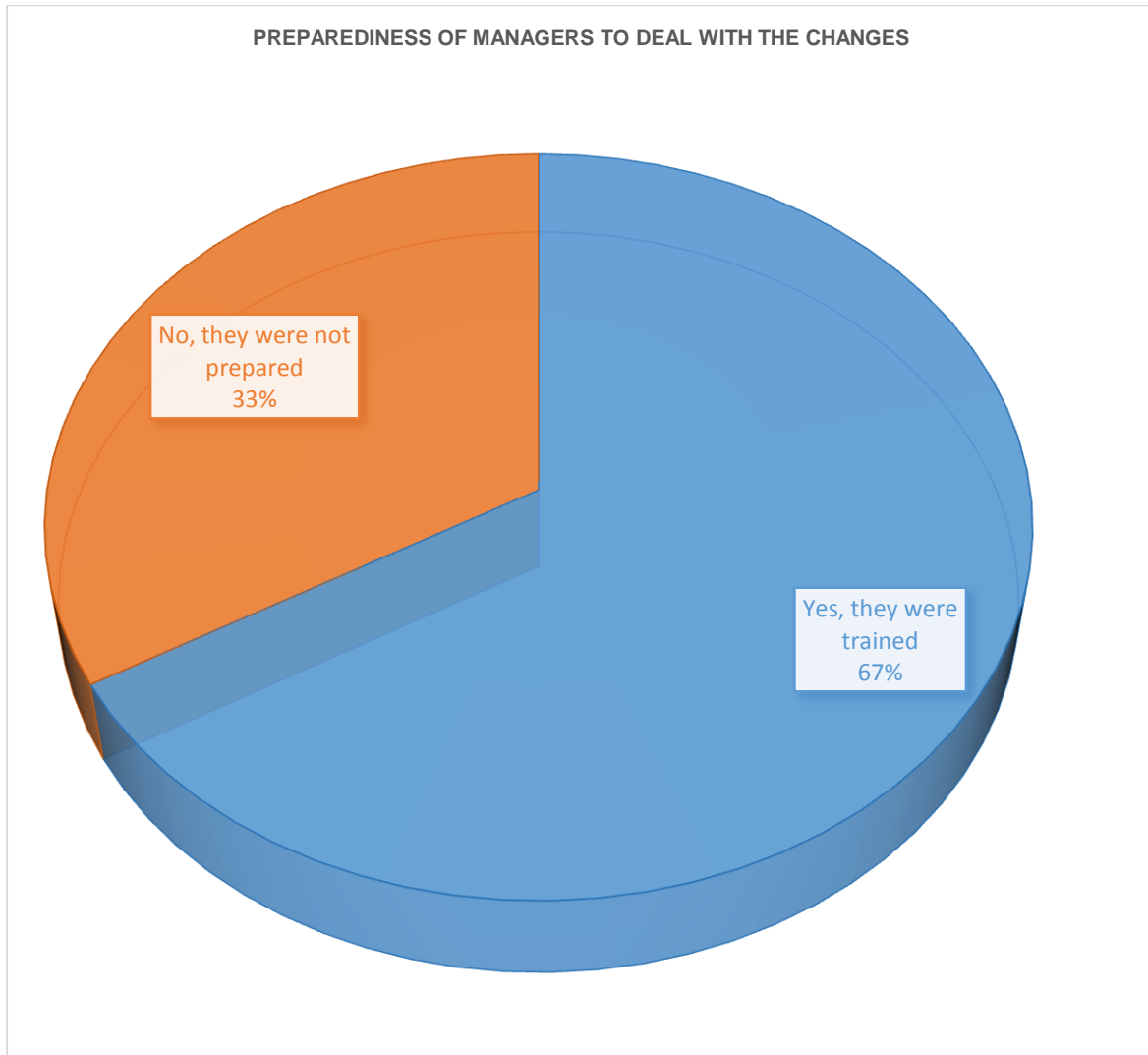


Figure: 4.2: Preparedness of managers to deal with and manage changes

Figure 4.2 above reveals that 67% of the senior managers interviewed indicated that the managers and staff (employees) of the two departments that merged had received some training, for example, how to consult, encourage and motivate subordinates to adapt and embrace change as way of dealing with resistance from subordinates during implementation of change as well as to prepare and make them ready to deal with and manage changes during the merger process.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: “Yes, there were committees set up internally and consultative meetings with employees affected by the merger took place regularly”

However, 33% of the senior managers did not agree that the employees of the two merged departments were prepared to deal with the changes.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: “No, the managers (employees) were not prepared for the merger due to the short time the process was introduced”

When cross-referenced to the results of question 4.3.12, where the employees were asked whether they were prepared for the change as well as if the reasons for the change was made known to them, 56.25% of them said no.

Evidence quote by an employee: “There was no notification of the changes from senior management and no explanation of the reasons that triggered the change was also given”

This shows a bias towards non-preparedness even though they might have had some training. This portrays a picture that not enough was done to actually prepare them to accept or manage the change. Based on the literature reviewed when readiness for change exists, the organisation is prepared to embrace change and that reduces resistance (Gilley, 2005). If organisational employees are not ready for change, the change may fail, and employees may initiate unfavourable reactions such as sabotage, absenteeism, and slow production. Hence it is crucial that senior management implement programs that prepare employees in such a manner that they feel involved and equipped with the necessary skills required to deal and manage changes (Kets, de Vries & Balazs, 1999).

4.3.2: Was a prior process of verifying and persuasive communication of the need for change to the managers put in place before the merger actually took place?

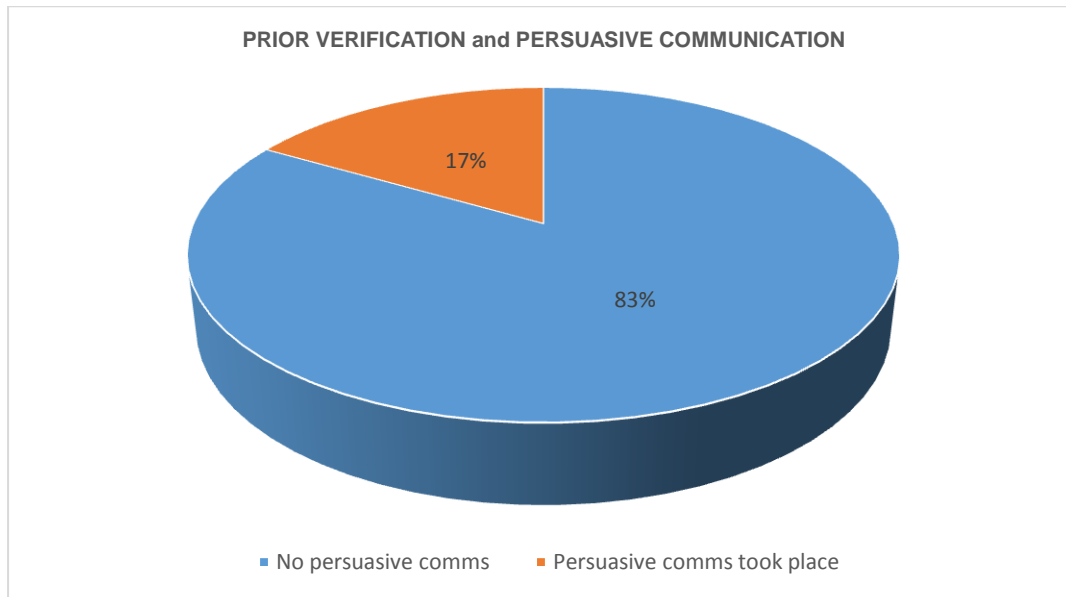


Figure 4.3: Prior verification and persuasive communication to affected employees

An overwhelming majority (83%) of senior managers interviewed admitted that no prior process of verifying and of persuasive communication about the change and reasons for the changes was done to the employees of the departments that merged as indicated in Figure 4.3 above.

Evidence quote by senior a manager: "There were no steps followed. Consultation only took place at the most senior levels, in the form of mandates"

A mere 17% of senior managers indicated that persuasive communication took place in the form of constant communication with involved employees prior, during and after the merger process. Further, the results of Figure 4.3 are evidence that senior management did not communicate effectively, first to educate affected employees about what was to be expected when the merger would actually happen and secondly, there were no reasons or explanations provided as to why the change was necessary. Explaining the two aspects to the employees would have created an atmosphere and environment of trust which could have allowed them (involved employees) to raise their views and even suggest training needs. When probed further why prior communication was not done, some senior managers indicated that the change was politically motivated and there was no prior process involved.

Based on the literature reviewed, senior management must produce vision that can rally and galvanise employees towards the vision or image of the future. The vision should be easy to communicate and have the capability of rallying and focusing the employees (Kotter, 1995). It symbolises good leadership and commitment and provides overall direction for the change process. Kets de Vries and Balazs (1999) stated that “it is easier to convince employees of the need for change when leaders craft a vision that offers the hope of relief from stress or discomfort”

4.3.3 Briefly describe the steps/process (if any) that were followed by senior management to prepare managers and staff to be ready and cope with the change?

From the literature reviewed, it is imperative for senior management to put in place clear steps to be followed during an organisational change (Kotter, 1995). Figure 4.4 below clearly indicates that the majority of the senior managers (66.67%) interviewed stated that there was no process followed and this concurs with the response given by the employees in question 4.2.12, where 56.25% of the responses indicated that there were no steps followed.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: “No process or steps were followed, no prior training took place”

Such an admission by senior management which has the responsibility to put such steps to be followed in place speaks volumes about the atmosphere of unpreparedness the merger took place in. The fact that senior management admitted that no process had been put in place for employees to follow is evidence that senior management was itself ignorant of the processes to put in place and follow so as to adequately prepare employees for the change.

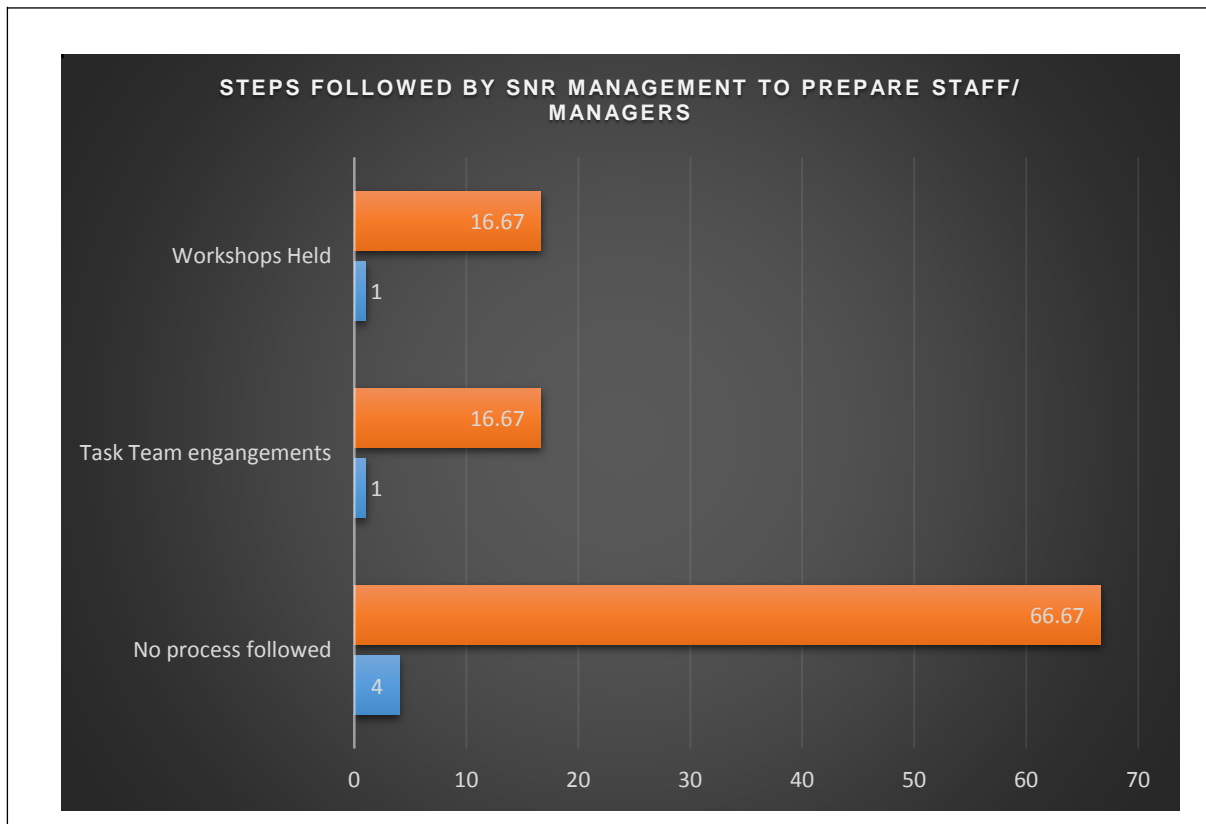


Figure 4.4: Steps followed by Senior Management to prepare employees for change

Maybe the expertise of executing such a merger was not available with the North West Provincial Government. Only 16.67% of the senior managers indicated that workshops were held and a similar percentage indicated that task teams were created to engage with all the involved employees before the merger took place.

Evidence quote by senior manager: "There were workshops done by Head of Department and HRM Unit to prepare staff, especially those affected directly"

Based on the analysis of responses to question 4.3.3 above, no steps were put in place by senior management to be followed as part of preparing those involved to cope with the merger. In many instances resistance to change is caused by a feeling on uncertainty on the part of employees. Some of the reasons identified as sources of resistance relate to (a) fear of losing something which is valued e.g. job security, (b) lack of understanding the change and its implications, (c) no buy-in from employees

regarding the need for the change or they struggle to cope with either the level or practice of change (Zander, 1950; Skoldberg, 1994; Kotter, 1996; Maurer, 1998; Robbins, 1998; Bolognese, 2002; Dunn, 2002 and Schuler, 2003).

4.3.4: Were the managers of the merging departments afforded an opportunity to contribute their expectations prior to, during and after the merging of the departments? Was there any resistance experienced from the employees?

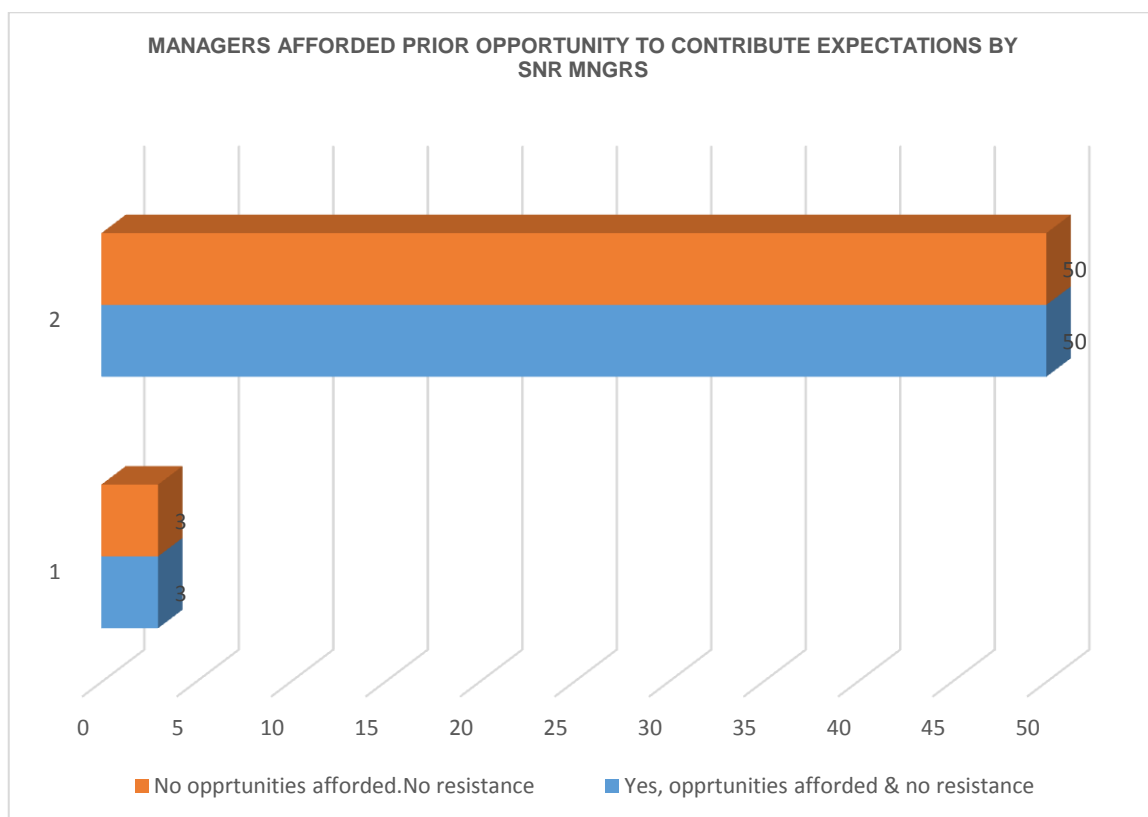


Figure 4.5: Merging managers afforded opportunities to contribute their expectations.

As indicated in Figure 4.5 above, 50% of the senior managers interviewed responded that employees of the two departments that merged were allowed opportunities to raise their views as well as to contribute to the smooth merging process.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: “Opportunity were afforded to managers/employees to raise issues and any resistance was addressed and cleared prior to the implementation of process”

The same managers indicated that there was no resistance from the affected employees to the whole merging process. The remaining half of the senior managers

indicated exactly the opposite, that is, involved employees were not accorded the opportunity to contribute to the process of merging the two departments.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: “No opportunity was afforded to managers to raise issues. All involved were not consulted and we were instructed that from now onwards you were reporting to another department”

However, they concurred with the first half of the senior managers on the point that there was no resistance from the employees affected to the merging of the two departments. Some of responses to the question, “Was there any resistance from the employees?” was that any resistance that was initially identified was addressed and cleared prior to the implementation of the process. Some senior managers indicated that the resistance that initially surfaced was due to lack of information and uncertainty on the part of the employees. The results of Figure 4.5 in conjunction with responses to the second part of question 4.3.12 where the question asked was “Did they (Senior Management) also explained the reasons for merging the two departments?”, 100% of the respondents overwhelmingly responded with “no explanation was offered”. Based on the literature explored in this study, to enable a smooth change transition, it is important that reasons for the change should be explained to employees. To achieve the state of readiness of employees there is a great need for senior management to create a rallying vision that galvanises and convinces employees to embrace the change. The vision will represent some future image to strive for which then makes it simpler for management to make everyone in the organisation to focus towards the vision (Kotter, 1995).

4.3.5 How did managers of the merging departments view the change processes and practices within the current work dynamics of their departments?

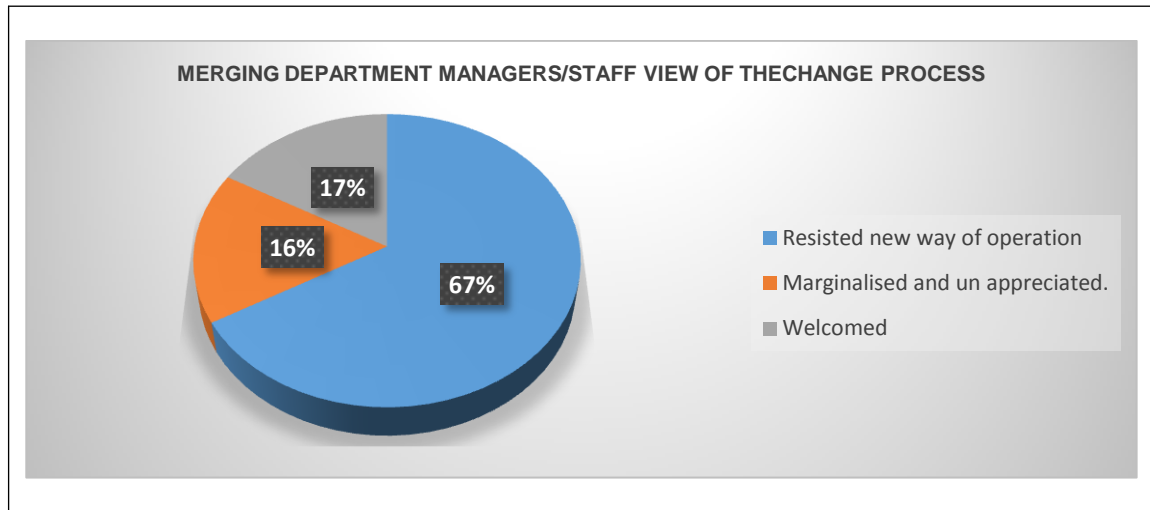


Figure 4.6: Merging departments' managers/staff views of the change process

Figure 4.6 above indicates that 67% of the senior managers responded that most employees had challenges with the new way of doing things in the newly-merged department and naturally there were resentment and resistance to the changed way of operation.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: "Change created operational challenges for some manager, e.g. allocation of resources, harmonisation of practices"

Figure 4.6 reveals that 17% of the senior managers indicated that employees welcomed the new way of operation with 16% saying some employees felt marginalised and unappreciated.

Evidence quote by a senior manager 1: "The process was welcomed as it gave focus to the new structures than before". Evidence quote by a senior manager 2: "Managers (employees) felt marginalised and unappreciated. It was not a merger but an absorption"

Taken together with employees' responses to question 4.2.10 which sought the views of the employees involved when they first heard about the merger, surprisingly the majority (31.25%) of the employees indicated that change was good and it was an opportunity to learn something new. Change recipients' readiness and willingness are paramount to the successful and effective implementation of changes or change

processes. Without the change recipients' willingness those involved or affected by the change will display resistance and the change is bound to fail.

4.3.6 To what degree did managers/staff in the merging departments resist the change? Why?

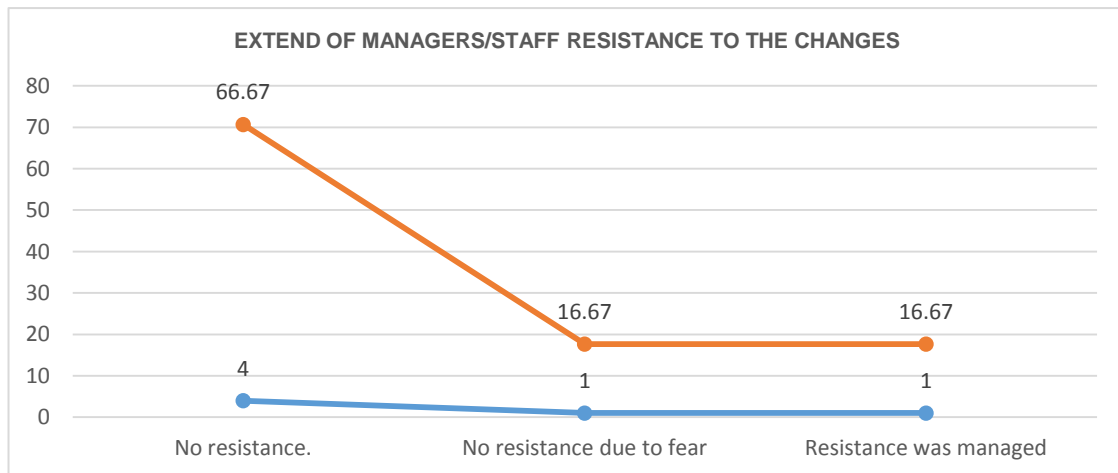


Figure 4.7: Managers/staff of the merging department's resistance of the change

Of all the senior managers interviewed, 66.67% of them indicated that no resistance was experienced from employees as indicated in Figure 4.7 above. The reason offered for no resistance was that any resistance that surfaced was addressed and employees seemed not to fear the change. No resistance was experienced.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: "Any resistance that surfaced was addressed and employees seemed not to fear the change"

In some instances resistance was managed which may mean employees were threatened should they want to resist, for instance some employees indicated in the interviews that they were warned and had no choice but to toe the line without asking questions. The response from the majority of the senior managers who were interviewed, that no resistance was experienced, was corroborated by the majority of the employees themselves in question 4.3.15, where the employees were asked whether they ever had a feeling of wanting to resist the change and why, most of them (37%) responded that they never had such a feeling of resisting because they viewed change as good and a chance to learning new ideas and things.

4.3.7 How ready were you for the change and how did you cope during transition?

In Figure 4.8 below, 66.67% of the senior managers indicated they were not prepared for the merger but had no choice but to implement instructions.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: "I was not prepared but had to carry out instructions and sought help from those who had experienced these departmental mergers before"

However, 16.67% indicated that they were very prepared and actually got all the assistance they required to cope with the merger.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: "I was very prepared and every assistance was afforded by management"

Another 16.67% indicated that change should always be anticipated as it happens all the time.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: "Change should always be viewed as a daily occurrence"

From their own admission that they were not prepared for the change, the senior managers who should be the ones to lead the way and put all processes to be followed in place was an indication that the merger was done haphazardly with no proper focus and ensuring employees were appropriately consulted and prepared for such changes (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993). Most change efforts by organisation fail due to resistance by employees (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993; Eby, Adams, Russell and Gaby, 2000). It is therefore imperative that organisations that think of making major changes should first build positive employee beliefs, perceptions and attitudes as a precursor to ensuring successful change processes (Armenakis *et al.*, 1993; Eby *et al.*, 2000). To have a better understanding of how to successfully manage change, researchers have concentrated on what causes employee resistance. Nord and Jermier (1994) and Oreg (2006) have indicated that "critics of resistance studies have argued that researchers need to

address employees' subjective experiences of change in order to understand what resistance to change actually entails".

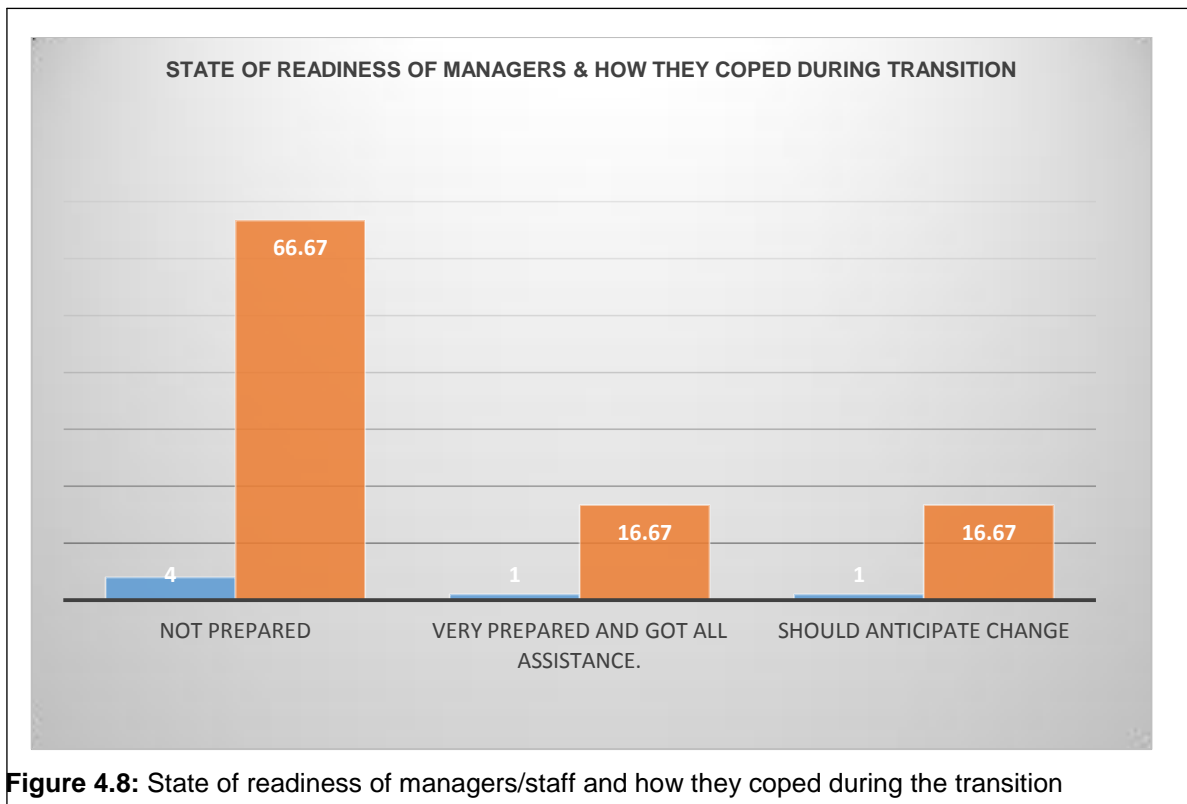


Figure 4.8: State of readiness of managers/staff and how they coped during the transition

Organisational readiness to change is seen on a scale ranging from observing the organisation as having the ability to successfully undertake change as an indication on one hand that the organisation is perceived as having a high readiness to change whilst on the other hand an organisation is viewed as not ready and incapable of pulling off a change effort thereby indicating a low perceived organisational readiness to change (Eby *et al.*, 2000).

In order to cope with the merger processes, some senior managers indicated that although they had not been prepared, they had to seek assistance from fellow workmates and colleagues who had experienced departmental mergers before as this current one was not the first ever merger.

4.3.8 What role did the managers (you) play in the change process within the merged departments?

Half of the senior managers indicated that during the merger process they were formulating strategic plans for the newly-formed department as indicated in figure 4.9 below.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: “I was involved with planning and implementation of strategic plans of the merger”

Those who responded that they were leading the change by coordinating the activities constituted 17% of the respondents and a similar percentage said they had not much to do.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: “I was responsible for coordination of the process and representing in the merging meetings”

Figure 4.9 below reveals that 16% of the respondents indicated that they were coaching, encouraging and motivating the employees, as well as making sure they received support and had issues clarified.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: “I was responsible for coordination of the process and representing in the merging meetings”

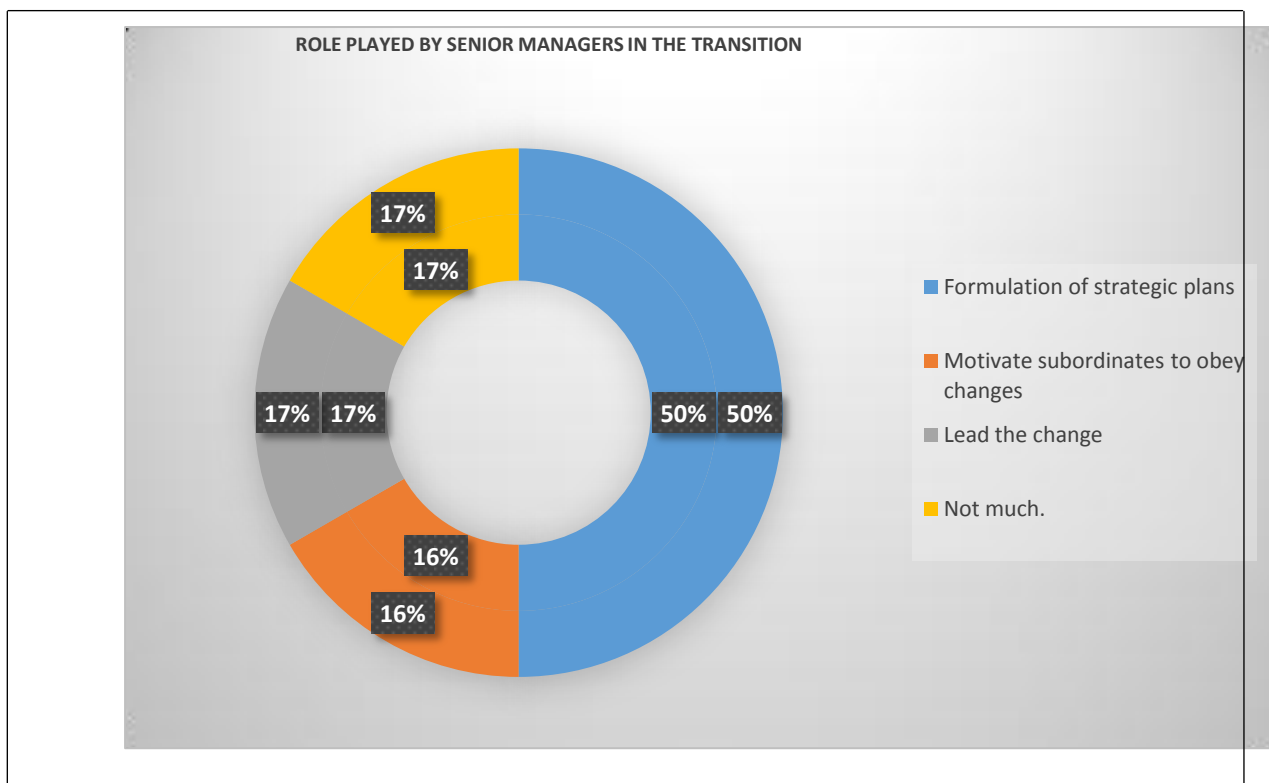


Figure 4.9: Role the senior manager played in the change process within the merged department

From the results of Figure 4.9 above it can be deduced that formulating strategic plans for the new department during the change was not the most appropriate role senior management could have played. Rather they should have put more effort in ensuring that the merging would proceed seamlessly by doing enough consultation with affected employees and also getting their views and clarifying and allaying employee fears about the change. Based on the literature reviewed, Daft and Marcic (2004).indicate that in view of the much publicised failures of change and change management it is imperative that senior management in organisations seriously consider their approaches and focus on the management and spur employees to positively identify and embrace change.

4.3.9 Were any employees retrenched or deployed to other departments as a result of the merger of the two departments?

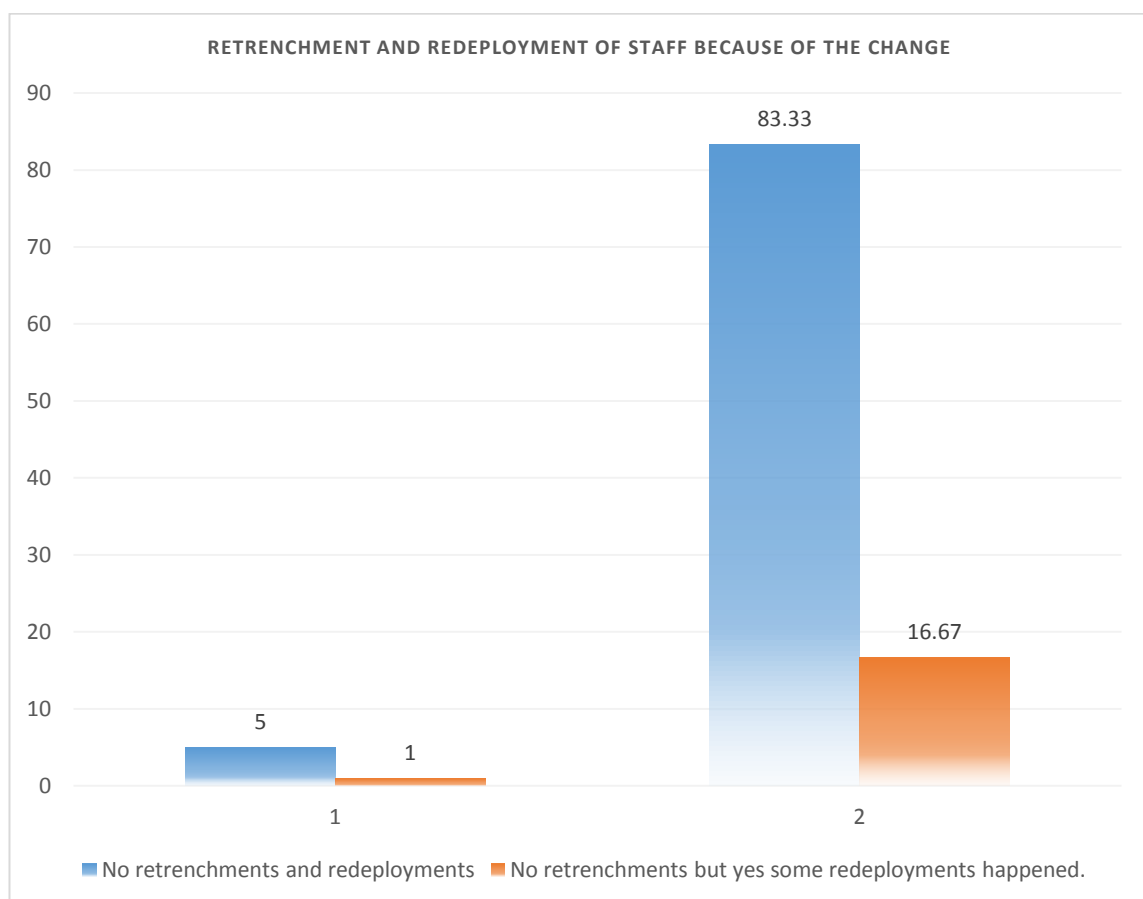


Figure 4.10: Employees' retrenchments and re-deployments as a result of the merger

As shown in Figure 4.10 above 83.33% of the senior managers indicated that neither retrenchments nor re-deployments took place as a result of the merger.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: No retrenchments and redeployments took place. 16.67% indicated that indeed there were no retrenchments but redeployments happened.

Evidence quote by a senior manager: "There were no retrenchment that took place, however there were some deployments that happened"

4.3.10 How did you view the change when it was announced that your Department was to merge with another?

Many of the employees interviewed, (31.25%) indicated that change was good and viewed it as an opportunity to learn something new therefore they embraced the merger as indicated in Figure 4.2.10 below.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "I viewed change as a good idea, because you get to learn new things"

On the other hand, 18.75% of them indicated that the change was unfavourable as it increased workloads for them. Some of the work they inherited needed much correcting.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "I viewed the change very negatively, I knew from experience that the merger would bring lots of problems"

A further 18.75% of the employees stated that the change was painful and not properly communicated as they were not sufficiently consulted. There were employees who indicated that they were not at all surprised by the merger or change because they are used to it as this particular change was not the first one, further indicated that they had gone through a similar process before and they constituted 12.5% of the all the employees interviewed.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "I foresaw challenges, as it was not the first merger I have been involved in"

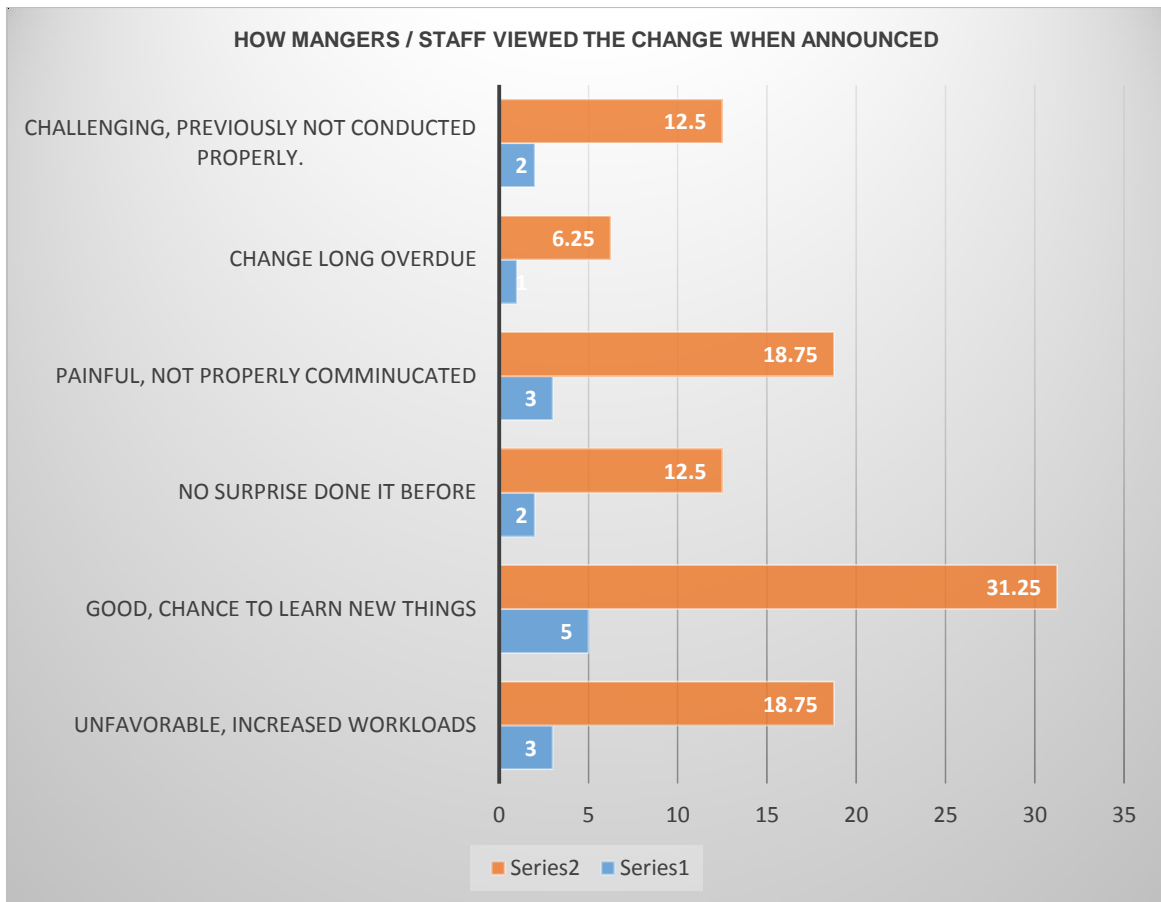


Figure 4.11: Managers and staff's view of the change when it was announced

Only 6.25% of interviewed employees indicated that the change was long overdue as the two departments that were merged were more efficient as one rather than being two departments as they dealt with very similar and complementary issues, hence it made much sense to amalgamate them from an efficiency viewpoint.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "This change was quite necessary and long overdue"

4.3.11 How was the announcement of the merger communicated to all involved?

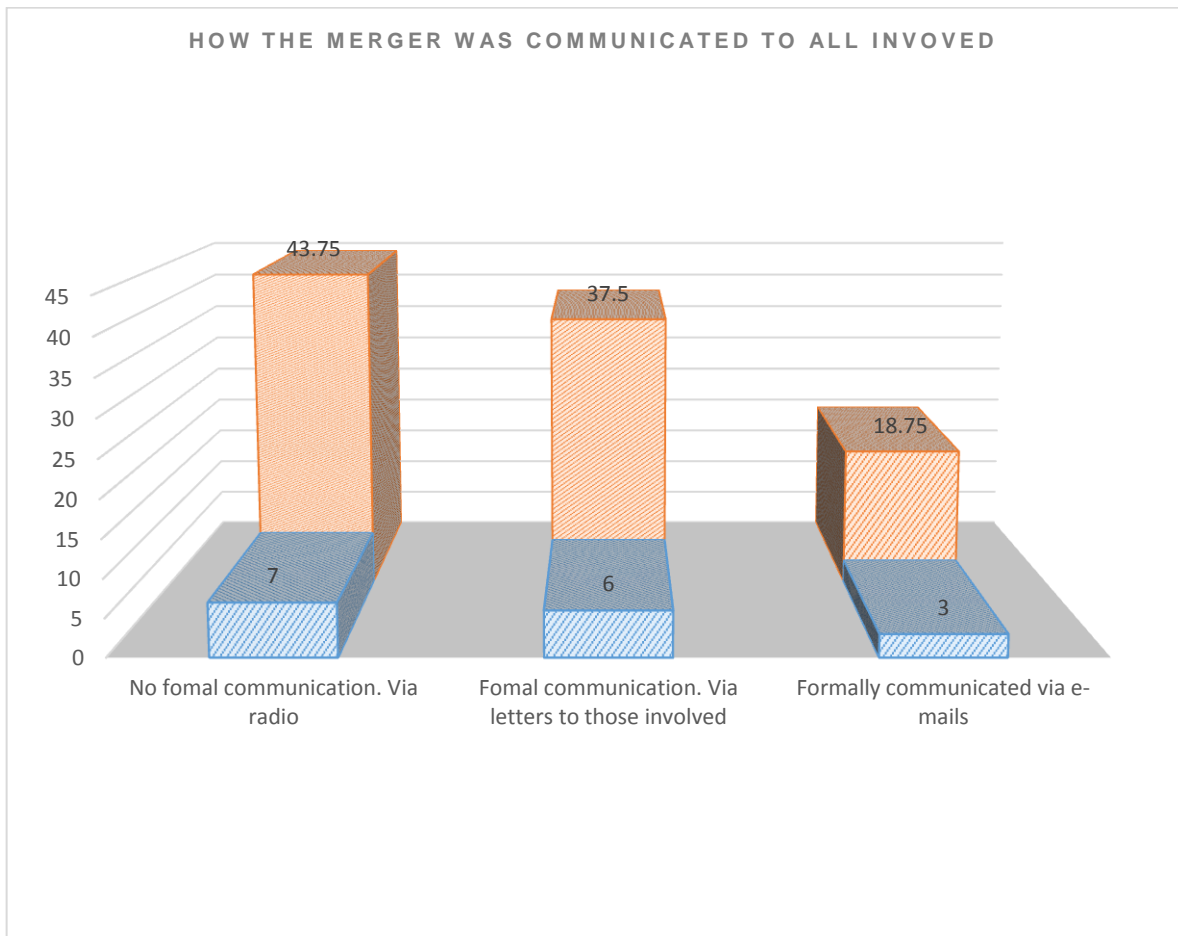


Figure 4.12: How the merger was announced to employees

The results reflected in Figure 4.12 above indicate that most of the employees interviewed (43.75%) indicated that there was no formal communication that was made to announce the merger with some of them saying they first heard about the merger on the radio.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "It was further indicated in some of the interviews that when the announcement of the merger was done by the Premier of North West Provincial Government, the message did not cascade down to lower levels"

Figure 4.12 reveals that 37.5% of the respondents indicated that proper and formal communication was done with each affected employee getting a formal letter.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "I was handed a letter that officially informed me that the department was to be split and merging with another department"

Those who indicated that they received formal communication via electronic mails and internal memos constituted 18.75% of the employees interviewed.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "I formally received an e-mail from the Premier's Office, and also heard it over radio and internal memos"

Based on the overall results of Figure 4.11 it can be deduced that communication about the merger to those involved was not effective and left a lot to be desired on the part of senior management that had the communication responsibility. Based on the literature reviewed, it was highlighted that when a change is envisaged, it is the responsibility of management to communicate and furnish as much information to employees about the change as possible. It is also imperative that the reasons for the need to implement the change and details of how the change shall be executed is communicated to employees well in time (Ashford, 1988; Lewis, 2000; Terry *et al.*, 2001). Opportunities for the employees to raise their concerns and contributions to the change should also be accorded to them. Uncertainties relating to employees' careers, possible new roles, fear or anxieties they may be experiencing should be explained and clarified (Terry *et al.*, 2001; Lewis, 2000).

4.3.12: Did senior management explain a process that would be followed to prepare you for this change? Did they also explain the main reasons for merging the departments?

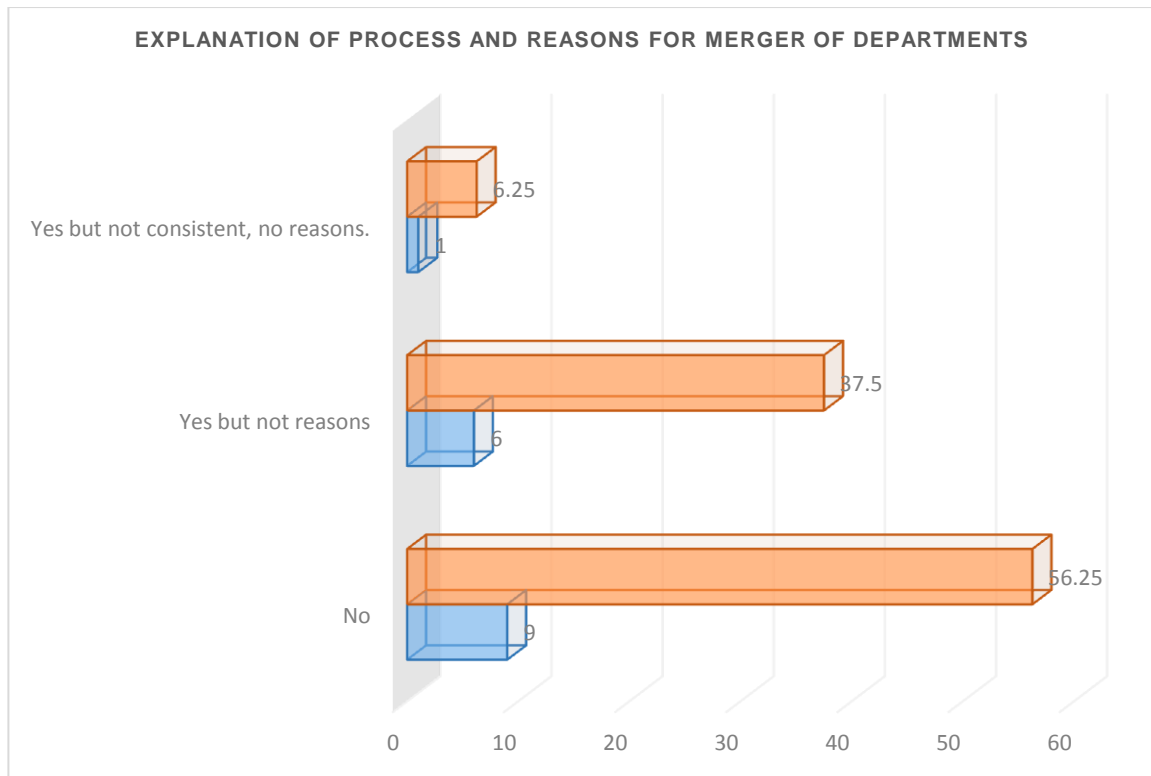


Figure 4.13: Explanation of process and reasons for merger by Senior Management

From the majority of the employees who were interviewed, 56.25% indicated that there was neither an explanation of the process to be followed nor of the reason why the two departments were being merged.

Evidence quote by an employee: "There was no notification of the changes from senior management and no explanation of the reasons that triggered the change was also given"

Those who indicated that the process was explained by senior management but not the reasons why the departments were merging constituted 37.5%.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "It was communicated to the directors who in turn cascaded the information to lower levels"

However, 6.25% indicated that although the process was explained the message provided was not consistent as differing explanations were received by differently affected employees. The same employees also indicated that no explanation of the reason to merge was offered by senior management. The literature reviewed in this study indicated that in order to surmount resistance and prepare employees to accept institutional change, explaining the compelling reasons for wanting to change and getting members directly involved as well as allowing them to express their opinions and suggestions, empowering them with allowing them to be closely involved with the crafting of the processes to be followed and designing how to implement the change (Cummins, 2004).

4.3.13: How much of your work content, responsibilities and work environment changed after the merger of the departments? Is the change favourable or unfavourable to you? Please elaborate on your response.

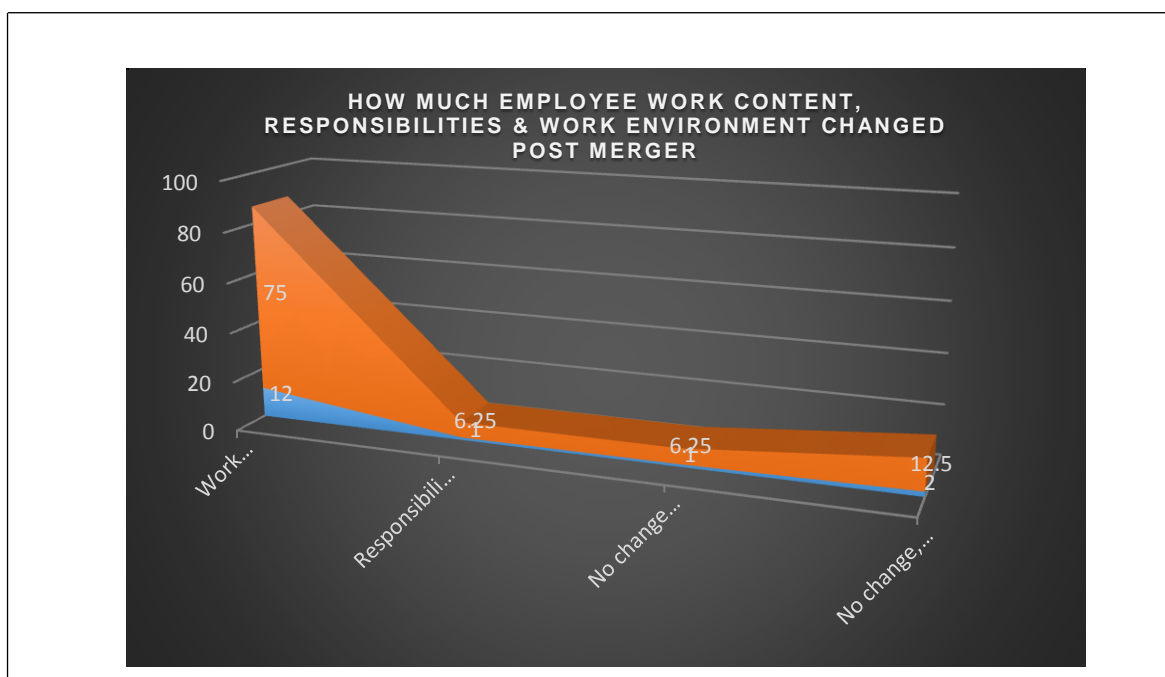


Figure 4.14: Change of work content, responsibility and work environment post - merger of Departments

An overwhelming 75% of the employees who were interviewed indicated that their work content and workload changed hugely which they view as unfavourable. When probed to explain further, they indicated that the inherited department had backlogs.

Evidence quote by manager/employee: "Workload increased hugely as was the responsibilities. No additional staff was moved over to complement the existing staff. The change was not favourable because the department became understaff but with more responsibilities"

Those who indicated that they were not affected said that there was no change to their work content, workloads and work environment. The merger had no impact on them as they continued doing what they had always been doing.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "No change of content or responsibilities as I continued to do exactly what I used to do before the merger. The merger was not applicable to me as I was not affected"

However, 6.25% indicated that they were not impacted on by the merger but still felt the change was unfavourable. When probed to explain why they said so, as they were unaffected, they explained that although nothing had changed for them it was unfavourable because the department of roads and transport go hand in hand but they were not merged, which made them inefficient.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "Nothing changed for me, however the change was unfavourable because roads and transport go hand in hand but the merger separated them"

They wished also that these two should also be merged. A similar percentage of respondents indicated that lots of their responsibilities changed; however, in certain instances some of the changes were favourable and others were not, hence they had a mixed feeling.

4.3.14 Should another change be announced would you prefer it be done differently? Please comment further on your view.

The overall response to question 4.2.14 below was an overwhelming "Yes, things should be done differently", with 87.5% of the employees interviewed as indicated in Figure 4.15 below. The main reason given is that there was no employee consultation with affected employees was done by senior management, which employees view as

something not considered important by senior management. Many managers felt that consultation and communication with them was not even considered a priority by senior management and would want this to change for the better should another merger be implemented. Some of the employees indicated that there was a need to inform those affected well ahead of time and steps to be followed should have been put in place and explanations given and opportunities provided to raise issues, views and clarification.

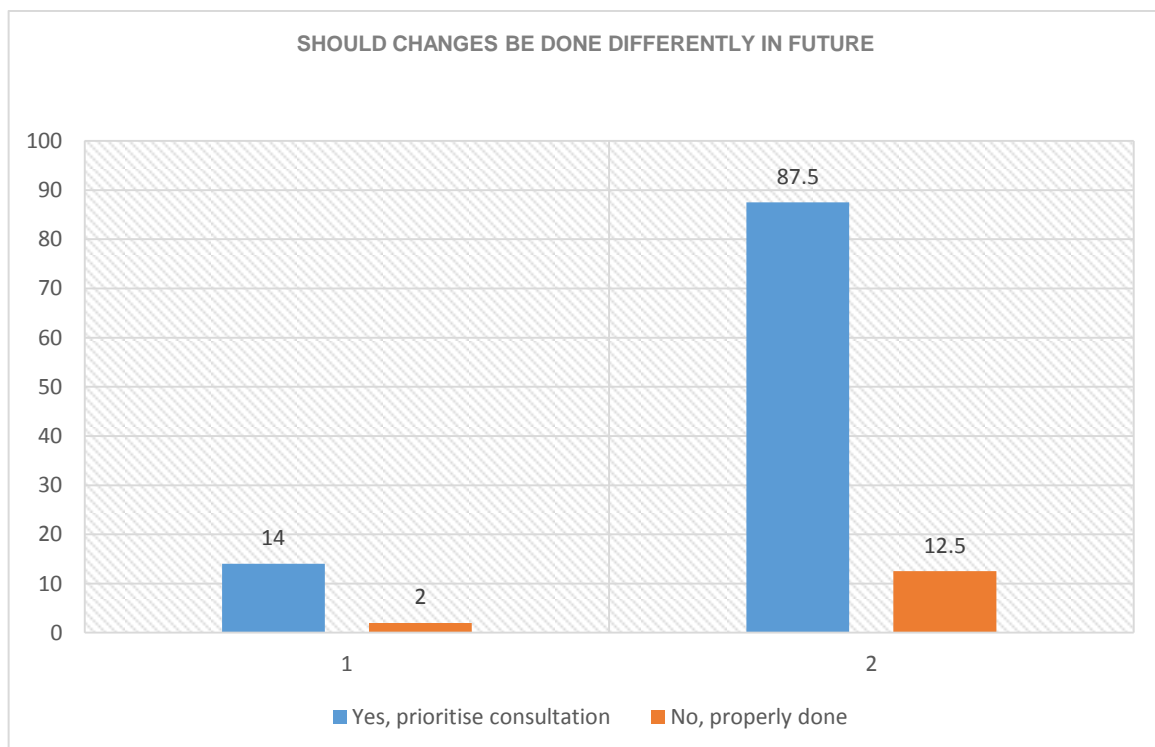


Figure 4.15: Should changes be done differently in the future

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: “Yes, at least consultation should be prioritised with affected parties and also listen to their views”

Only 12.5% of the employees interviewed indicated that should change happen again they would want it done exactly the same as way as they consider that how things were done during the current was proper and perfect.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: “No, everything was done properly and accordingly”

Based on the literature reviewed, change recipients' readiness and willingness are of paramount importance for the successful and effective implementation of changes or change processes. Without the change recipients' willingness those involved or affected by the change will display resistance and the change is bound to fail. Involvement of employees in organisational changes will facilitate buy-in from them and create an atmosphere of willingness on the part of the employees to change themselves and embrace the change initiatives. Increased levels of individual or organisational willingness to accept change facilitates successful implementation of changes.

4.3.15 Did you ever have a feeling of wanting to resist the whole change process? Why was this so, if you felt like resisting the change?

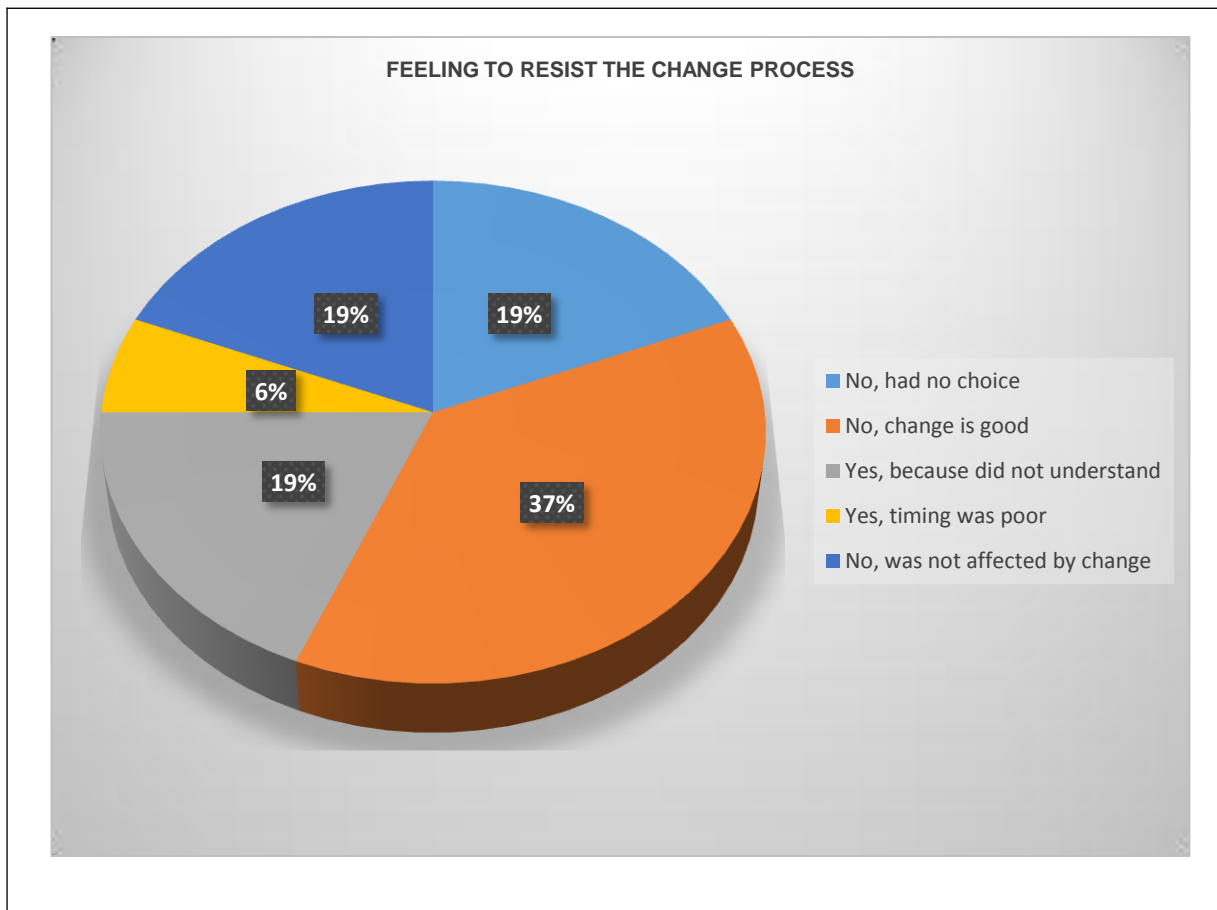


Figure 4.16: Feeling of wanting to resist the change process

As shown in Figure 4.16 above the majority (37%) of the managers interviewed indicated that they never had a feeling of resistance to the change.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "No, it never crossed my mind to resist, actually change is good, it only depends how it is handled and effected"

Actually some of them indicated that change was good, it only depended on how it was handled and effected and others indicated that the change process was too long.

Evidence quote by a manager/employee: "Even if I needed to resist, I did not have a choice but to comply"

However, 18.75% of the managers indicated that although they had a feeling to want to resist the change process they had no choice but to do it. In other words they were unwilling. Actually one manager's response to question 4.2.15 was "No. I had to swallow the bitter tablets and go on with life". A similar percentage of the managers indicated that they felt like wanting to resist the change process but attributed such feeling to lack of understanding and uncertainty. One manager's response was "Yes, because I did not understand the reasons for the change and the steps to follow". Only functions were moved over without the accompanying manpower, hence workloads were too much". This also highlights the importance and imperativeness of effective communication and creation of a team to run with the change project. The remaining 6% of the managers indicated that indeed they felt they should resist the process because the timing of the change was inappropriate as it interfered with quite a number of other processes including audits by the Auditor-General, budgets that were half complete were moved to the inheriting department, thereby creating lots of pressure and confusion of who was to do what.

Based on the literature reviewed any change or change process encounters some form of resistance. This is because resistance is a natural and unavoidable part of any change process. It is viewed as a means of challenging either the proposed change or how the change is to be carried out. It's actually a survival mechanism within organisations. Management needs to be aware of the reasons why employees resist change in order to be able to understand and manage the root causes of the resistance. Identifying the root causes of change resistances can be done a number of ways, such as through employee feedback, supervisor input, project team issues, and compliance audits. It is therefore essential to consult the employees afford them

opportunities to raise their concerns and contribute their views to the change and change process.

4.4 Conclusion

From the findings of this research it seems quite clear that the merger of the two departments within the North West Provincial Government did not follow any planned change process and was therefore seemingly carried out in a haphazard manner, as a way to just comply with the Presidential orders. No proper preparation and planning were considered as no change management team was put in place to spearhead the process. Employees were not properly consulted nor were their inputs into the process and views sought. There were no measures put in place to hold senior management accountable for lack of putting proper steps or processes to be followed by staff. It can be concluded, based on the findings of this research, that there is a great need for senior management in the public sector to put in place processes that prepare managers for change.

5.0 CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the research study by indicating how the research questions were answered as well as providing a summary of the research findings and limitations, ending with recommendations and managerial implications.

5.2 Findings from the study

This section discusses findings from the study by examining the results from both the literature review and primary research. Findings from the literature review and the primary study are discussed under sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 below respectively.

5.2.1 Key findings from the literature review

The main findings from the literature review were as follows:

a) Readiness to change

Resistance to organisational change and change processes reduces with the level of change readiness that prevails within the organisation. If the readiness of the members or employees involved is low the change can be refuted and members display total indifference to the change process all together. Armenakis *et al.*(1999:631) stated that “readiness for change reflects beliefs, feelings, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and perceptions of individual and organisational capacity to successfully enact those changes”.

Readiness for change is viewed as a complex conception that has an emotional side to it and a rational side as well an emotive inclination to change. This complex view of readiness for change as a triadic approach as opposed to viewing it as not complex is much better at capturing the complexity of the phenomenon. George and Jones (2001:419) and Piderit (2000:783) pointed out that “it is assumed that emotional, rational and emotive responses toward change come into play at various stages in the change process, and do not necessarily coincide”. Scientists have made attempts to group together the factors that shape change recipients’ readiness to embrace change

(Armenakis & Bedeian 1999; Holt *et al.*, 2007). The results by researchers identified numerous factors responsible for the change recipients' readiness to embrace change; however, only two have been singled out as important and that can make or break a recipient's readiness for change and these are (a) climate of change and (b) the way change is dealt with (i.e., process of change).

b) Group readiness to change

Group readiness to change is based on collective perceptions and beliefs that: (1) change is needed, (2) the organisation has the ability to cope with change effectively, (3) the group will benefit from change outcomes and (4) the group has the capacity to cope with change requirements. Group readiness to change needs to be analysed and discussed along with individual readiness and organisational readiness for two main reasons: first, following Coghlan's (1994:18) argument, which states that 'articles that focus on how individuals resist change tend to be deficient or one sided in that they deal with individual in isolation from the groups with which an individual may identify,' Thus, individual readiness to change has to be explored along with group readiness to change in the future. Second, although there is some empirical evidence linking groups and readiness to change (Pond *et al.* 1984), there are no clear definitions and analysis of this concept.

c) Change management team

Once the need for change has been envisaged, it is important that during the period of crafting of the change strategies to also consider forming a "change management team". Such a team should be tasked with championing and help with driving the changes, from planning to implementation as well as crafting the communication messages. An ideal change management team should comprise and represent a variety of the organisation's functional areas and levels. The attributes of the team are that it needs to have excellent communication skills, have business influence, be fully committed to the change, know and understand the business quite well, members of the team should be players who understand teamwork and should also have some change management experience.

The team does not have to be working on the project full-time but must be able to commit some time to the project. Since the change management team comprises members from various levels and areas of the organisation it may be essential for the team to have an orientation and training to ensure that everyone on the team understands their roles and responsibility and level of commitment required of the members.

d) Kotter's eight-step model

"The first model was developed by John P. Kotter (<http://www.kotterinternational.com/8-step-process-for-leading-change>) and it has eight steps that have to be executed in the specific order for the implementation of the change to be successful.

- i) Establish an experience of necessity:** Investigate the market and the situation of competition. Identify possible and potential crises and significant opportunities.
- ii) Create a governing coalition:** Establish a group of people with sufficient competence, knowledge and power to execute the change.
- iii) Develop a vision and a plan:** Create a vision which can manage the work of change.
- iv) Convey and communicate the change vision:** Use all terms and conditions to communicate the new vision and the strategies.
- v) Create a fundamental plan for action on a broad basis:** Remove obstacles in systems, structure and humans which might block the change.
- Vi) Generate short term benefits:** Plan and realise fast and visible victories. Reward those who make the victories possible.
- vii) Consolidate the results and produce more change:** Use the change to effect increased credibility to change all systems, structures and policies that do not harmonise with the vision. Hire and promote employees that live the vision.

viii) Anchor the new approaches in the culture: Achieve new results through successful behaviour and more effective management. Clarify the connection between new behaviour and results”.

e) Employee perceptions of change

Paulsen *et al.* (2005:463) state that “generally changes affect the very structure of organisational life with regards to employee relationships, reporting lines, employee and work unit status”. Social lines and interactions related with group memberships also get to be disrupted when changes happen (Terry & Jimmieson, 2003). As much as change may help to take advantage of certain prevailing conditions, such as to strategically position the organisation or to shield an organisation against certain adverse environmental conditions (to minimise the adverse impact of a recession) employees generally dislike changes and respond negatively towards it and resist any kind of change efforts (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; McHugh, 1997). Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999: 631). McHugh (1997) further states that “such negative reaction to change is largely because change brings with it increased pressure, stress and uncertainty for employees”.

f) Resistance to change

Any change or change process encounters some form of resistance. This is because resistance is a natural and unavoidable part of any change process. It is viewed as a means of challenging either the proposed change or how the change is to be carried out. It’s actually a survival mechanism within organisations. Management needs to be aware of the reasons why employees resist change in order to be able to understand and manage the root causes of the resistance. Identifying the root causes of change resistances can be done a number of ways, such as through employee feedback, supervisor input, project team issues, and compliance audits. It is therefore essential to consult the employees afford them opportunities to raise their concerns and contribute their views to the change and change processes.

Carr (2001) states that “employees’ emotional reactions to change are similar to the experience of grief”. It is therefore important that management understands that some

employees view change as a loss and loss creates emotions that can result in stress and anxiety.

g) Build internal support for change and for overcoming resistance

Fernandez, Sergio and Rainey Hal (2006:170) stated that “Managerial leaders must build internal support for change and reduce resistance to it through widespread participation in the change process and other means”. Fernandez and Rainey (2006:168) write that a “crisis, shock, or strong external challenge” real or manufactured “can help reduce resistance to change”. They caution that managers run the risk of “playing it too safe” if the urgency rate is not pumped up enough.

It is imperative that management understands that successful implementation of organizational change often resembles a hybrid where employees participate and direction comes from top management. Management should also understand that at times they have to follow a political process where they develop and nurture all stakeholders with the ultimate goal of achieving the change buy-in and overcoming resistance.

5.2.2 Key findings from the primary research

The major findings from the 22 respondents (*six of the respondents were senior managers and the other sixteen were employees, supervisors and managers*) involved in this research study are as follows,

1 Main research question

Preparedness of managers to deal with and manage changes

The findings revealed that 67% of the senior managers interviewed indicated that the managers and staff (employees) of the two departments that merged had received some training, for example, how to consult, encourage and motivate subordinates to adapt and embrace change as way of dealing with resistance from subordinates during implementation of change as well as to prepare and make them ready to deal with and manage changes during the merger process. On the other hand, 56.25% of the managers and employees stated that they were not trained to prepare them for the

change. They also indicated that the reasons for the change were not explained. Overall, the findings show a bias towards non-preparedness of managers to effectively deal with the change even though they might have had some training. This portrays a picture that not enough was done to actually prepare them to accept or manage the change.

2 Research sub-questions

i) Views of manager of merging departments on the change process

An overwhelming percentage 67% of senior managers interviewed responded that most employees had challenges with the new way of doing things in the newly-merged department and naturally there were resentment and resistance to the changed modes of operation. This finding highlights the imperative significance of thoroughly training and preparing employees for a change and creating and putting in place a change management team to spearhead the change and disseminating focused and galvanising communication messages to employees.

ii) Steps followed by Senior Management to prepare employees for change

It is imperative for senior management to put in place clear steps to be followed during an organisational change (Kotter, 1995). However, the findings indicated that the majority of the senior managers who were interviewed, constituting 66.67%, stated that there was no process put in place for employees to follow and this concurs with the response given by the employees themselves where 56.25% of the responses indicated that there was no steps followed.

iii) Merging managers afforded opportunities to contribute their expectations.

Half (50%) of the senior managers interviewed responded that employees of the two departments that merged were allowed opportunities to raise their views as well as to contribute to a smooth merging process. However, the other half of the senior managers indicated exactly the opposite, that is, involved employees were not accorded the opportunity to contribute to the process of merging the two departments.

The two contradictory responses from senior management clearly indicate that there is no coherent and standard way of managing change processes.

iv) Merging department managers' view of the change process

A large number (67%) of the senior managers indicated that most employees had challenges with the new modes of operation within the newly-merged department and naturally there were resentment and resistance to the changed way of doing things. Some employees felt marginalised and unappreciated with the new way things were and how the new way of operating was being conducted. A sizeable number of employees (31.25%) surprisingly indicated that change was good and it was an opportunity to learn something new. It may be concluded that there is potential for employees to embrace and accept changes as there is a core of them who view change in positive light. Management may want to take advantage of such a core group to influence others about the positives of change.

v) Extent of managers' resistance to the changes

An overwhelming number (66.67%) of all the senior managers interviewed indicated that no resistance was experienced from employees. The reason provided for no resistance was that any resistance that surfaced was addressed and employees seemed not to fear the change. In some instances it was indicated that resistance was managed which may mean employees were threatened should they want to show any resistance. Some employees clearly indicated in the interviews that they were warned and had no choice but to toe the line without asking questions. However, 37% of the employees indicated that they never had a feeling of wanting to resist because they viewed change as good and a chance to learning new ideas and things.

v) Doing change processes differently

An overwhelming percentage of 87.5% of the employees interviewed indicated that future mergers should definitely be done differently as they were not happy with how the whole current change process was handled by senior management. The main reason given was that affected or involved employees were not consulted or allowed an opportunity to express their opinions and make suggestions about the change process.

Many employees felt that consultation and communication with them were not even considered a priority by senior management and would want this to change for the better should another merger be implemented. Some of the employees indicated that there was a need to inform those affected well ahead of time and steps to be followed should have been put in place and explanations and opportunities to raise issues, views and clarification afforded to them.

5.3 Conclusion, recommendations and limitation of the study

An analysis of the main findings from both the literature review and primary research indicated that senior management of the North West Provincial Government overlooked the importance of planning the change process ahead of implementation. As a result the entire process was not managed properly, expertly and professionally. First and foremost, they seem to have had very little time between planning and implementing the change which may suggest that the change was a knee jerk decision. There was no change management team put in place to drive the process from planning to crafting persuasive communications and creating platforms and environments employees would discuss the issue and raise their views and suggest way of carrying out the change process as prescribed in Kotter's eight-step model.

The study's recommendations are as follows:

- 1** The process of convincing employees of the need for change often begins with the crafting of a compelling vision for it. Some research indicates that it is easier to convince employees of the need for change when leaders craft a vision that offers the hope of relief from stress or discomfort (Kets de Vries & Balazs, 1999).
- 2** Plan the change properly and ahead of time and form a change management team to run with the change process in a planned manner. The change management team is a group of people who will analyse the likely challenges, come up with possible solutions and then take actions to solve the identified challenges (Jacobsen, 2004).
- 3** Focus on building favourable strong employee beliefs, favourable feelings, willingness, attitudes and intentions of individuals and an organisational

aptitude that fosters a culture of embracing change. One of the main reasons why change efforts fail is employee resistance to change, the significance of resistance is compounded by the high rate of change failure.

4 Understand all forms and categories of resistance by employees, some of the resistance categories that a critical to understand are as follows,

a) Lip service: Sabotage by disregarding, as an instrumental compliance in that in recognising the legitimate authority of the hierarchy and the benefits of the continued employment, employees overtly and orally conform but covertly resist attempts to be subjugated.

b) Prolonged argument: Sabotage by erosion, involving the tenacious use of vociferous and protracted oral arguments upon all possible occasions to erode enthusiasm, support, or argument with the management-espoused change,

c) Hijacking: Sabotage by transformation, where employees endeavour to transform the adopted change into something more acceptable to their function, or simply something more personally palatable,

d) Scarcity creation: Sabotage by undermining, including the purposeful behaviour of a more confrontational form.

e) Direct conflict: Sabotage by battle, reflecting extremely pronounced personal opposition to change that could result in resignation”.

5.4 Limitations of this study

The limitations of this study included lack of access to the North West Provincial Premier and the director in charge of the departments that merged. It would have been important to interview them as part of this research and hear what their thinking had been regarding the state of preparedness of public sector employees for major changes. The other limitations for this study related to time constraints as the researcher is a full-time worker and some the questions were not answered satisfactorily despite efforts by the researcher to probe for more information.

5.5 Final conclusion

The study concludes that from the findings of this study and the literature review it is clear that the merger of the two departments within the North West Provincial Government did not follow any planned change process and it seemingly was done in a haphazard manner, so as just to comply with the Presidential orders. No proper preparation and planning were considered as no change management team was put in place to spearhead the process. Employees were not properly consulted nor were their input into the process and views sought. There were no measures put in place to hold senior management accountable for lack of putting proper steps or processes to be followed by staff. Overall, there is great need for the national government to standardise and come up with a process that should be followed when any public sector mergers take place. The significance of this study has been to indicate the importance of planned change management and preparedness of especially managers in being ready for managing and leading change throughout the implementation process. In response to the question, "Should another change be announced would you prefer it be done differently?" many of the participants stated as indicated by some of the evidence quotes below.

Evidence quote 1: "Yes, I would prefer that it be done differently where by the change should be communicated prior to implementation with the affected departments upfront"

Evidence quote 2: "Yes, I would prefer that the change be done differently, announced and communicated effectively and well ahead of time. Information should be cascaded to lower levels to get employees inputs where necessary"

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: In-depth Interview Questions

Interview Guide to the interviewer: *In carrying out the structured (open-ended) interviews, it is important that you adhere closely to the following interview instructions, namely,*

- a) *preparing for the interview*
 - b) *introducing yourself and explain why the study is being done to establish a rapport with the respondent.*
 - b) *re-assuring the respondent of their **confidentiality** or **anonymity** and informing them that their identities will not be revealed in the aggregated findings.*
 - b) *always following the correct order of questions.*
 - c) *being systematic and consistent in the way you interact with each respondent.*
 - d) *refraining from giving personal opinions.*
 - e) *If you are recording the interview advise respondent that this is the case at the outset.*
 - f) *writing down open-ended responses in full.*
-

Part A: Interview Questions for Senior Management

1. In your opinion do you think managers in the departments that merged were well prepared and made ready to manage changes during the merger? *(Probe, whatever answer to get deeper insights)*
2. Was a prior process of verifying and persuasive communication of the need for change to the managers put in place before the merger actually took place? *(Probe, whatever answer to get deeper insights)*
3. Briefly describe the steps/process (if any) that was followed by senior management to prepare managers and staff to be ready and cope with the change?
4. Were the managers of the merging departments afforded an opportunity to contribute their expectations prior to, during and after the merging of the departments? Was there any resistance experienced from the employees? *(Please explain further)*
5. How did managers of the merging departments view the change processes and practices within the current work dynamics of their departments?

6. To what degree did managers in the merging departments resist the change? Why?
7. How ready were you for the change and how did you cope during transition?
8. What role did the managers (you) play in the change process within the merged departments? *(Please explain further)*
9. Were any employees retrenched or got deployed to other departments as a result of the merger of the two departments?

Part B: Interview Questions for Managers and Employees

10. How did you view the change when it was announced that your department was to merge with another?
11. How was the announcement of the merger communicated to all involved?
12. Did senior management explain a process that would be followed to prepare you for this change? Did they also explain the main reasons for merging the departments?
13. How much of your work content, responsibilities and work environment changed post the merger of the departments? Is the change favourable or unfavourable to you? Please elaborate on your response.
14. Should another change be announced would you prefer it be done differently? Please comment further on your view.
15. Did you ever had a feeling of wanting to resist the whole change process? Why was this so, if you felt resisting the change?

Appendix B: Letter of Introduction and Informed Consent



Letter of Introduction and Informed Consent

Graduate School of Business and Government Leadership

Title of the study

Public sector managers' readiness to manage change during mergers

Research conducted by:

Mr Ronald Yiga

Cell: 083 313 8460

018 388 1742

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Ronald Yiga, who is a Master's student from the Graduate School of Business Administration at the North-West University-Mafikeng Campus.

The purpose of this study is to establish the readiness of public sector.

Please note the following:

- This is an anonymous study survey as your name will not appear on the questionnaire. The answers you give will be treated as strictly confidential as you cannot be identified in person based on the answers you give.
- Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.
- Please answer the questions in the attached questionnaire as completely and honestly as possible. This should not take more than 40 minutes of your time.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.
- Please contact my supervisor (**Prof Y. Du Plessis, and 018 389 2021 and/or yvonne.duplessis@nwu.ac.za**) if you have any questions or comments regarding the study. Please sign the form to indicate that:
 - You have read and you understand the information provided above.
 - You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. (Please tick).

Participant's signature & Date

Appendix C: Ethical Clearance Certificate



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ETHICS APPROVAL OF PROJECT

The North-West University Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-RERC) hereby approves your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-RERC grants its permission that provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the project may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Project title: Public sector managers' readiness to manage change during mergers.																																									
Project Leader: Prof Y du Plessis																																									
Student: R Yiga																																									
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Institution			Project Number					Year			Status																														
Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation																																									
Approval date: 2015-05-21						Expiry date: 2020-05-20																																			

Special conditions of the approval (if any): None.

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-RERC:
 - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project,
 - without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the NWU-RERC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-RERC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-RERC retains the right to:
 - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project;
 - withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected,
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-RERC or that information has been false or misrepresented,
 - the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
 - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.

The Ethics Committee would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Committee for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Linda du Plessis

Digitally signed by Linda du Plessis
DN: cn=Linda du Plessis, o=North-West University, ou=Vice-Rector:
VTC,
email=Linda.duPlessis@nwu.ac.za,
c=ZA
Date: 2015.05.28 13:24:55 +02'00'

Prof Linda du Plessis

Chair NWU Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (RERC)