

**EMPOWERMENT,
ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT
AND JOB SATISFACTION
WITHIN A CHEMICAL ORGANISATION**

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ABSTRACT

Key terms: Empowerment, psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Work is considered to be a necessary and unavoidable part of human existence. As South Africa continues to be exposed to global economics, social and political changes, the international arena demands increased speed, efficiency and customer focus at reduced costs. In order to achieve these demands, organisations are demanding more from their employees than ever before. Employees must learn to take initiative, be creative and accept responsibility. Each employee's full potential is needed on every level in an organisation.

Employee empowerment is a concept that has been the subject of research for over 50 years. It generally shows that despite an increasing popularity of the "employee empowerment movement", very few companies today are truly empowered and programs intended to empower meet with very little success. Furthermore, empowerment, together with the strategies for implementing it, is far from being a simple "quick fix". Employee empowerment is multidimensional – no single set of contingencies can describe it. It actually encompasses a very complex and multifaceted continuous process, with its roots in the changing social, economic, and political structures of society.

The objective of this study was to conceptualise empowerment from both a situational (contextual) and psychological (motivational) perspective. From a situational perspective it investigated the relationship of psychological empowerment with contextual factors such as leadership. From a psychological perspective it investigated and measured the four cognitions that provide employees with a sense of empowerment.

Furthermore it explored the possible relationship between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction on the one hand, as well as the extent to which psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction, on the other hand. The relevance of this to the organisation was to determine whether there is a difference in these variables between employees, departments, tenure and age groups and if these situational variables predict psychological empowerment.

The research group was composed of 137 employees within a chemical organisation. They completed several questionnaires. The research results of the empirical study were reported and discussed according to the empirical objectives. The descriptive statistics and the internal consistency of the measuring instruments for the total population were highlighted. Thereafter the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments were discussed.

The results of the empirical study indicated that a positive level of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction exists within this organisation. Results indicated that statistically significant differences exist in organisational commitment between tenure and various age groups. It furthermore indicated that there were statistically significant differences in psychological empowerment between different age groups. No statistically significant differences between the different qualification levels were observed in psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Results furthermore indicated statistically significant differences in leader empowering behaviour between various organisational levels of employment and within various departments. Statistically significant differences do exist in job satisfaction between various organisational levels of employment, although no statistically significant differences were reported with regard to various departments. With regard to differences between various organisational levels of employment and various departments, no statistically significant differences were experienced in psychological empowerment and organisational commitment

Positive correlation, with a medium to a large effect, were reported between (a) psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction, (b) leader empowering behaviour and job satisfaction, and (c) organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Concerning the predictive value of the constructs, the findings indicate that psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Based on the above results recommendations were made. These recommendations emphasise the importance of integrating both situational and psychological perspectives to enhance empowerment to the benefit of both the individual and the organisation.

OPSOMMING

Sleutelterme: Bemagtiging, psigologiese bemagtiging, leier-bemagtigingsgedrag, organisasietoewyding en werkstevredenheid.

Werk word beskou as 'n noodsaaklike en onvermydelike deel van die menslike bestaan. Soos Suid-Afrika blootgestel word aan wêreldwye ekonomiese, sosiale en politieke veranderinge, vereis die internasionale arena groter spoed, effektiwiteit en kliëntediens teen verminderde koste. Ten einde aan hierdie vereistes te voldoen, verwag en eis maatskappye meer van hulle werknemers as ooit tevore. Werknemers moet leer om inisiatief en kreatiwiteit aan die dag te lê en om verantwoordelikheid te aanvaar. Elke werknemer se volle potensiaal word op elke vlak binne die maatskappy benodig.

Die konsep van werknemberbemagtiging word al vir die afgelope 50 jaar nagevors. Alhoewel "werknemberbemagtigings-benadering" oor die algemeen, al meer gewild raak, kan slegs 'n paar maatskappye hulle daarop beroem dat hulle werklik bemagtig is en word bevind dat programme wat die oogmerk van bemagtiging daarstel min suksesse tot gevolg het. Verder kan bemagtiging, en die strategieë om dit te implementeer, nie gesien word as 'n maklike uitweg nie. Werknemberbemagtiging is multidimensioneel – nie een stel gebeurlikhede kan dit beskryf nie. Dit omsluit eintlik 'n baie komplekse en multi-gefaseerde aaneenlopende proses, met sy wortels gesetel in die veranderende sosiale, ekonomiese en politieke strukture van die samelewing.

Die oogmerk van die studie was om bemagtiging vanuit beide 'n situasionele (kontekstuele) sowel as 'n psigologiese (motiverende) perspektief te konseptualiseer en te bespreek. Vanuit die situasionele perspektief het dit die verwantskap tussen psigologiese bemagtiging en kontekstuele faktore soos leierskap ondersoek. Vanuit die psigologiese perspektief het dit die vier kognisies wat werknemers ervaar as 'n gevoel van bemagtiging ondersoek en gemeet.

Dit het voorts die moontlike verhouding tussen psigologiese bemagtiging, leier-bemagtigingsgedrag, organisasietoewyding en werksbevrediging aan die een kant ondersoek, sowel as die mate waartoe organisasietoewyding en werksbevrediging deur psigologiese bemagtiging en leier-bemagtigingsgedrag aan die ander kant voorspel kan word. Die toepaslikheid hiervan vir die maatskappy was om te bepaal of daar 'n verskil is in hierdie veranderlikes tussen verskillende groepe en departemente en of situasionele veranderlikes psigologiese bemagtiging voorspel.

Die ondersoekgroep is saamgestel uit 137 werknemers binne 'n chemiese maatskappy. Vraelyste is deur die ondersoekgroep voltooi. Die navorsingsresultate van die empiriese studies is volgens die empiriese oogmerke bespreek. Beskrywende statistiek en interne konsekwentheid van die meetinstrumente vir die totale populasie is ook bespreek. Daarna is die betroubaarheid en geldigheid van die meetinstrumente bespreek.

Die resultate van die empiriese studie het aangedui dat daar 'n positiewe vlak van psigologiese bemagtiging, leier-bemagtigingsgedrag, organisasietoewyding en werksbevrediging binne die chemiese maatskappy bestaan. Resultate het daarop gedui dat statistiese beuidende verskille bestaan in organisasietoewyding tussen verskillende diensjare en verskillende ouderdomsgroepe. Resultate het voorts daarop gedui dat daar beduidende statistiese verskille bestaan tussen die tellings vir die verskillende meetinstrumente met betrekking tot gevoelens van psigologiese bemagtiging tussen verskillende ouderdomsgroepe. Geen beduidende statistiese verskille met betrekking tot verskillende opvoedingsvlakke kon gevind word nie. Resultate het verder daarop gedui dat daar beduidende statistiese verskille in leier-bemagtigingsgedrag tussen verskillende organisasievlakke en binne verskillende departemente bestaan. Statisties beduidende verskille bestaan in werksbevrediging tussen verskillende organisasievlakke terwyl geen statistiese beduidende verskille ten opsigte van verskillende departemente in werksbevrediging gerapporteer is nie. Met betrekking tot verskille tussen die onderskeie organisasievlakke en verskillende departemente, kon geen statistiese beduidende verskille in psigologiese bemagtiging en organisasietoewyding gevind word nie.

Postiewe korrelasie, met 'n medium tot groot effek, tussen:

- (a) - psigologiese bemagtiging en leier- bemagtigingsgedrag,
 - psigologiese bemagtiging en organisasietoewyding; en
 - psigologiese bemagtiging en werksbevreëdiging;
- (b) leier-bemagtigingsgedrag en werksbevreëdiging; asook
- (c) organisasietoewyding en werksbevreëdiging bestaan.

Met betrekking tot die voorspellende waarde, is aangedui dat psigologiese bemagtiging en leier-bemagtigingsgedrag wel organisasietoewyding en werksbevreëdiging voorspel.

Aanbevelings vir toekomstige navorsing is aan die hand gedoen. Hierdie aanbevelings beklemtoon die belangrikheid om beide die situasionele sowel as die psigologiese perspektiewe te integreer sodat bemagtiging tot voordeel van beide die individu en die maatskappy verhoog kan word.

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Please note that the terms he / him or his could also indicate she or her. The terms used in the dissertation do not only imply a specific gender.

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT, RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this study it is envisaged to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. This study will also determine whether psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour can predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction. The difference between these variables across groups, levels and departments in the organisation will also be discussed.

In this chapter the problem statement will be discussed. Thereafter the general and specific research objectives and methodology will be highlighted. The chapter will conclude with a summary.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the international world of work the only constant is change. Change is not part of life – change is life. In future, more than ever before, organisations will be confronted with rapidly changing challenges such as workforce mobility, down-sizing, “doing more with less”, productivity improvement and being the preferred service provider.

A recurring theme in the business world over the past decade has been globalisation: global markets, global communication and global resources (Hawley, 1995). Globalisation put pressure on companies to benchmark and to fundamentally rethink and redesign their existing organisational processes, to increase production, speed and quality, while cutting costs and eliminate layers (Arnold, Arad, Rhoades & Drasgow, 2000).

South Africa, as the rest of the world, is undergoing major changes in the social, political, economical, technological and organisational environments. South African companies moved out of the international isolation phase after the 1994 elections, when the majority of South Africans elected an inclusive democratic South African government (Jesse, 2000). Since the lifting of sanctions and South Africa's entry into international markets, organisations were no longer protected from the competition in the international business arena. South African businesses had to compete on an equal footing with international businesses in the local and international markets (Delpont, 2000).

The 20th Century has challenged humanity with the Industrial, Transport, Communication, Information Technology and, most recently, the Internet Revolutions. Krawitz (2000) predicts that the sixth revolution will be "The People Revolution". He emphasises that in an economy where technology has the power to duplicate any product within hours, the only way to sustain a competitive advantage is through people. If people are the key to competitive advantage, the way companies treat people become critical to success (Krawitz, 2000). Companies need to optimise the potential of people and attract, develop, care for, retrain and inspire competent people.

Krawitz (2000) mentions that South Africa's natural resources have been its focus for generations and in order for organisations to succeed, a new focus will have to emerge identifying people as the key to success. In South Africa we have a skills shortage in certain areas, but at the same time a very high unemployment rate that is impacting negatively on the availability of competent people, putting pressure on our economy.

Hough (1999) states that human capital is a factor that can promote competitiveness as it provides the required knowledge, skills, attitudes and capacities for developing competitive strategies, product development, quality control, corporate financial development, marketing and human resource development.

In Europe, America and South Africa the word empowerment brings to mind pictures of organisations restructuring to become meaner and leaner (Madi, 1997). In South Africa empowerment has received much attention towards increasing the country's global economic position (Wadula, 2001).

Conger and Kanungo (1988) view empowerment from two perspectives, namely as a situational construct and a motivational construct. Menon (2001) conceptualises empowerment as either an act, a process or a state. She classified empowerment into three broad categories, based on the underlying thrust and emphasis, namely structural empowerment, motivational empowerment and leadership empowerment.

Empowerment as a situational construct emphasises power and decision-making authority, which means moving decision-making authority down the organisational hierarchy so that the employee has the ability to impact on the organisational outcomes.

Empowerment as a motivational construct reflects an individual's active orientation to his work role and his cognitions are shaped by a work environment (Spreitzer, 1995). Psychological empowerment exists when employees feel that they exercise some control over their work life (Spreitzer, 1995). Variables like the type of work, demographic factors and leaders could have an influence on an employee's commitment and psychological empowerment levels. Menon (2001) defines motivational (psychological) empowerment as a cognitive state characterised by a sense of perceived control, competence and goal internalisation. The benefits of empowerment will only be realised if the employee actually experiences empowerment as a psychological state. The psychological state refers to the internal processes of the individual being empowered.

The Leader empowering approach emphasises the energising aspect of empowerment. Leaders energise their followers to act by providing an existing vision for the future. In a previous study by Konczak, Stelly and Trusty (2000), it was found that leader empowering behaviour and psychological empowerment were related to organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Organisational commitment is the extent to which an individual identifies and is involved with his organisation and/or is unwilling to leave it (Greenberg & Baron, 1997). When an employee enjoys his work, it doesn't mean that he feels positively towards the company. To understand employees' work-related attitudes, feelings and cognitions towards the company must also be considered. Positive attitudes can shape cognitions, assisting the employee to experience a sense of empowerment.

Carson & Carson (1999) state that job satisfaction is an emotional construct reflecting an employee's positive feelings about a task situation. Job satisfaction is related to behaviour that indicates a positive organisational orientation, whilst job dissatisfaction is related to patterns of behaviour such as turnover, absenteeism and arriving late for work, to mention only a few. Research has acknowledged contextual factors such as organisational culture as influencing empowerment (Liden, Sparrowe & Wayne, 2000). They elaborate further by stating that empowering individuals may result in higher levels of job satisfaction. They also state that individuals who perceive their jobs to be significant and worthwhile feel higher levels of job satisfaction than those who perceive their jobs as having little value.

The company involved in this research is a world leader in the commercial production of liquid fuels and chemicals from coal to crude oil. It is one of South Africa's leading corporate wealth generators and over the last decade this company has been pursuing new frontiers in its quest to become a respected global enterprise. The company is also moving from participatory management towards collaborative teamwork, and from older-style management towards an inspirational combination of management and leadership. They are moving forcefully into the 21st century, with an increased consciousness of the need to empower themselves as individuals and as teams.

This study to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction does not only have academic value, but is also of practical importance to the organisation.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the exposition of the problem above, this research will attempt to answer the following questions:

- How are empowerment and psychological empowerment conceptualised in the relevant literature?
- What is the current levels of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction perceived by employees?
- What is the difference in the levels of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction regarding tenure, age and qualification?
- What is the difference between different organisational levels of employment and departments in terms of the degree of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction?
- What is the relationship between psychological empowerment on the one hand, and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction on the other hand?
- To what extent can psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research include both general and specific objectives:

1.4.1 General objective

With reference to the above formulation of the problem, the general objective of this research is firstly to measure and determine the relationship between psychological empowerment, leader

empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction in a chemical organisation. Secondly it is to determine whether psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour can predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

1.4.2.1 *Specific literature objective*

- To conceptualise and define empowerment and psychological empowerment.

1.4.2.2 *Specific empirical objectives*

- To determine the current level of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction perceived by employees within a chemical organisation.
- To determine if there is a difference in the levels of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction in terms of tenure, age and qualification.
- To determine the difference between different organisational levels of employment and departments in terms of the degree of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.
- To determine the relationship between psychological empowerment on the one hand, and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction on the other hand.
- To determine if psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour can predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction in a chemical organisation.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology consists of a literature study and empirical research.

1.5.1 Literature study

The literature study focused on previous research that has been done on empowerment, psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Dwyer (2001) found significant correlations between psychological empowerment, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Rugg (2001) and Malan (2002) found significant correlations between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour and job satisfaction. Hlalele (2003) found significant correlations between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. The results of this research were used to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

The following databases were consulted:

- Library catalogues
- Repertory of South African and International Journals: Journal of Vocational Behaviour, Journal of Workplace Learning, Journal of Organisational Behaviour, Journal of Industrial Psychology, Journal of Quality and Participation, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Quality Management, Journal of Managerial Psychology, Journal of Management Systems, Journal of Management, Journal of Social Psychology
- RGN-Nexus: Current and completed research
- Business periodicals index
- Social science index
- Sabinet

With the above information in hand, the researcher was able to respond to the research questions and was able to enhance the results of the empirical study from a theoretical perspective.

1.5.2 Empirical study

The empirical study's results were integrated with the results of the literature study.

1.5.2.1 *Research design*

The purpose of research design is to plan and structure a research project in such a way that it enhances the ultimate validity of the research findings (Mouton & Marais, 1992). The research design can be classified as a survey design (Huysamen, 1993). It also has to do with the study of the relationship that occurs without any planned intervention between two or more variables and to indicate causality between the variables.

For the purpose of this study, information from a collected sample was used to describe the population at that specific point and time (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997). By means of a survey design the study of constructs simultaneously are made possible.

1.5.2.2 *Study population*

The total population of this organisation is 207. The study population consisted of 137 employees within a Chemical Organisation. The study population was representative of different organisational levels of employment (Executive team/Leaders, Specialists & Salaried Personnel and Monthly Salaried Personnel) within this organisation, representing all functions. The names of all the employees were put into a hat and randomly selected to determine the sample.

1.5.3 **Measuring Instruments**

The following standardised measuring instruments were used in this research:

1.5.3.1 *The Measuring Empowerment Questionnaire (Spreitzer, 1995)*

This is a theory-based measure of empowerment developed by Spreitzer (1995) based on the four facets (personal meaning, sense of competence (self-efficacy), self-determination (choice) and perceived impact) of psychological empowerment hypothesised by Thomas & Velthouse (1990). The questionnaire consists of 12 items. Konczak et al. (2000) found a high coefficient alpha of 0,86 in their study. Dwyer (2001) and Rugg (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,92 and 0,84 for reliability respectively.

1.5.3.2 *The Leader Empowering Behaviour Questionnaire (LEBQ)* (Konczak et al., 2000)

This instrument provides leaders with feedback on behaviour relevant to employee empowerment. As an applied tool, the six-factor model provides behavioural specific feedback on coaching and development purposes. The six dimensions are: delegation of authority, accountability, self-directed and participative decision making, information sharing, skill development and coaching and developing for innovative performance. The questionnaire consists of 19 items. The interfactor correlations ranged from 0,40 to 0,88 (Konczak et al., 2000). Dwyer (2001) and Rugg (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,95 and 0,97 for reliability respectively.

1.5.3.3 *The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993)*

This questionnaire was used to measure the organisational commitment of employees. Continuance, affective and normative commitments are dimensions measured by this questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 18 items. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was consistently above 0,80 (Suliman & Iles, 2000). Dwyer (2001) and Rugg (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,79 and 0,86 for reliability respectively.

1.5.3.4 *The Revised Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire*
(Schriesheim, Powers, Scandura, Gardiner & Lankau, 1993)

The short version of this questionnaire was used to measure job satisfaction of employees. The short version of the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire consists of 20 items that measure satisfaction with specific aspects of the job and the work environment. According to Cook, Hepworth, Wall & Warr (1981) the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire offers a reliable and valid measure of general job satisfaction. Research done by Konczak et al. (2000) indicates a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0,85. Dwyer (2001) and Rugg (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,92 and 0,91 for reliability respectively.

1.5.4 Research procedure

The measuring battery and sample group were compiled. The researcher communicated the aim of the research to the employees of the organisation during a coffee session. Selected employees were given company time to answer questionnaires during scheduled sessions at their workstations. The researcher attended these sessions and emphasised the ethical aspects and confidentiality regarding the research. On completion, questionnaires were deposited firstly into a collection envelope and thereafter into a sealed collection box. The results were analysed and feedback will be given to all individuals who indicated that they would like to receive feedback.

1.5.5 Statistical analysis

All statistical analyses were done through the Statistical Consultation Services at Potchefstroom University for CHE. The following statistical methods were used in analysing the results:

- Descriptive statistics such as sample size (N), average or mean (\bar{X}), standard deviation (SD), skewness and kurtosis.
- Cronbach's alpha (α) was used to determine the reliability of the measuring instruments and construct validity was tested by means of principal component factor analysis.

- ANOVA (one way analysis of variance) was used to indicate significant differences between the means. Probability level was set at $p < 0,05$. T-tests were used to indicate whether significant differences occurred between group means. Effect sizes were used to determine statistical significance.
- Practical significant correlations between the variables were indicating using Pearson-product moment correlations (r).
- Regression analysis was used to indicate if psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

1.6 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter 1: Problem statement, research objectives and methodology

Chapter 2: Literature study: Empowerment, psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction

Chapter 3: Empirical research

Chapter 4: Results of the empirical study

Chapter 5: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has served as introduction, sketching the research problem context and setting the scene for the rest of the dissertation. In the next chapter the literature study with regard to empowerment, psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction will be discussed. This presents the theoretical knowledge needed for better understanding.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE STUDY

EMPOWERMENT, ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the key terms and problem statement for this study were discussed. The specific research questions as well as the general and specific research objectives were also highlighted.

A literature study can be seen as an answer to the problem statement and assist the researcher to comprehend the results from the empirical study. In this chapter a literature study will be done with the aim to define empowerment, psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Theories surrounding empowerment from both a situational (organisational) and psychological (motivational) perspective will be reviewed, with equal emphasis on both perspectives. This chapter serves to provide a theoretical framework within which to interpret the results of the investigation. The chapter will conclude with a summary.

In this study the researcher refers to manager and leader in the same sense. It is accepted that managers should become leaders in order to enable people and to be more successful managers.

2.2 BACKGROUND

Factors underpinning and promoting the interest in empowerment can be attributed to a combination of economic, global, political and financial changes, which have forced most organisations to change their management practices in order to survive.

Organisations consist of people. The best technologies are worthless without skilled people. The major source of competitive advantage lies in the dedication, the quality of the commitment, and the competency of an organisation's work force. The results of employee energy and creativity – human talent – are the organisation's most important resource. It is the employees of organisations, who through their skills and knowledge will ensure the survival of organisations in future. Spreitzer and Quinn (1997) state that if a company wants and needs people who are more effective, innovative and transformational, empowerment is worth the effort.

The concept of empowerment will now be discussed.

2.3 EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment in its varied forms has been prevalent for many years. Management literature on empowerment deals with participative management techniques such as management by objectives, quality circles, and goal setting by subordinates as the means of sharing power or delegating authority. However, since 1990 the number of articles referring to "employee empowerment" has exploded. This is partly because the term can be used to describe both the individual and the organisational aspects of the concept (Honold, 1997).

The process of building a highly committed, highly effective work force has been given many labels: participative management, quality of work life, internal service environment, alternate work arrangements, open systems planning, socio-technical systems, work redesign or self-management. These initiatives to involve employees in organisational decision making are as old as industrial democracy and can be tracked back to the last century. More recent initiatives are team building, participation and total quality management (Appelbaum, Hebert & Leroux, 1999).

Whatever these above-mentioned initiatives are called, empowered work teams share responsibility, communication, expectations, rewards and power. In a competitive world, individuals continuously strive for power and control over their environment. To empower means to give power.

Taking this into consideration, the root constructs of power and control, from which the empowerment construct derived, will be discussed.

2.3.1 Power and Control

Power has always been at the centre of human motivation and all people to some degree have a need for power and prestige, to influence and control other people. Power, however, has several meanings. In a legal sense, power can mean authority, so that empowerment can mean authorisation. Power also may be used to describe capacity, as in the self-efficacy definition of Conger and Kanungo (1988). However, power also means energy. Thus, to empower can mean to energise (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

Definition of power:

Power is the faculty or capacity to act, the strength and potency to accomplish something. It is the vital energy to make choices and decisions. It also includes the capacity to overcome deeply embedded habits and to cultivate higher, more effective ones (Covey, 1999).

The researcher proposes the following definition of power: *Power is the ability to get someone to do something you want done or to make things happen.*

Today's competitive climate demands that everyone feels powerful, in control and be willing to help carry the organisation toward peaks or greater competitiveness. An individual's power needs are met when he perceives that he has power or when he believes he can adequately cope with events, situations, and/or people that he confronts. Any managerial strategy or technique that strengthens this intrinsic need for self-determining or a belief in personal self-efficacy will make him feel more powerful.

Many companies have learned the value of sharing control with employees – control over decision making, control over work processes, control over performance goals and measurements, and/or control over people (Howard & Foster, 1999). By sharing power and giving up control, leaders express implicit trust in their employees' ability to do a good job and the motivation to do it well. Sharing control demonstrates trust, builds employee contribution and increases work satisfaction and organisational effectiveness (Ulrich, 1997).

By examining powerlessness, the necessity of empowerment becomes clearer.

2.3.2 Powerlessness

Freire (1973) argues that powerlessness causes individuals to lose their ability to make choices, being more subjected to external prescriptions and the choices of others. Rosabeth Moss-Kanter's studies revealed that: "when people feel powerless, they behave in petty ways. They become rule-minded, and are over-controlling because they are trying to grab hold of some little piece of the world that they do control and then over-manage it to death" (Appelbaum et al., 1999).

Definition of powerlessness:

An antecedent to the empowerment process is a situation where individuals experience an actual or potential loss of power, and they feel a sense of distrust, alienation from resources to social influence, a sense of hopelessness and an attitude of self-blame (Albertyn, 2000).

The researcher proposes the following definition of powerlessness: *Powerlessness refers to being unable to take action or to direct the course of one's life.*

Anything that makes people feel powerless is a destructive force. Employees, who feel disempowered can be costly, not only in terms of turnover but also in terms of increased psychological strain, reduced job satisfaction and increased absenteeism. It is critical to find out the reasons for a sense of powerlessness. Once these reasons (conditions) are found,

empowerment strategies and tactics can be used to remove them.

Empowerment gains profundity through the examination of power and powerlessness, as discussed above. The process of empowering as well as the elements of empowerment will be the next point of discussion.

2.3.3 Process of Empowering

The term *empowering* refers to sharing information, soliciting co-worker's ideas, fostering employee development, delegating meaningful responsibilities, providing coaching feedback, expressing positive expectations of subordinates irrespective of their diversity differences, and rewarding performance improvement. Such managerial behaviours make employees feel more capable and motivate them to assume greater responsibility (Spencer, 1995).

2.3.3.1 *Elements of empowerment*

Elements of empowerment are concerned with two aspects (Vogt & Murrell, 1990) namely:

- Creating power for oneself (being empowered)
- Helping others grow towards a state of empowerment (being empowering).

Vogt and Murrell (1990) describe empowerment as the act of building, developing and increasing power by working with others. In simple definitional terms, the verb to empower means to enable, to allow or to permit and can be conceived as both self-initiated and initiated by others. For social change agents, empowering is an act of building, developing, and increasing power through co-operation, sharing, and working together. It is an interactive process and complex relationship, a pathway from the self to organisational well-being. The self is empowered through trust, communication, and participation, which, in turn, bring about commitment (to people, institutions, projects, experiences). A central component of this process is commitment, which connects the individual with others and with a sense of personal worth that brings a sense of self-fulfilment (Vogt & Murrell, 1990).

Empowered people are empowering people. The process of empowering together with above-mentioned two elements of empowerment could be illustrated as follows:

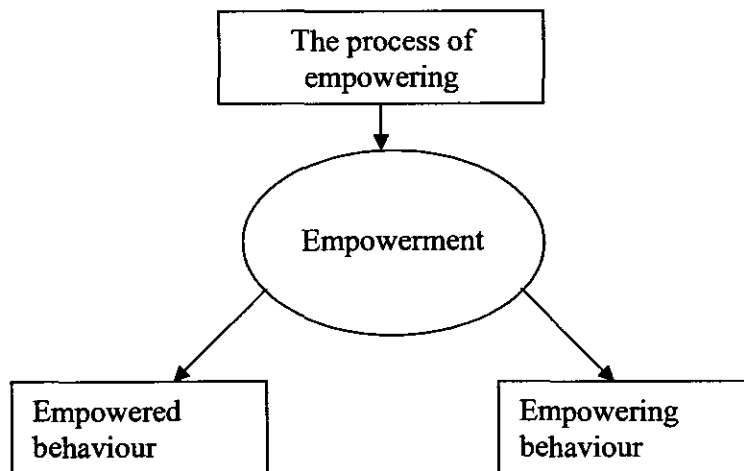


Figure 2.1: Process and elements of empowering (Vogt & Murrell, 1990)

Conger and Kanungo (1988) describe power and control as the root construct of empowerment and the researcher therefore initially highlighted the concepts of power/control, powerlessness and empowering. Taking the aforementioned and Figure 2.1 in consideration, the multiple dimensions of empowerment make it a difficult concept to define. The various definitions conceptualising empowerment will now be reviewed, to obtain a commonly accepted understanding.

Conger and Kanungo (1988) view empowerment from two perspectives namely a situational construct and a motivational construct. Menon (2001) conceptualises empowerment as an act, a process or a state. She classified empowerment into three broad categories, based on the underlying thrust and emphasis, namely structural empowerment, motivational empowerment and leadership empowerment. Empowerment as a situational construct (structural empowerment) will be defined, conceptualised and discussed first. Secondly, empowerment as motivational construct (motivational/psychological empowerment) will be defined, conceptualised and discussed. Lastly the importance of leadership in creating a culture of

empowerment (leadership empowerment) will be discussed. Similarities exist between the work of these two researchers. The rest of the chapter will focus on these three perspectives of empowerment.

2.4 EMPOWERMENT AS A SITUATIONAL CONSTRUCT

Empowerment is an organisational strategy that gives employees greater responsibility for decision making and increased involvement in controlling work processes (Schreuder & Theron, 1997). The empowerment trend emerged as organisations recognised their employees' capacity to improve and enhance organisational performance through being informed and involved; through the recognition of their skills and experience and through being encouraged to be creative, innovative and to take risks (Cloete, Crous & Schepers, 2002). Organisations want employees who can take initiative, embrace risk, stimulate innovation and cope with high uncertainty, therefore effectiveness and innovative behaviour are needed (Spreitzer, 1995).

The situational approach defines empowerment as being influenced by external (contextual) factors. Leaders at any level in the organisation can increase the power of employees who report to them. Empowerment has been defined by Conger and Kanungo (1988) as "a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organisational members through their removal of both formal organisational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information".

Situational empowerment as a process (Conger & Kanungo's (1988) five-stage model to empowerment) will now be reviewed.

2.4.1 Conger and Kanungo's Five-stage Model to Empowerment

The process of empowerment can be viewed in five stages that include the psychological state of empowering experience, its antecedent conditions, and its behavioural consequences:

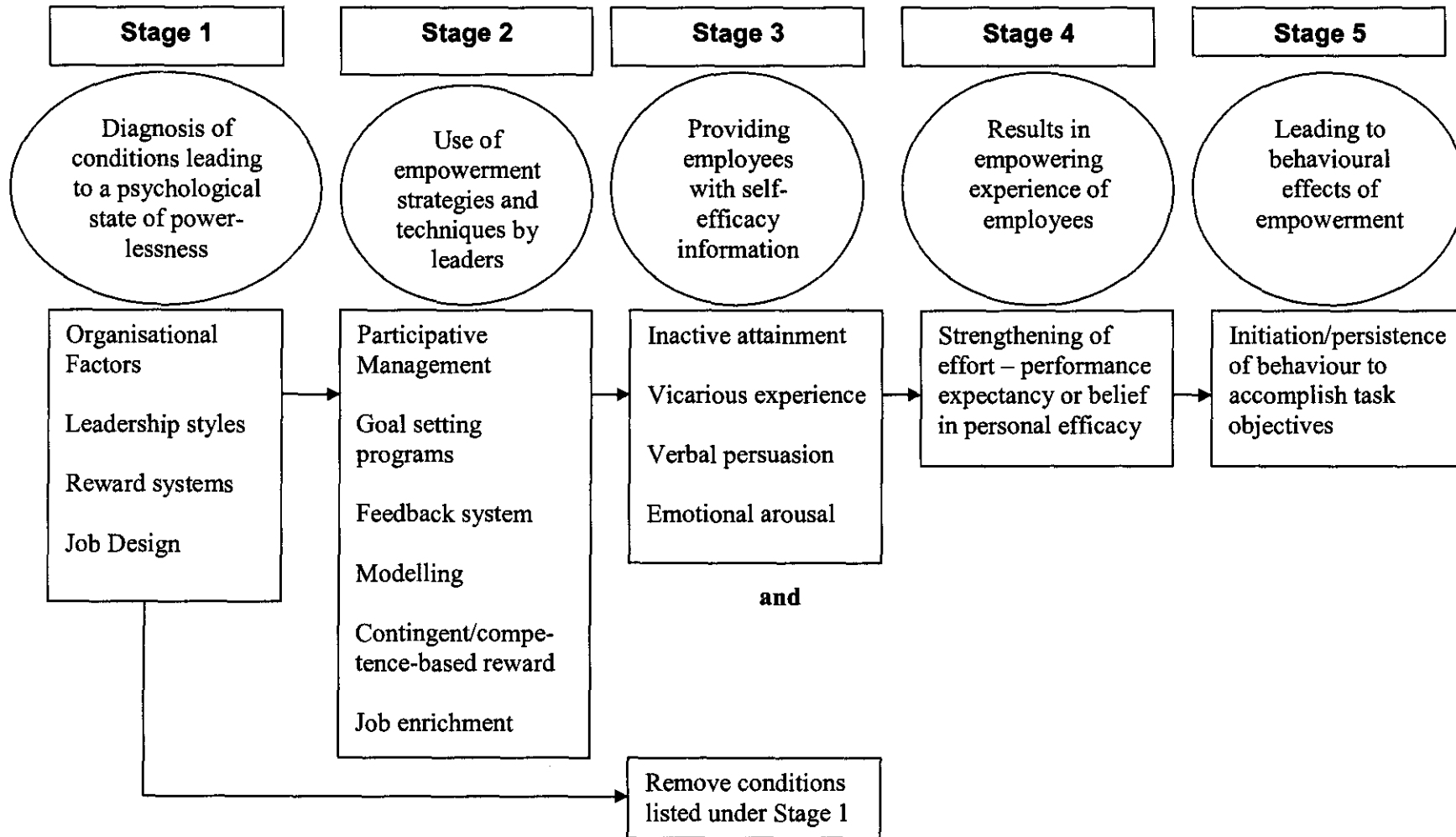


Figure 2.2: Process of empowerment (Conger & Kanungo, 1988)

Stage 1: Certain conditions within the organisation are responsible for feelings of powerlessness. These conditions could find their origin in organisational factors, leadership styles, and reward systems and/or in the nature of the job (job design). These contextual factors leading to potential lowering of self-efficacy belief will be discussed later in this chapter (Conger & Kanungo, 1988).

Stage 2: The diagnosis completed in the first stage leads to the implementation of empowerment strategies and techniques in the second stage. Use of participative management, establishing goal-setting programs, implementing merit-based pay systems, and job enrichment through redesign are examples of possible empowerment activities (Conger & Kanungo, 1988).

Stage 3: Strategies and techniques mentioned in stage 2 are aimed at accomplishing two objectives in stage 3: Removing some of the external conditions (contextual factors) responsible for powerlessness on the one hand and (more important) providing employees with self-efficacy information. Self-efficacy describes a belief in one's effectiveness (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1993). Individuals high in self-efficacy tend to be confident and self-assured and feel they are likely to be successful in whatever endeavours they undertake.

Stage 4: Receiving such information results in feelings of empowerment in the fourth stage. This is because increasing self-efficacy strengthens effort-performance expectancies (Conger & Kanungo, 1988).

Stage 5: Finally, the enhanced empowerment feelings from stage 4 are translated into behaviours in the fifth and final stage. These behavioural consequences of empowerment include increased activity directed towards task accomplishment. Thus, by helping employees feel more assured of their capability to perform well, and by increasing linkages between effort and performance, empowerment can result in positive individual and organisational payoffs (Conger & Kanungo, 1988).

Contextual factors leading to potential lowering of self-efficacy belief (Stage 1 in the above-mentioned model) will be discussed next.

**2.4.2 Contextual factors leading to potential lowering of self-efficacy belief
(Conger & Kanungo, 1988)**

As discussed above, Conger and Kanungo (1988), identify contextual factors which they believe will contribute to the lowering of self-efficacy or personal power among employees. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) highlight external events that have an impact on individual task assessments. Spreitzer (1996) highlights social structural characteristics that impact on psychological empowerment. The need to empower employees becomes critical when they feel powerless. Numerous authors argue that leaders can empower employees when they share information, provide structure, develop a team-based alternative to hierarchy, offer relevant training opportunities, and reward employees for the risks and initiatives they are expected to take (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer & Quinn, 1997). These factors are:

**TABLE 2.1
CONTEXTUAL FACTORS LEADING TO POTENTIAL LOWERING OF SELF-EFFICACY BELIEF (Conger & Kanungo, 1988)**

Organisational Factors	Significant organisational changes/transitions
	Start-up ventures
	Competitive pressures
	Impersonal bureaucratic climate
	Poor communication/network systems
	Highly centralised organisational resources
Supervisory Style	Authoritarian (High control)
	Negativistic (emphasis on failures)
	Lacking of reason for actions/consequences
	Low span of control
	Role ambiguity
	Limited access to information and resources
Reward systems	Non-contingency (arbitrary reward allocations)
	Low incentive value of rewards
	Lack of competence-based rewards
	Lack of innovation-based rewards

TABLE 2.1

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS LEADING TO POTENTIAL LOWERING OF SELF-EFFICACY BELIEF (Continue)

Job design	Lack of role clarity
	Lack of training and technical support
	Unrealistic goals
	Lack of appropriate authority/discretion
	Low task variety
	Limited participation in programs, meetings, decisions that have a direct impact on job performance
	Lack of appropriate/necessary resources
	Lack of network-forming opportunities
	Highly established work routines
	High rule structure
	Low advancement opportunities
	Lack of meaningful goals/tasks
	Limited contact with senior leaders/management

Above-mentioned contextual factors need to be discussed in more detail. The researcher will start by discussing the impact of organisational factors on employees' self-efficacy beliefs:

2.4.2.1 *Organisational factors*

The focus will be on organisational environment, organisational culture, structure and teams specifically when discussing organisational factors.

When an organisation creates an **environment** in which its members feel more assured of their capability to perform well and where they choose empowerment as a way of being, the probability for organisational success is increased because the efforts of individuals are focused towards the same goal. There is personal commitment to and ownership of outcomes. The organisational environment must support the following three practices (Duvall, 1999):

- **Freedom to act:** An organisational focus which intentionally provides for the successful accomplishment of mutually understood expectations by individuals through co-responsibility for performance outcomes, the availability of necessary resources, and indemnification for expected errors.
- **Commitment:** The acceptance by individual members of their responsibility for the consequences of their own behaviour. The leader's challenge is to create working environments in which individuals voluntarily choose to commit, collaborate, and act toward the accomplishment of organisational goals. The central issues for modern organisations will be how to balance top-down control with bottom-up empowerment.
- **Collaboration:** The simultaneous involvement of individual members in the process of their own success, and the success of others. Employees often think of empowerment in terms of self-empowerment. They lose sight of the fact that teamwork and co-operation depend on each element in the system working in concert with every other element. The principal element is that both partners are explicitly and intentionally directing their behaviour towards successful performance outcomes.

The focus/aim of empowerment is to assure **success** within the framework of the organisation's mission, vision and strategy (Galbraith & Lawler, 1993). **Success** as a result of empowerment (Duvall, 1999) is defined as follows:

Individual success is the degree to which individual role performance, within the context of an organisational role, produces results favourable to the individual and the organisation. **Organisational success** is achieved as members of an organisation accomplish collective organisational goals and objectives, as the acquisition of knowledge and information begins to change behaviour, which is then directed to accomplishing organisational goals and objectives. Organisational members share a mutually beneficial and satisfying work experience meeting both social and personal growth needs.

Schein (1999) defines **culture** as the shared values and assumptions that guide behaviour in an organisation. Culture change occurs when the desired culture is quickly translated into employee action. Empowerment approaches to culture change are not new, but they have received increasing attention through efforts at companies such as General Electric, where Jack Welch, the chairman, wanted General Electric to be known by its customers and employees for speed, simplicity, and self-confidence. To make this happen, he empowered thousands of employees to take out “low-hanging fruit”.

Through town meetings, General Electric employees identified items that could be changed immediately and made more consistent with the new culture (Ulrich, 1997). Talking about culture is a lot easier than creating culture in which empowerment can prosper (Blanchard, Carlos & Randolph, 1999). The organisation must provide for a climate that promotes open communications and active listening, and encourages personal risk, trustworthy behaviour and initiative. For individuals to feel empowered they must perceive their working environment as being liberating rather than constraining (Appelbaum et al., 1999).

Empowerment cannot materialise itself without **structural** and procedural changes within the organisation. In response to increasing global economic competition, to increase speed and efficiency, as well as to reduce costs, many companies have undergone dramatic structural changes. There must be congruence between corporate goals, management goals and the goals of the organisation’s employees (Appelbaum, et. al., 1999).

To improve the overall flexibility and efficiency of their organisations, many companies have replaced their traditional hierarchical management structures (marked by centralised decision-making and a top-down philosophy of control) with empowered (semi-autonomous or self-managing) **work teams** (Arnold et al., 2000). The current emphasis on teams, and most importantly on empowered teams, has been accompanied by different requirements for both employees and leaders in those organisations. Over time, employees in empowered teams are granted more autonomy, self-direction, and control over their work environment. Teams,

functional groups and departments will be more effective when they are structured according to the human need for acceptance (Vogt & Murrell, 1990).

The impact of organisational factors was highlighted above. The influence of supervisory style on an employee's task assessment will now be discussed.

2.4.2.2 *Supervisory style*

Empowerment as a situational construct describes the perceived power that an individual actor has over others. Empowerment in terms of the situational dynamic-, becomes the process by which a leader shares his power authority and control over organisational resources with subordinates. To empower implies the granting of power – delegation and authority (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). The structural approach emphasises power and decision-making authority, which means moving decision-making authority down to lower levels and granting employees the ability to affect organisational outcomes (Menon, 2001).

In order for empowerment to be successful, each organisation must create it for itself. Empowerment must address the needs and culture of each unique entity (Honold, 1997). Leaders create an environment where individuals are able to make that choice. The most current theory on leadership looks at leadership as a process in which leaders are not seen as individuals in charge of followers, but as members of a community of practice. A community of practice is defined as “people united in a common enterprise who share a history and thus certain values, beliefs, ways of talking, and ways of doing things” (Appelbaum et al., 1999). Leadership involves a leader and group of followers, and dominance, motivation, and influence are the primary vehicles of leadership. Leader empowerment behaviour will be discussed later on in this chapter.

The impact of reward systems on lowering an individual's self-efficacy beliefs will now be highlighted.

2.4.2.3 *Reward systems*

Some relevant organisational mechanisms are compensation and reward programs that empower employees and give them a stake in the organisation and selection systems, including skill-based pay, variable pay, and “broad banding”, as well as orientation, training and mentoring programs. These provide knowledge of organisation expectations, structure, roles, norms and mentorship, which contribute to an individual’s sense of competence, and effectiveness and can offset feelings of disempowerment (Koberg, Boss, Wayne, Jason & Goodman, 1999).

Internally- and externally-oriented individuals differ in the kinds of rewards they prefer. Externally-oriented individuals prefer extrinsic rewards (pay and job security). In contrast, internally-oriented individuals prefer intrinsic (self-supplied) rewards such as feelings of accomplishment or achievement (Appelbaum & Hare, 1996). The implication of this is that an internal locus of control influences self-efficacy (Appelbaum & Hare, 1996). Self-efficacy influences psychological empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995). Thus leaders who understand their subordinates’ level of psychological empowerment can better tailor their reward systems to reflect individual needs.

Job design, as the final contextual factor leading to potential lowering of self-efficacy belief, will be discussed next.

2.4.2.4 *Job Design*

A review of the literature demonstrates that organisations have a long history for trying to encourage employee participation. This can be tracked back to the 1960’s when companies started to work on job enlargement, job enrichment, and management by objectives and quality circles, as they realised the benefits of giving employees the power to influence their own work environment.

Following Lewin's (1951) model of motivation, individual success is directly related to the satisfaction of individual needs. When individuals are able to satisfy their perceived needs, they see themselves as being successful. People are self-motivated to achieve, grow and develop in positive ways. An individual acting in these ways is assuming responsibility for outcomes for the choices of his behaviour (Horsfall, 1996). This link between the individual and the task is strong enough to produce emotional reactions over task outcomes. Typical emotional expressions range from a feeling of personal pride when a job is well done to a feeling of loss or disappointment at not achieving a goal. It is this emotional bond that differentiates responsibility from accountability (Pinchot & Pinchot, 1993).

Conditions within the organisation that could lead to feelings of powerlessness, namely organisational factors, supervisory styles, reward systems and job design were discussed above.

To further support the impact/effect of both formal organisational practices and informal techniques on employees' self-efficacy beliefs the process model of empowerment (Vogt & Murrell, 1990) will now be highlighted:

2.4.3 Process model of empowerment

The Process model, as illustrated in Figure 2.3 (page 28), recognises that a culture valuing openness, individual contributions, interdependence, and personal well-being must first be in place. Within it, a communication process that is multi-leveled, is honest, that is open to asking and listening and that encourages everyone's input is crucial. Such a communication system creates the opportunity for each person to express his authentic self and to receive feedback that fosters growth and promotes participation. Once the freedom of empowerment is attained, the individual feels an integral part of the system and becomes willing to commit himself to group and organisational goals.

In such settings interpersonal and group skills, as well as technical expertise and the valuation of each person’s contribution, will produce teamwork, quality outcomes, and organisational well-being. Such well-being might be defined in numerous ways, but the most useful dimensions will include not just the traditional criteria of productivity and profitability but also the kind of human and ethical values that lead to personal and organisational enhancement (Vogt & Murrell, 1990).

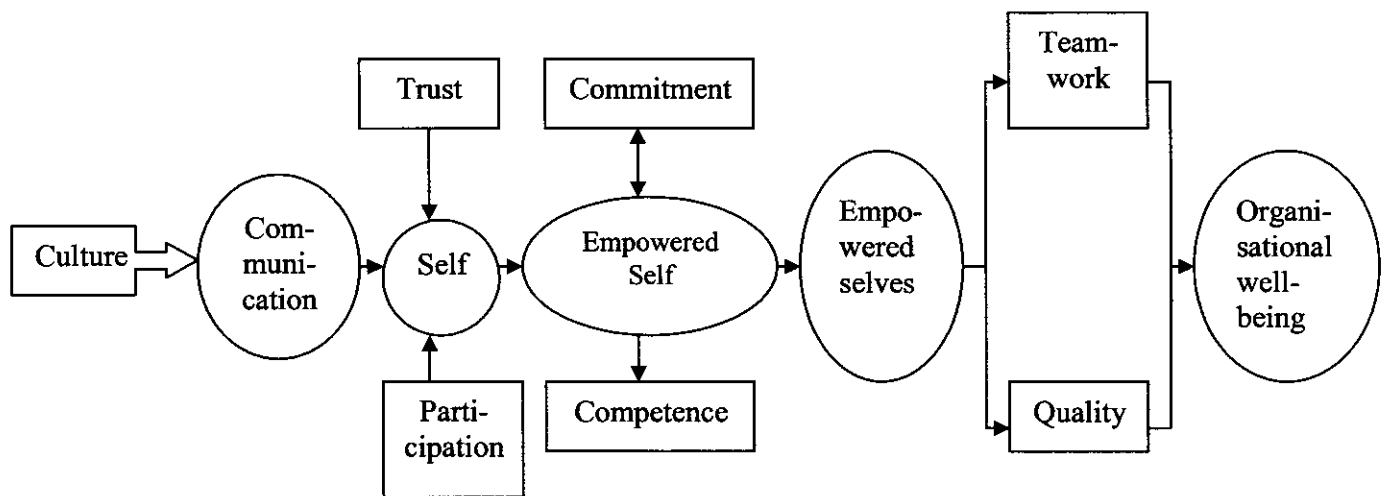


Figure 2.3: Process model of empowerment (Vogt & Murrell, 1990)

In order to contribute to the competitive strength of the organisation, empowerment is seen as a useful tool. Empowerment in the workplace can be examined through various perspectives and presents many facets. Organisations are investigating, in depth, how to implement various techniques to create a setting for the empowerment of the workforce in order to increase competitive advantage, innovation and effectiveness. Various factors, such as environment, culture, structure, supervisory style, reward systems, job design and technology, are to be considered for an implementation to be successful.

However, most of all, an organisation must first analyse its business processes as a result of the organisation’s objectives and decompose these processes into business tasks that are of primary concern for the organisation’s core activities (Houtzagers, 1999).

The importance and impact of situational empowerment on both the individual and the organisation must not be underestimated; therefore, the advantages and disadvantages of empowerment need to be addressed. Advantages will be dealt with first whereafter disadvantages will be highlighted.

2.4.4 Advantages of empowerment

In view of the variety of advantages attributed to empowerment, for both the individual and the organisation (Appelbaum & Honeggar, 1998; Appelbaum et al., 1999; Blanchard et al., 1999), it is evident why empowerment is the fuel for the growing workplace. Employees will pursue the focus, structure, style, controls, or rewards and whatever else drive and determine the direction of the organisation (King, 1996). Employee empowerment will be achieved if employees feel valued, supported, have high self-esteem, understand the company's direction and have internalised the company's culture and values (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

TABLE 2.2
ADVANTAGES OF EMPOWERMENT

<i>Advantages for the organisation</i>	<i>Advantages for the individual</i>
Increased productivity	Job satisfaction
Increased performance and motivation	High commitment and energy
Higher quality products and services	Effort and persistence in challenging situations
Improved teamwork	Coping and high goal expectations
Customer service and competitive position	High performance
Increased speed and responsiveness	Willingness to learn
Lessened emotional impact of demoralising organizational changes and restructuring	Interest in activity and resilience in the face of adversity
Lowered absenteeism and turnover	Absence of withdrawal from difficult situations
Heightened stability, satisfaction and involvement of employees	Believe they are autonomous and have an impact
High morale employees	More likely to be creative
Creative employees	Feel less constrained by technical and rule-bound aspects of work
Enthusiastic employees	Feelings of self-efficacious, likely to be innovative in their work and do expect success
Aligned commitment	
Effectiveness and efficiency	

2.4.5 Disadvantages of empowerment

Disadvantages of empowerment need to be noted in order to ensure that individuals are not exploited. The old issues of exploitation, control and de-skilling of workers have not gone away: rather, they have been wrapped up in different management clothing. Empowerment has become a strategic discourse employed by management to legitimise changes to increase production and profit, which are often not to the interest of employees. Albertyn (2000) suggests that struggles for liberation and empowerment constitutes a powerful threat to existing power structures and so curricula, which once advocated independence, now stress how individuals should struggle either to adapt to existing conditions or to build individual self-esteem from within. Albertyn (2000) points out that there is a danger that what appears to be empowering mechanisms often raise initial hopes, only to dash them when it becomes clear that the mechanisms are at best tokenism and at worst a co-optation that justifies the status quo.

Most definitions of empowerment refer to some aspects of power and control – control over decision making, control over work processes, control over performance goals and measurement and/or control over people. To furthermore assume that empowerment equals the sharing of power with subordinates implies that the construct requires no further analysis beyond the power construct. The process of sharing power (delegation) is too constrictive in scope to accommodate the complex nature of empowerment.

Various authors define and conceptualise empowerment from a situational approach as discussed above. Situational empowerment is incomplete by itself. Conger and Kanungo (1988) state that empowerment as simply equated to employee participation is inadequate reasoning, since the nature of empowerment as experienced by the employees is not addressed. The research of Spreitzer and Quinn (1997) supports this view on empowered people and suggests a more complex view. According to Spreitzer (1995), organisational researchers have in the past focused their work on empowering measurement practices without any perspective on the individual's perspective on empowerment and the psychological experience of empowerment. How people

feel about themselves, their self-image, their self-limiting beliefs, could hold them back from achievement and this must be addressed in any meaningful empowerment programme. It is what the employee does with his education, skills, power and influence that bring greater or lesser rewards for both the individual and the organisation.

Psychological empowerment differs from the situational concept of empowerment in that it focuses on intrinsic motivation rather than the managerial practices used to increase an individual's level of power. Empowerment must be viewed as a continuum, not as an absolute, that is, people can be viewed as either more or less empowered, rather than empowered or not empowered (Spreitzer, 1995). Honold (1997) supports the above-mentioned view, and sees empowerment as a continuum of power from powerlessness to empowered. Although leaders must create a context that is more empowering, employees must also choose to be empowered.

Simply providing opportunities for employees to take power is not enough. Employees must choose to be engaged – to take ownership. If power is not assumed by those it is bestowed upon, there is no empowerment (Honold, 1997). It is thus imperative for researchers to explore what it is that makes employees experience this sense of motivational empowerment. This will be reviewed next.

2.5 EMPOWERMENT AS A MOTIVATIONAL CONSTRUCT (PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT)

Conger and Kanungo (1988) were among the first to define empowerment from a motivational approach (psychological empowerment). Psychological empowerment is defined as a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organisational members through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness (e.g. bureaucracy) and through their removal by both formal organisational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). The major component of “formal organisational practices” was discussed earlier in this chapter. Duvall (1999) supports this view and states that empowerment

is vital to the success of the 21st century organisation and describes empowerment as the process of implementing conditions that increase employees' feelings of self-efficacy and control.

Psychological empowerment, as discussed above, refers to empowerment at an individualised deep psychological level and impacts both individual and organisational effectiveness. The focus is on intra-personal cognitive processes, and the core of the model is on the on-going cycle of environmental events, task assessments and behaviour.

Spreitzer (1995) supports this view and highlights the following important assumption regarding her definition of psychological empowerment, namely that psychological empowerment reflects an individual's active orientation to his work role and his cognitions are shaped by the work environment, and not an enduring personality trait. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) support this view and emphasise that an individual's work context and personality characteristics shape empowerment cognitions.

Psychological empowerment impacts both individual and organisational effectiveness. Psychological empowerment is a process by which the role of workers becomes redefined in order to enable the organisation to achieve new goals and adapt to a changing environment. Organisations want employees who can take initiative, embrace risk, stimulate innovation and cope with high uncertainty, therefore effectiveness and innovative behaviour are needed (Spreitzer, 1995). Spreitzer and Quinn (1997) state that empowerment is a mindset/an active orientation that an employee has about his role in the organisation.

Recent research supports the notion of empowerment as psychological construct, such that empowerment exists when people feel that they exercise some control over their work lives (Howard & Foster, 1999). Conger and Kanungo (1988) also emphasise that an individual's power needs are met when they perceive they have power or when they believe they can cope with events, situations, and people they confront. Power in this motivational sense refers to an

intrinsic need for self-determination or a belief in self-efficacy. Menon (2001) defines empowered employees as those who possess the attributes of empowerment and are in a state of empowerment. This state is characterised by perceptions of control, competence and goal internalisation.

Empowerment as a motivational construct aims to enable, rather than to simply delegate power. Menon (2001) conceptualised motivational empowerment as psychological enabling. Enabling implies motivating through enhancing personal efficacy/increasing the sense of self-worth by creating conditions for heightening motivation for task accomplishment (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Employees need to be able to personally take responsibility for the success of the organisation and for the success of their lives. The strength of the individual's belief in his own effectiveness will affect whether he would even try to cope in a given situation. Efficacy expectations determine how much effort people will expend and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles and aversive situations (Bandura, 1997). Any managerial strategy or technique that strengthens this intrinsic need for self-determining or a belief in personal self-efficacy will make him feel more powerful.

Thomas & Velthouse (1990) conceived empowerment within the workplace and proposed a cognitive model in which they argued that empowerment is multifaceted. They emphasised that an individual's work context and personality characteristics shape empowerment cognitions. They furthermore define empowerment more broadly as increased intrinsic task motivation manifested in a set of four cognitions reflecting an individual's orientation to his work role. The set of four task-related cognitions pertaining to an individual's work role consists of: *meaning, competence, choice (self-determination) and impact*. Meaningfulness concerns the value of the task goal or purpose judged according to the individual's own ideals or standards. Competence is the degree to which a person can perform task activities skilfully when he tries. Choice involves casual responsibility for a person's actions, or self-determination. Impact is the degree to which behaviour is seen as making a difference in terms of accomplishing the purpose of the task, that

is, producing intended effects in one's task environment. Together, these four cognitions reflect an individual's active orientation to shape his work role and context. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) state that the four dimensions specify a nearly complete or sufficient set of cognitions for understanding psychological empowerment.

Correlation exists between the research done by Thomas and Velthouse as discussed above, and Beach. Beach (1996) states that the concept of empowerment is similar to the concept of intrinsic motivation. She also says that a state of empowerment can only come from within an individual. Empowerment involves an intrinsic desire to take charge of one's life. It is an inner urge that drives people to some sort of action. No one can create intrinsic motivation for another. Similarly, no one can cause another to be in an empowered state. Yet leaders can create extrinsic conditions leading employees in the direction of attaining empowerment.

Empowerment is an internal decision by an individual to commit him to achieving organisational goals and objectives, to collaborate with others towards the accomplishment of common goals and to choose to act freely within the boundaries and structure of the organisation for the purpose of achieving individual and organisation success (Duvall, 1999). Spreitzer and Quinn (1997) state that employees must see themselves as having freedom and discretion; they must feel personally connected to the organisation, confident about their abilities, and capable of having an impact on the system in which they are embedded.

Conger and Kanungo (1988) see empowerment as giving and putting processes in place for employees to experience a sense of self-efficacy. Conger and Kanungo's five-stage model to empowerment, as per figure 2.2 on page 19, has aspects of situational empowerment (stages 1 and 2) as well as psychological empowerment (stages 3 and 4), which highlights that there are no clear boundaries in defining empowerment. Stage 5 of the model focuses on the behaviour consequences of empowerment that will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

On the basis of work by Thomas and Velthouse (1990), Spreitzer (1995) developed a multi-dimensional 12-item measure of perceived empowerment, consisting of four sub-dimensions. Each dimension contributes to an overall construct of psychological or perceived empowerment. Subjects indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each of the 12 statements, with responses ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

During the empirical study, the Measuring Empowerment Questionnaire of Spreitzer (1995) was used. The four cognitive determinants of intrinsic motivation, namely *meaning*, *competence*, *choice* and *impact* will now be discussed in detail:

2.5.1 Personal meaning

A typical statement dealing with meaningfulness (Spreitzer, 1995) is: “My job activities are personally meaningful to me”. This encompasses the value of work goal evaluated in relation to an individual’s ideals. Spreitzer and Quinn (1997) state that empowered people have a sense of meaning, they feel that their work is important to them and they care about what they are doing. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) describe meaning as the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual’s own ideals or standards. Menon (2001) states that employees need to internalise the goals of the organisation because goals are important for energising. Employees will act on its behalf if they believe and cherish organisational goals.

Meaning involves a fit between the requirements of a work role and beliefs, values and behaviours (Hackman & Oldman, 1980). Bandura (1997) states that people do things that give them a feeling of self-worth and self-satisfaction. Empowered employees need to have a vivid picture and understanding of where the organisation is going – this will give them meaning.

Meaningfulness is the opportunity one feels to pursue a worthy task purpose (Appelbaum & Honeggar, 1998). The feeling of meaningfulness is the feeling that one is on a path that is worth one’s time and energy – that one is on a valuable mission, that the purpose matters in the larger

scheme of things. Meaningfulness concerns the value a task holds in relation to the individual's value system. In order to build feelings of meaningfulness the following should be in place: non-cynical climate, clear values, an exciting vision, relevant task purposes and whole tasks. This highlights the relevance and importance of contextual factors, within a psychological perspective, as discussed during the situational perspective of empowerment.

Competence as a cognitive determinant of intrinsic motivation will now be addressed.

2.5.2 Sense of competence

A typical statement dealing with competence (Spreitzer, 1995) is: "I have mastered the skills necessary for my job". Spreitzer and Quinn (1997) state that empowered people have a sense of competence. This is the accomplishment one feels in skilfully performing task activities one has chosen. The feeling of competence involves the sense that one is doing good quality work on a task. Employees are confident about their ability to do their work well, and they know they can perform.

Self-esteem, which is defined as feelings of self-worth, is positively related to feelings of psychological empowerment. Through self-esteem employees see themselves as valued resources having talents worth contributing, and are thus more likely to assume an active orientation with regard to their work (Spreitzer, 1995). This dimension is also labelled competence rather than self-esteem because of a focus on efficacy specific to a work role. Competence refers to self-efficacy (Conger & Kanungo, 1988) or an individual's belief that he is able/capable of successfully performing a particular task or activity with skill (Bandura, 1991).

Competence is analogous to agency beliefs, personal mastery, or effort-performance expectancy (Bandura, 1991). Bandura (1997) explained that empowerment is gained through development of personal efficacy. Empowerment enables employees, and enablement programs teach them how

to exert influence over practices that affect their well being. In the efficacy-building process, employees need early experiences in producing tangible results to convince themselves that they have the capability to change the environment in which they live. Having gained some success, they come to believe that they can overcome tougher problems.

Perceived competence denotes self-efficacy and confidence with regard to role demands – the employee believes that he can successfully meet routine task demands as well as any non-routine challenges that might arise in the course of work (Menon, 2001). Perceived competence is the cornerstone of Conger and Kanungo's empowerment strategy (1988) as well as a major component of Thomas and Velthouse's model of empowerment (1990).

The implementation of empowerment strategies and techniques, as indicated in the second stage of the Conger and Kanungo's Five-stage model to empowerment (1988), relates to both the situational and psychological perspective of empowerment. Reasons are that these identified strategies and techniques aim to remove some of the external conditions (contextual factors) responsible for powerlessness, but more importantly leaders provide employees with self-efficacy information (from four sources – inactive attainment, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and emotional arousal). Receiving such information results in feelings of empowerment because increasing self-efficacy strengthens effort-performance expectancies. By helping employees feel more assured of their capability/ability to perform well, and by increasing linkages between effort and performance, empowerment can result in positive individual and organisational payoffs.

Choice, as reflecting an individual's active orientation to shape his work role and context, needs to be highlighted next.

2.5.3 Self-determination (choice)

A typical statement dealing with self-determination (Spreitzer, 1995) is: “I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job”. This reflects choice in initiating and governing behaviour. Spreitzer and Quinn (1997) state that empowered people have a sense of self-determination. Self-determination relates to the opportunity one feels one has to select task activities that make sense and to perform them in ways that seem appropriate. The feeling of choice is the feeling of being free to choose – of being able to use one’s own judgment and act out on one’s own understanding of the task.

Employees are not micro-managed by leaders. Any leader that strengthens this sense of self-determination or self-efficacy belief of employees will make them feel more powerful (Conger & Kanungo, 1988).

Where competence is a mastery of behaviour, self-determination is an individual’s sense of having a choice in initiating and regulating actions. Self-determination reflects autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes; examples are making decisions about work methods, pace and effort (Deci, Connell & Ryan, 1989).

Conger and Kanungo (1988) as well as Thomas and Velthouse (1990) stress the importance of perceived control. Perceived control refers to beliefs about autonomy in the scheduling and performance of work, availability of resources, authority and decision-making. People exert some influence over what they do by the alternatives they consider (Bandura, 1997).

Perceived impact as the final cognitive determinant of intrinsic motivation will be discussed next.

2.5.4 Perceived impact

A typical statement dealing with impact (Spreitzer, 1995) is: “My impact on what happens in my department is large”. This describes an individual’s ability to influence outcomes at work. Spreitzer and Quinn (1997) state that impact is the accomplishment one feels in achieving the task purpose. The feeling of progress/perceived impact involves the sense that the task is moving forward, that one’s activities are really accomplishing something. This means that people believe they can have influence on their work unit and that others listen to their ideas.

Spreitzer (1995) proposed that because psychological empowerment comprises the motivational cognition of impact or the degree of perceived influence on work outcomes, individuals who are internal will feel more empowered than those who are external in their locus of control. People with an internal locus of control believe they have strong personal control over their life experiences, whereas those with an external locus of control feel luck, chance, fate or others determine their decisions and behaviour and their successes and failures (Koberg et al. 1999). Impact is different from locus of control. Whereas impact is influenced by the work context, internal locus of control is a global personality characteristic that endures across situations.

Ashforth (1989) states that impact is the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, administrative, or operating outcomes at work. Impact is the converse of learned helplessness. Impact represents the degree to which individuals perceive that their behaviour makes a difference (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

All the dimensions of psychological empowerment have been discussed. Spreitzer (1996) emphasises that the above-mentioned four dimensions of psychological empowerment are viewed from the perspective of the individual. It is necessary to study these conditions and the process through which they go. Psychological empowerment has been reviewed by the researcher.

The focus of the study will now be on Leadership approach (Menon, 2001). Leadership (Leader empowering behaviour) involves “embedding a culture within” rather than “imposing a structure upon”. Aforementioned highlights the importance of leadership in creating a culture of empowerment.

2.6 LEADER EMPOWERING BEHAVIOUR

In Menon’s Leadership approach (2001) the emphasis is on the energising aspect of empowerment. Leaders energise their followers to act by providing an existing vision for the future. One of the critical issues confronting leaders in the process of transforming organisations is employee empowerment (Robbins, 2001). In order to survive in a competitive environment characterised by deregulation and converging markets, complex customer needs, corporate restructuring, and downsizing, today’s organisational leaders are searching for innovative ways to enhance the creative potential of their workforce and gain that extra competitive advantage. In the business world, that which compels companies to implement the empowerment process is the promise of enhanced operational and financial performance as it results from an increase in overall employee ownership, involvement and job satisfaction (Appelbaum et al., 1999).

Compassionate leadership is a term used by Dobbs (1993) to describe what holds empowerment together. “Compassionate leadership is characterised by openness, receptivity to new ideas, honesty, caring, dignity and respect for people” (p. 57). Leaders are required to support teams, encourage self-management and promote empowerment. One great challenge to leaders is to lead people more effectively, as people issues are becoming more central to business success.

Empowerment can be used as a tool to motivate employees to achieve organisational goals. Research quoted in Thomas & Velthouse (1990) indicates the benefits of how transformational and charismatic leaders can energise workers by tapping idealism and building faith in the ability to accomplish meaningful goals. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) believe that empowerment

relates to the very basis of human existence influenced by the environment, the tasks, and the behaviour of the leader, the individual's interpretative styles, and the impact and meaningfulness of the task. Empowered employees feel that their organisation provides them with socio-political support, that they have greater access to information and resources than in traditional organisations, and that their work climate is participatory (Honold, 1997). It is the task of leaders to transform the beliefs and attitudes of employees in line with the organisation mission.

Empowerment is possible only through strong (but not domineering) leadership. Leaders cannot motivate employees directly. They can create an environment, which encourages people to be more efficient and effective. People must experience an environment in which they are free to act toward the successful accomplishment of organisational goals. It is the responsibility of the organisation, through its leaders, to create the conditions under which success is possible: an environment in which individuals may choose to be successful. The open system model of a motivating climate will now be discussed:

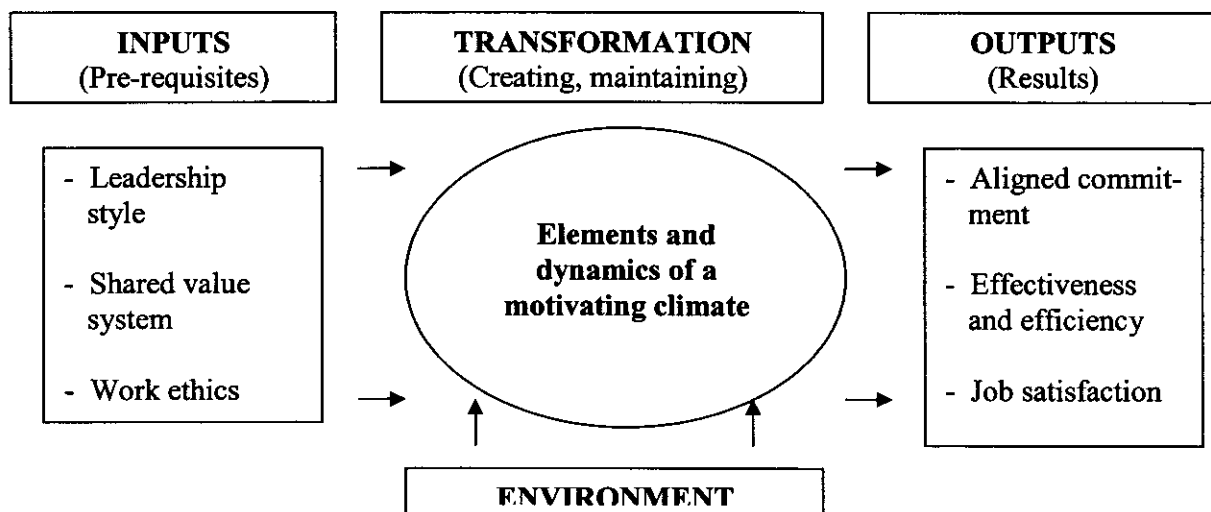


Figure 2.4: Open system model of a motivating climate (Coetsee, 1996)

A motivating climate in an organisation exists if it is characterised by certain outputs, employees and leaders who are aligned and committed to goals, who perform and who experience job satisfaction, because certain inputs are present, like effective leadership styles, a shared value system and sound work ethics. The outputs are the results of a transformation process, in which the interaction between the elements of a motivating climate transforms the inputs into outputs.

Psychological empowerment behaviour demonstrated by leaders will now be discussed.

2.6.1 Psychological empowering behaviour demonstrated by leaders

Arnold et al. (2000) developed an Empowering Leadership Questionnaire (ELQ). The ELQ focuses on a shift in the source of control from the leader to the team member. The Leader Empowering Behaviour Questionnaire (LEBQ), developed by Konczak et al. (2000), focuses the study on the role of the leader during the empowerment process. Konczak et al. (2000) suggest that measuring empowering leader behaviour should help prioritise human resource interventions intended to increase empowerment in the workplace.

Important leadership dimensions, found to empower employees, are identified in Arnold et al. (2000) and Konczak et al. (2000). These dimensions are consistent with numerous reviews on leadership. The various dimensions important to leadership will be discussed next:

- *Leading by example and team leadership*

This refers to behaviours that show the leaders' commitment to the work group as well as their own behaviour (Arnold et al., 2000). Showing concern and/or interacting with the team refers to behaviours such as keeping track of what is going on in the team, working closely with the team as a whole and demonstrating a general regard for team members' well-being (Konczak et al., 2000). Leaders need to lead by example and start by changing themselves. Leaders who transform themselves will trust themselves and will therefore also trust those around them. Trust is an essential ingredient in the "organic" approach to empowerment (Spreitzer & Quinn, 1997).

- *Sharing information with subordinates*

This refers to the importance of leaders sharing company information (vision, mission, strategy, goals, etc) with employees (Arnold et al., 2000). According to Konczak et al. (2000) empowerment requires leaders to share information and knowledge that enable employees to optimally contribute to organisational performance. Providing information is a key contextual factor related to empowerment. Without information, employees will not take responsibility/accountability for organisational goals (Spreitzer, 1995).

- *Delegation*

Conger & Kanungo (1988) characterised empowerment as a process that involves a leader sharing power with subordinates. To empower implies the granting of power and/or delegation of authority (Konczak et al. (2000)). A leader empowering employees by delegating responsibilities, produces employees who are more satisfied with their leader and consider him to be fair, and in turn perform on par with the leader's expectations (Honold, 1997). The delegation of authority and the granting of power should increase intrinsic motivation by influencing task assessments related to meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact in Thomas & Velthouse's (1990) conceptualisation.

- *Encouraging self-directed and participative decision-making amongst subordinates*

This is an important dimension and refers to the degree to which leaders encourage independent decision-making (Konczak et al., 2000). Although this refers to decision-making around plans, goals and procedures, it also includes taking initiative in identifying problems in work processes and taking steps to correct these problems. This item relates to the "participative decision-making" dimension of Arnold et al. (2000).

Aforementioned refers to a leader's use of team members' information and input during decision-making, encouraging their expression of ideas and opinions (Arnold et al., 2000). The 2nd stage in Conger and Kanungo's Five-stage model to empowerment (1988) refers to empowerment strategies by leaders aimed at removing some of the situational conditions (contextual factors) responsible for employee's feelings of powerlessness.

- *Holding subordinates accountable for outcomes*

According to Konczak et al., (2000) empowerment redistributes power but also provides a mechanism by which responsibility for outcomes is placed with individuals and teams. Conger and Kanungo (1988) describes how changes in authority must be accompanied by restructuring of performance measurement systems to ensure that individuals and teams are evaluated and held accountable for performance they can control.

- *Coaching and developing subordinates' skills for innovative performance*

This includes leader's behaviours that encourage calculated risk taking and new ideas, provide performance feedback, and treat mistakes and setbacks as opportunities to learn. While working with subordinates, leaders must ensure that risk taking is not punished in order to help them understand the reason for mistakes and to reduce the risk of their recurrence (Konczak et al., 2000). Leaders need to act as coaches and must assist employees to solve problems. Coaching refers to behaviour that educates employees and helps them to become self-reliant. The "coaching" sub-dimension (Arnold et al., 2000) features aspects of continuous improvement. Konczak et al., (2000) describes a leader's role as one of facilitating rather than directing and controlling, with a significant portion of the leader's time spent on securing appropriate training to ensure that employees develop the skills needed to support empowerment efforts.

Apart from setting the climate and/or energising employees, leaders will have to be more inspired and wiser. Leaders will function within an environment characterised by change, diversity, ambiguity, complexity, interdependency and seamlessness. The people with whom the leader will have to deal will be the people over whom he has no authority whatsoever: executives in joint ventures in partnerships, people in other companies, people employed by the companies to whom major tasks have been outsourced. It will take new powers of persuasion to get things done.

The shift in the leader's role to that of facilitator requires above all new levels of human understanding and intelligence as well as new organisational and personal flexibility and adaptability. Truly intelligent organisations of the future will understand that learning to harness and manage emotional intelligence will unleash tremendous power within an organisation. A core leadership issue for the future will be human effectiveness on the physical, mental and emotional levels. Leaders will have to understand other cultures and how people from other places think and work. Furthermore, because of global customers, leaders will have to learn how to make the same or similar business processes work across cultures. The best leadership style is the ability of a leader to switch from one style to another, depending on the requirements of the situation, and furthermore his ability to take his team with him whenever the change takes place.

As indicated above, the future will demand additional competencies as well as flexibility in the use of competencies. Tied to flexibility should be sound judgment concerning when to use which competency to what degree, which is a competency in itself, namely wisdom. Future leadership will demand a high level overall integration of and synergy across competencies (Herbst, 1998). Human Resource Departments have to determine the competencies leaders will need in future to provide companies with the competitive edge they will need to survive (Claassen & Verwey, 1997). Both enable and enabling competencies for leaders will now be highlighted.

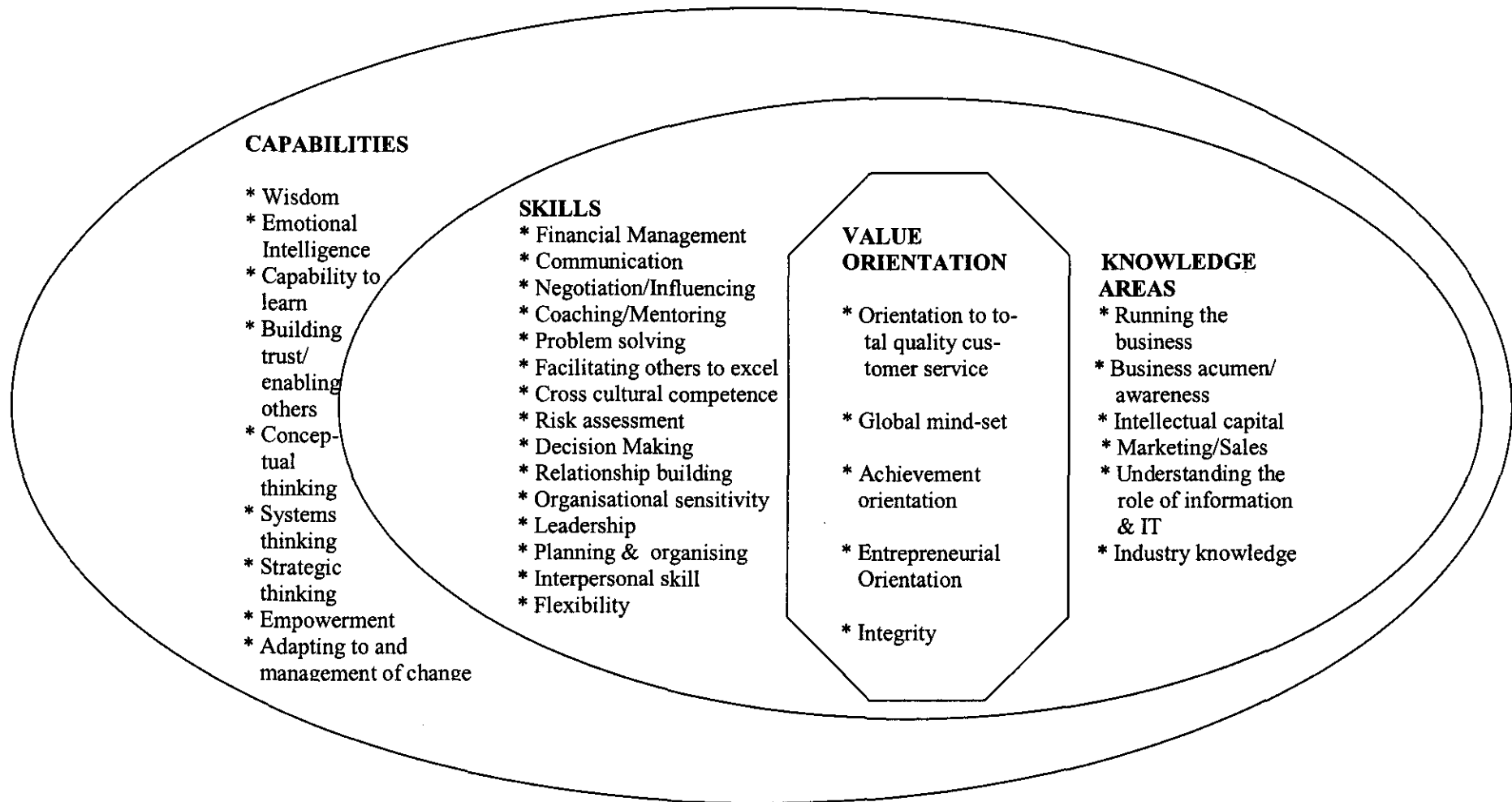


Figure 2.5: Enable and enabling competencies for leaders (Herbst, 1998 – adapted)

Hardy and O'Sullivan (1998, p. 471) paint the following picture as they define a leader's dream of the ideal empowered employee:

“How lovely to have energetic, dedicated workers who always seize the initiative (but only when “appropriate”), who enjoy taking risks (but never risky ones), who volunteer their ideas (but only brilliant ones), who solve problems on their own (but make no mistakes), who aren't afraid to speak their minds (but never ruffle any feathers), who always give their very best to the company (but ask no unpleasant questions about what the company is giving back). How nice it would be, in short, to empower workers without actually giving them any power”.

Various researchers have viewed empowerment in a variety of ways. Some focus on situational techniques that leaders use to create an environment that allows for, and even facilitates, employees opting for an empowered state. Others focus on the psychological aspects of an individual's ability and desire to be empowered. Through the interaction of the above-mentioned dimensions (situational empowerment, psychological empowerment and leadership empowerment), empowerment can be noted as multi-dimensional in nature – no single set of contingencies can describe it. Empowerment is a result of the interaction between the situational and psychological perspectives and the influence/role of leaders on employees – the culture that exists within a specific organisation.

The researcher proposes the following definition of empowerment: ***The fine balance between the freedom and willingness to act in a motivating environment and through inspiring leaders, with a mindset of accountability ensuring optimisation of both individual and organisational well-being.*** The primary competitive advantage an organisation has is the competence of its people - their ability to take initiative and continually generate new ideas, products and services. During the process of empowerment employees must be willing (motivated), able (trained) and allowed (through responsibility, authority and accountability) to learn and perform to their potential. Effective inspiring leadership will furthermore lead to motivated, competent and committed employees.

The final part of this chapter will focus on the outputs/outcomes of psychological empowerment (the relationship between psychological empowerment and certain constructs).

2.7 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT AND CERTAIN CONSTRUCTS

As discussed in the open system model of motivating climate as well as information given in stage five of Conger and Kanungo's Five-stage Model to Empowerment (1988), leaders need to take cognisance of certain behavioural outcomes of psychological empowerment. The researcher will discuss two constructs (outputs), namely organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

2.7.1 Organisational commitment

Organisations continually increase their demands on employees: employees are asked to be more global, more responsive to customers, more flexible, more learning-orientated, more team-driven, more productive, and so on. These very real competitive demands require increasing commitment from employees, who are being asked to give their emotional, intellectual, and physical energy to ensure organisational success (Ulrich, 1997).

King (1996) has developed an instrument for measuring an individual's organisational commitment. The dominant research holds that attractiveness has three major components or dimensions that influence empowerment structures within an organisation:

- *Loyalty* – which is an employee's faithfulness to an organisation;
- *Value congruence* – which refers to the degree to which a person perceives his own values and the organisation's values as similar or related; and
- *Affective commitment* – This estimates the extent to which employees "attach to" the organisation's goals and values.

Generally, an affectively committed employee is a key ingredient to “the ideal” or empowered organisation. When an employee reaches the affectively committed stage, he is truly empowered and inherently willing to identify with the organisation, make personal sacrifices, perform beyond normal expectations, work selflessly and contribute to the organisation’s overall effectiveness. An affectively committed employee has no desire to leave the organisation for self-interests or personal gain.

Allen and Meyer (1996) define organisational commitment as the psychological link between the employee and the organisation that makes it less likely for the employee to willingly want to leave. There are similarities between research done by King as well as Allen and Meyer as mentioned above. The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire by Meyer, Allen & Smith (1993) will be used in this study. They distinguish between the following dimensions of organisational commitment:

- *Continuance commitment* – this refers to an employee’s behavioural orientation. Continuance commitment refers to an employee’s general awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organisation, especially when the employee perceives a lack of suitable alternatives and/or when the personal costs of leaving are too high. Employees feel committed to stay, but more out of desperation than anything else.
- *Affective commitment* – this refers to an employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in his workplace.
- *Normative commitment* together with affective commitment refers to an employee’s attitudinal disposition.

Employees could also experience various levels of commitment, namely:

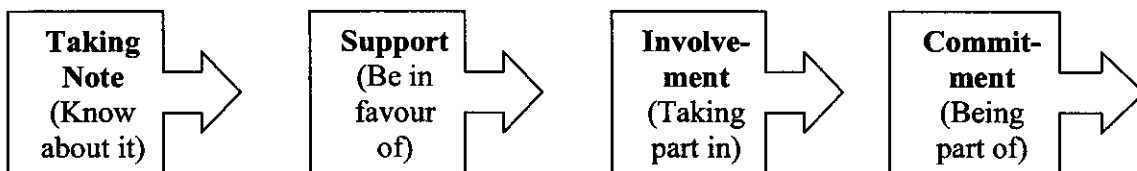


Figure 2.6: Levels of commitment (Coetsee, 1996)

Taking note, means “know about it”. To know about something does not mean that you are going to do something about it. To support means to be in favour of something – that you “will vote” for it. Support indicates a positive attitude, but a positive attitude must be followed by positive behaviour – which entails involvement. To get employees involved indicates a positive attitude. Involvement includes participation and employees will feel “part” of what is being done. An employee can be involved in something, without feeling strongly about it. Commitment is ownership or full identification. It can also be described as “being passionately committed” to something. Aligned commitment means that all members of an organisation are focused on the same goal and are committed to achieve them. It also entails that employees do their work according to certain behavioural guidelines or values.

Organisational commitment has received substantial attention in past research due to its significant impact on work attitudes such as job satisfaction and performance (Yousef, 1999). Menon’s (2001) survey found that the greater the empowerment, the greater the organisational commitment. Single and Pearson (2000) found only partial support for the relationship between perceptions of empowerment (Spreitzer’s Questionnaire (1995)), and organisational commitment. Findings on research done in South Africa will be discussed in chapter 4.

The second construct (output) of psychological empowerment, namely job satisfaction, will now be discussed.

2.7.2 Job satisfaction

“Without work, all life goes rotten. But when work is soulless, life stifles and dies”

Albert Carnus

“He who has a “why” to do something, can bear with almost any “how”.

Friedrich Nietzsche

Job satisfaction is the attitude an employee has towards his job, in other words, it is concerned with the feelings one has towards a job. Attitudes are evaluating statements and judgments – either favourable or unfavourable – concerning objects, people or events. A person with a high level of job satisfaction holds positive attitudes towards the job, while a person who is dissatisfied with his job holds negative attitudes about the job (Robbins, 1991). Work motivation is concerned with the behaviours that occur on the job (McCormick & Ilgen, 1987).

Job satisfaction and meaning appear to go together. People with meaning are more committed. Job satisfaction includes mentally challenging work, equitable rewards, supportive working conditions, supportive colleagues and personality-job-fit. People are likely to search for jobs that fit their qualifications, their needs and their job expectations. Intrinsic aspects of the job are directly related to the tasks (e.g. skill variety), whereas extrinsic aspects are related to external circumstances (e.g. promotion opportunities) (Dormann & Zapf, 2001).

Spector (1997) identified the 20-item short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire as a popular facet measure that is frequently used in job satisfaction research. This Questionnaire measures two distinct components of job satisfaction:

- *Intrinsic job satisfaction*

How people feel about the nature of the job tasks. Job involvement is the degree to which a person is cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in, and concerned with his present job and is more likely linked to intrinsic job satisfaction (Hirschfeld, 2000). Items 3, 7, 9, 11, 15, 16 and 20 comprise the core of intrinsic job satisfaction. These items have standardised factor coefficient on intrinsic job satisfaction of 0,69 (Hirschfeld, 2000).

- *Extrinsic job satisfaction*

How people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself. Items 5, 6 and 12 comprise the core of extrinsic job satisfaction. These items have standardised factor coefficient on extrinsic job satisfaction of at least 0,70 (Hirschfeld, 2000).

A review of the literature suggests that empowerment leads to increased job satisfaction (Appelbaum & Honeggar, 1998). The study of Konczak et al. (2000) found correlations between the Psychological Empowerment Scale of Spreitzer (1995) and the measure of general job satisfaction of Hackman and Oldham (1975).

Menon's (2001) survey found that the greater the empowerment, the higher the job satisfaction. Menon found that an arbitrary reward system decreased levels of empowerment experienced. The research of Parker and Price (1994) suggests that high levels of work control over decision-making are associated with high levels of psychologically well-being and job satisfaction. Findings on research done in South Africa will be discussed in chapter 4.

Job satisfaction, however, is a complex variable and is influenced by situational factors of the job environment as well as dispositional characteristics of an individual and can be illustrated as follows:

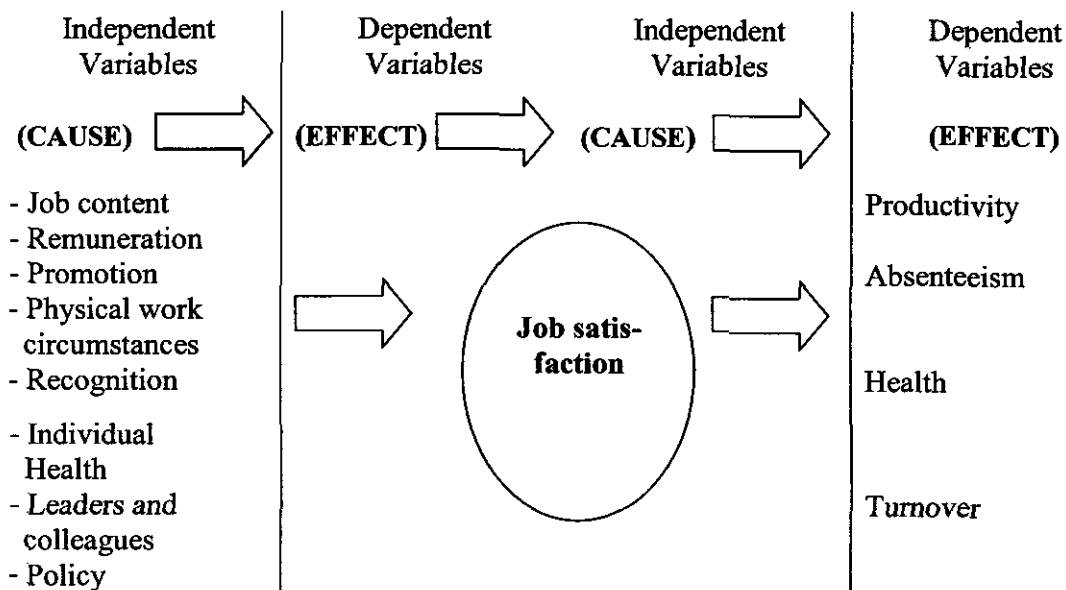


Figure 2.7: Job satisfaction illustrated as a dependent and independent variable (Robbins, 2001)

Job satisfaction presents an attitude rather than behaviour and has become a primary dependent variable, due to its demonstrated relationship to performance factors. The belief that satisfied employees are more productive than dissatisfied employees has been a basic tenet among leaders for years. Aspects like job content, remuneration, policies, etc. impact job satisfaction, therefore job satisfaction should be a legitimate objective of an organisation. Not only is job satisfaction negatively related to absenteeism, productivity and turnover, but organisations also have a responsibility that goes beyond money to provide employees with jobs that are challenging and intrinsically rewarding. An organisation can benefit by increasing its employees' job satisfaction.

The correlation study in this research will focus on the relationship of psychological empowerment, on the one hand, and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction on the other hand. Although the aim of this study is not to focus on the correlation of the variables with one another, it is interesting to highlight research done regarding correlations between these variables.

2.8 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT, LEADER EMPOWERING BEHAVIOUR, ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION

Generally, research findings are not entirely consistent. Psychological empowerment mediate the relationship between six dimensions of empowering leader behaviour and two outcome variables, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Konczak et al., 2000).

Research done by Boshoff and Mels (1995) indicates a significant positive relationship between organisational commitment and job performance, which implies that highly organisationally committed employees are likely to be better performers. As pointed out earlier, this relationship has generally been found to be positive but not always to a statistically significant extent (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979).

Studies demonstrate that an individual's level of organisational commitment is a better indicator of turnover than the far more frequently used job satisfaction predictor. Organisational commitment is probably a better predictor because it is a more global and enduring response to the organisation as a whole than is job satisfaction. An employee may be dissatisfied with his particular job, consider it a temporary condition, and not be dissatisfied with the organisation as a whole. However, when dissatisfaction spreads to the organisation itself, individuals are more likely to consider resigning (Robbins, 1991).

Organisational commitment in relation to job satisfaction received considerable attention in previous research. Yousef (1999) states that experience and performance moderate the relationship between organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Empowerment perceptions are associated with increased job satisfaction and work productivity/effectiveness, as well as a decreased propensity to leave the organisation (Koberg et al., 1999).

Feelings of empowerment were associated with increased satisfaction and perceived productivity/effectiveness at work and decreased propensity to leave the organisation (Koberg et al. 1999). The result also shows that feelings of empowerment are more likely in a work group with an approachable leader who encourages the worth of the group and facilitates group effectiveness.

Research has acknowledged contextual factors such as organisational culture as influencing empowerment (Liden et al., 2000). They elaborate further by stating that empowering individuals may result in higher levels of job satisfaction. They also state that individuals who perceive their jobs to be significant and worthwhile experience higher levels of job satisfaction than those who perceive their jobs as having little value. Results on research done in South Africa will be discussed in chapter 4.

2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the literature study with regard to empowerment, psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Human capital is a critical factor for promoting competitiveness as it provides the required knowledge, skills, attitudes and capacities for developing competitive strategies, product development, quality control, corporate financial operations, marketing and human resource development.

In order to empower people, you will have to carefully select high quality people for the job, train them thoroughly in every aspect of the job, provide them with the necessary tools and equipment to get the job done, give them the authority to perform their duties, and hold them accountable for their duties.

Employee empowerment as a term is frequently used in management circles. In practice, however, it is a daunting effort to find an exact definition of it. Employee empowerment is multi-dimensional: it involves how leaders lead, how individuals react, how peers interact, and how work-related processes are structured. Empowerment is also a business imperative that will ultimately add value to the customer and affect the bottom line.

From the literature the researcher was able to discuss:

- Situational (contextual factors) approach to empowerment, indicating that empowerment is a set of managerial practices, cascading power and control to employees. Empowerment can be seen as something, an act, that you give to someone else.

- Psychological (motivational factors) approach to empowerment where empowerment is viewed from a psychological base. This focuses on individual characteristics that employees have, which enable/empower employees, irrespective of whether power and control is given to them.
- Leader empowering behaviour focusing on the energising aspect of empowerment.
- The relationship between psychological empowerment and two constructs, namely organisational commitment and job satisfaction.
- Correlations between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

The specific literature objective, to conceptualise and define empowerment and psychological empowerment, has been achieved. In the next chapter the empirical research will be discussed. The general and specific research objectives of the study will be highlighted, after which the research design and study population will be emphasised.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a literature study was undertaken with regard to defining empowerment, psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Empowerment was defined through two perspectives, namely situational empowerment (contextual factors) and psychological empowerment (motivational construct). The researcher concluded that neither perspective is complete in itself. The outcomes of psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour were discussed.

In this chapter the focus is on the empirical study and the research process will be highlighted. The general and specific research objectives of this study will be discussed, whereafter the research design and study population will be emphasised. An explanation of the reliability and validity of the questionnaires used during this study will be conducted. Attention will thereafter be given to the statistical analysis. Lastly the hypotheses that have been formulated will be stated. The chapter will conclude with a summary.

3.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research include both general and specific objectives:

3.2.1 General objective

The general objective of this research is firstly to measure and determine the relationship between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction in a chemical organisation. Secondly it is to determine whether psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour can predict organisational

commitment and job satisfaction.

3.2.2 Specific empirical objectives

- To determine the current level of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction perceived by employees within a chemical organisation.
- To determine if there is a difference in the levels of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction with regard to tenure, age and qualification.
- To determine the difference between different organisational levels of employment and departments in terms of the degree of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.
- To determine the relationship between psychological empowerment on the one hand, and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction on the other hand.
- To determine if psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour can predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction in a chemical organisation.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of a research design is to plan and structure a research project in such a way that it enhances the ultimate validity of the research findings (Mouton & Marais, 1992). It also has to do with the study of the relationship that occurs without any planned intervention between two or more variables and to indicate causality between the variables.

For the purpose of this study, information from a collected sample was used to describe the population at that specific point and time (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997). The survey design indicated the levels and relationship between the constructs of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

The study population will now be discussed.

3.4 STUDY POPULATION

The study population was compiled from a chemical organisation. The organisation involved in this study is one of South Africa's leading corporate wealth generators and has been in operation for 50 years. One of the company's core values is: Winning with People. This demonstrates that the company respects and encourages individuals to grow as unique contributors to their teams, that it rewards performance, and promotes sharing (the harnessing of diversity). The study to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction has not only academic value, but is also of practical importance.

The total population of this organisation is 207. The study population consisted of 137 employees. The study population was representative from three organisational levels of employment ((a) Executive team/Leaders, (b) Specialists and Salaried Personnel and (c) Monthly Salaried Personnel) across four departments (Maintenance, Production, Technical Support Group and Service Departments) and various sections representing all functions. The names of all the employees were put into a hat and randomly selected to determine the sample. The method of sampling resulted in a study sample of 11 Executive team/Leaders, 35 Specialists and Salaried Personnel (skilled employees) and 88 Monthly Salaried Personnel (semi-skilled employees).

The Executive Team/Leaders were electronically issued with a questionnaire; whereas the remaining employees were scheduled to attend a structured session to complete the questionnaires. Table 3.1 provides a summary of the population and study sample across the strata, encompassing three organisational levels of employment and four departments.

**TABLE 3.1
STRATIFIED SAMPLE ACROSS THREE ORGANISATIONAL LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT AND FOUR DEPARTMENTS**

Department																													TOTAL				
Section	Execu- Tive		TSG		Instru- Ments		Mecha- Nical		Elec- trical		Stra- tegic		Other		East		Ethyl Acetane		West		Other		Logis- Tics		Finan- cial		SHERQ		HR				
LEVELS OF EMPLOY- MENT	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E	S A M P L E			
Executive Team/ Leaders	1	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	11	14
Specialists & Salaried Personnel (Skilled employees)	1	1	9	15	3	4	4	6	2	3	2	4	1	1	3	5	3	5	4	6	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	38	58	
Monthly Salaried Personnel (Semi- skilled employees)	0	0	0	0	9	14	14	21	8	13	0	0	0	0	23	36	12	18	22	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	88	135	
Sample	2	2	12	12	18	10	3	3	26	15	26	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	137					

A secondary aim of this study was to compare groups with different biographical background in respect of tenure (years of service), age and qualifications. This biographical information indicates the diversity of the study population.

3.4.1 Graphical presentation of demographical data

The following figures indicate the actual sample group (134) with regard to organisational level of employment, department, tenure, age and qualification.

3.4.1.1 Organisational level of employment

TABLE 3.2
DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE GROUP – ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT

	Executive Team/ Leaders	Specialists & Salaried Personnel (Skilled employees)	Monthly Salaried Personnel (Semi-skilled employees)
N	11	35	88
%	8%	26%	66%

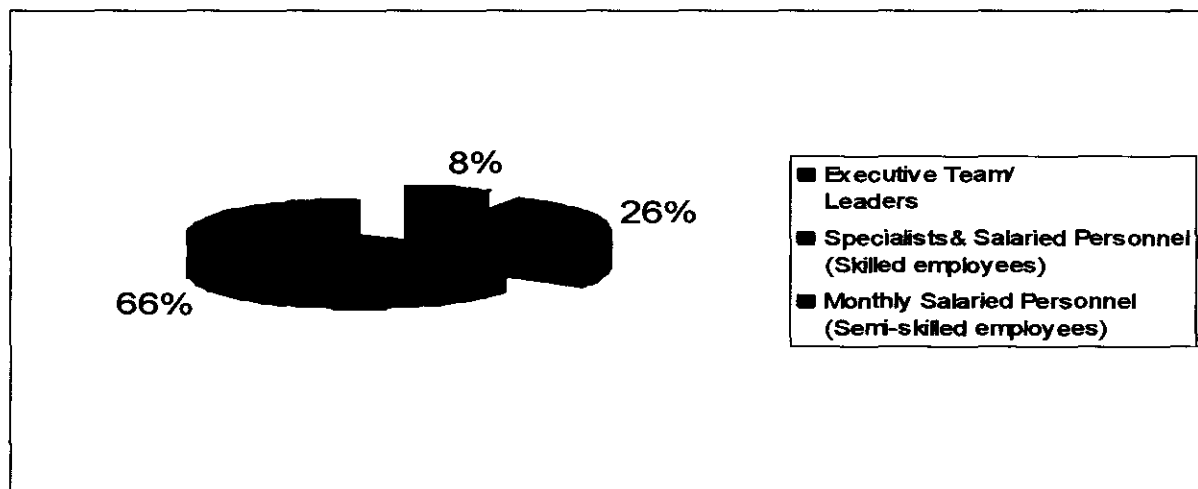


Figure 3.1: Graphical representation of sample group – Organisational level of employment

3.4.1.2 *Department*

TABLE 3.3
DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE GROUP - DEPARTMENT

	Technical Support Group	Maintenance	Production	Services Departments
N	11	46	68	9
%	8%	34%	51%	7%

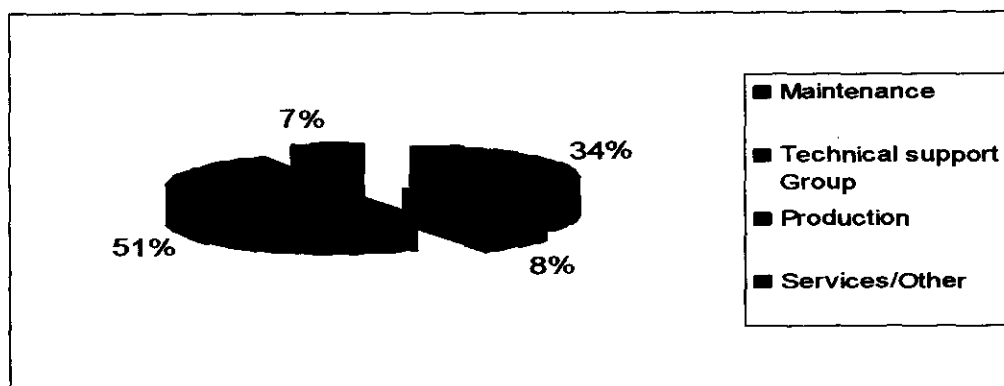


Figure 3.2: Graphical representation of sample group - Department

3.4.1.3 *Tenure*

Employee's tenure range from employees with one year of service to employees with 32 years of service.

TABLE 3.4
DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE GROUP - TENURE

	1-5 years	6-10 years	11+ years
N	66	32	36
%	49%	24%	27%

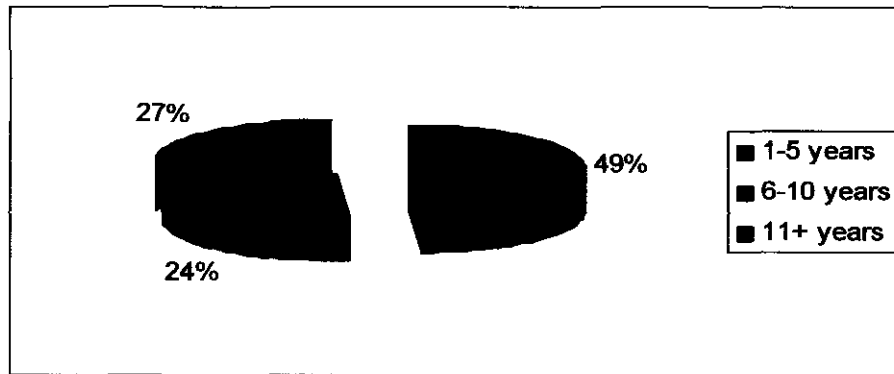


Figure 3.3: Graphical representation of sample group – Tenure

3.4.1.4 *Age*

The age of employees range from 21 to 57 years of age.

**TABLE 3.5
DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE GROUP - AGE**

	18-29 years	30-39 years	40+ years
N	56	38	40
%	42%	28%	30%

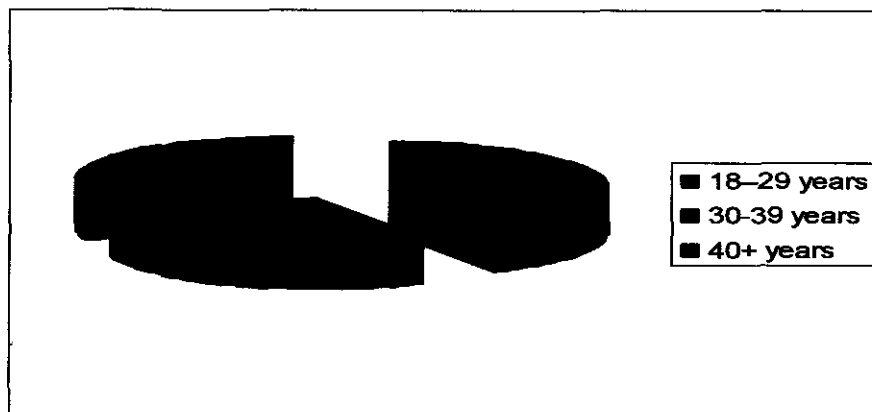


Figure 3.4: Graphical representation of sample group - Age

3.4.1.5 Qualification

Qualifications range from Standard 7 (Grade 9) to Masters Degree.

TABLE 3.6
DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE GROUP - QUALIFICATION

	Grade 10-12	Certificate/ Diploma	University: Degree or post-graduate
N	69	55	10
%	52%	41%	7%

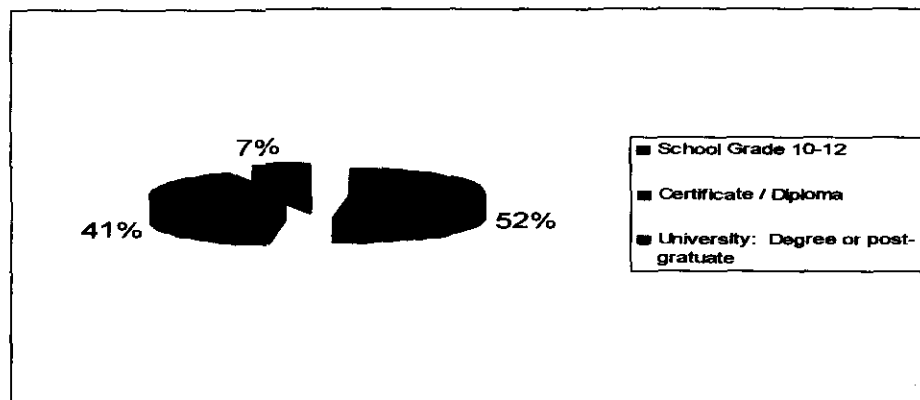


Figure 3.5: Graphical representation of sample group - Qualification

The research procedure will be the next point of discussion.

3.5 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The following procedures were used during the research:

- Approval for conducting the study was obtained from the Operations Manager. A meeting was held with the Executive Team to discuss the administration and effective role-out of this research. The researcher, thereafter, communicated the aim of the research to the employees of the organisation during a coffee session. By obtaining

commitment and ownership from the leaders, employees were also willing to participate.

- The names of all 207 employees within this Chemical organisation were put into a hat and randomly selected to determine the sample.
- To complete the questionnaires, employees were scheduled for a session of an hour over a two week period. This was done in a group context, while taking constraints from the business, such as shift work, in consideration. The business provided resources (three training officers) to assist with the co-ordination of this action.
- 137 questionnaires were printed and accompanied by a covering letter.
- The researcher personally attended these sessions, to issue the questionnaires. The personal contact made it easier to emphasise the purpose of the research and to stress the ethical aspects and confidentiality of the questionnaires.
- Completed questionnaires were placed into a provided envelope, and thereafter deposited into a sealed box, indicating to respondents that their responses were anonymous (if they wished to complete the questionnaires anonymously).
- The questionnaires of the leaders were distributed electronically and the above-mentioned training officers collected it within the agreed time slot.
- Only three questionnaires were not returned – two employees were on annual leave and the other employee was on maternity leave.
- The results were analysed and feedback will be given to all individuals who indicated that they would like to receive feedback.

The next discussion will be on the measuring instruments.

3.6 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

The test battery consists of three sections: a covering letter orientating the employees, a biographical information section and the four questionnaires used in this study, namely The Measuring Empowerment Questionnaire (Spreitzer, 1995); The Leader Empowering Behaviour Questionnaire (LEBQ) (Konczak et al., 2000); The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (Meyer et al., 1993) and The Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (Schriesheim et al., 1993). The Measuring Empowerment Questionnaire and the Leader Empowering Behaviour Questionnaire were measured on a seven-point scale, which varied from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). The remaining two questionnaires, the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire and the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire were rated on a five point scale, where one represents strongly disagree and five represents strongly agree.

The above-mentioned standardised measuring instruments will be viewed in more detail:

3.6.1 The Measuring Empowerment Questionnaire (Spreitzer, 1995)

This is a theory-based measure of empowerment developed by Spreitzer (1995) based on the four facets (meaning, competence (self-efficacy), self-determination (choice) and impact) of psychological empowerment hypothesised by Thomas and Velthouse (1990). The questionnaire consists of 12 items. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the overall empowerment construct was 0,72 for the industrial sample and 0,62 for the insurance sample: thus the overall reliabilities are acceptable. Konczak et al. (2000) found a high coefficient alpha of 0,86 in their study. Dwyer (2001) and Rugg (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,92 and 0,84 for reliability respectively.

Convergent and discriminate validity of the empowerment measures in the industrial sample indicate an excellent fit (AGFI (adjusted goodness-of-fit index) = 0,93; RMSR (root-mean-square residual) = 0,04; NCFI (non-centralised normal fit index = 0,97). In the

insurance sample, a modest fit was obtained (AGFI = 0,87; RMSR = 0,07 and NCFI = 0,98). Spreitzer (1995) suggested the need for continued work on discriminant validity.

3.6.2 The Leader Empowering Behaviour Questionnaire (LEBQ) (Konczak et al., 2000)

With respect to leadership development, the LEBQ (consisting of 19 items) appears to be a psychometrically sound instrument for providing leaders with feedback on leadership behaviour relevant to employee empowerment. As an applied tool, the six-factor model provides behaviourally specific feedback for coaching and development purposes. The six dimensions are delegation of authority, accountability, self-directed decision making, information sharing, skill development and coaching for innovative performance. It can be used for providing leaders with very prescriptive and useful feedback concerning the types of behaviour necessary to empower employees.

All alpha reliability coefficients for scores on the six-factor model were acceptable (range = 0,82 to 0,90). All standardised factor coefficients were greater than 0,78 with the exception of item 6 (0,65) and item 12 (0,62). There was moderate variability in the scales as indicated by the standard deviations (SDs = 0,99 to 1,37). Dwyer (2001) and Rugg (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,95 and 0,97 for reliability.

The interfactor correlations ranged from 0,40 to 0,88 (Konczak et al., 2000). They recommended that future investigators should explore additional items to assess the dimensions of leader empowering behaviours, specifically for the information-sharing dimension. The current questionnaire contains only two items for information sharing.

3.6.3 The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (Meyer et al., 1993))

This questionnaire was used to measure the organisational commitment of employees. It is based on the premise that organisational commitment is a multidimensional construct. It has the following constructs: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. A batch of 18 items, which are characteristic of the above three constructs was compiled by the authors. Intercorrelations between factor counts for different samples could indicate that the factor is congruent over different populations. Intercorrelations between populations were often above 0,90; which indicate that the combined factor is congruent.

The Cronbach alpha coefficient was consistently above 0,80 (Suliman & Iles, 2000). Konczak et al. (2000) scored higher at 0,87. Dwyer (2001) and Rugg (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,79 and 0,86 for reliability.

Before scoring, the following four items of this questionnaire were reversed: 3, 7, 10 and 16.

3.6.4 The Revised Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (Schriesheim et al., 1993)

The short version of this questionnaire was used to measure job satisfaction of employees. The short version of the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire consists of 20 items that measure satisfaction with specific aspects of the job and the work environment. This questionnaire offers a reliable and valid measure of general job satisfaction (Cook et al., 1981). A pilot study was undertaken in March 1998 with ten Chinese restaurant managers in order to assess the reliability of the job factor and to revise confusing wordings in the questionnaire. Reliability showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the 20 job factor (short version) attributes ranged from 0,77 to 0,92; which were considered relatively high and internally consistent. Dwyer (2001) and Rugg (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,92 and 0,91 for reliability.

Konczak et al. (2000) indicates a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0,85. Alpha coefficients higher than 0,90 are reported in South African studies. Coetzee (1988) and Khwela (2001) indicated results of 0,91. Thomas and Tymon (1994) found it to be 0,87. Sagie (1998) obtained alpha coefficients of 0,70 and Naudé (1999) reports high reliability coefficients of 0,96 for the long version of the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire.

Coetzee and Rothmann (1999) as well as Rothmann and Agathagelou (2000) support results with coefficients of 0,96 for the long version. It is thus evident that these results support the reliability of the Short Version Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire.

Statistical analysis will be highlighted next.

3.7 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical analysis was computed with the assistance of the Statistical Consultation Service at the University of Potchefstroom for CHE. The first step in the data analysis procedure was to assess the internal reliability of the measuring instruments by means of Cronbach Alpha Coefficients using the computer program Statistical for Windows, Version 6.1.

To describe a set of data, a researcher is employing descriptive statistics. The most important techniques and measures will now be discussed:

3.7.1 Average or mean (\bar{X})

The mean is the arithmetic average of a group of numbers. It is computed by dividing the sum of all the scores by the number of scores in the group. The aim is to determine whether the difference between the groups' mean scores is so large that it is unlikely to be due to chance. The most common measure is the arithmetic mean, or average. The mean describes the "typical" score in a group of scores and is an important summary measure of group performance (Shaughnessy, Zechmeister & Zechmeister, 2000).

3.7.2 Standard deviation (SD)

Two or more distributions of test scores may have the same mean, yet differ greatly in the extent of dispersion of the scores about the mean. To describe the degree of dispersion, a researcher needs a statistical index that expresses the variability of scores in the distribution. The most commonly used statistical index of variability in a group of scores is the standard deviation. If the scores are tightly packed around a central value, the standard deviation is small (Gregory, 1996).

3.7.3 Skewness and kurtosis

Two of the characteristics of a distribution are skewness and kurtosis. Skewness and kurtosis are convenient verbal labels to be used in describing distributions. *Skewness* is a measure of the degree to which a distribution is asymmetrical. *Kurtosis* has a specific mathematical definition, but basically it refers to the degree to which scores congregate in the tails of the distribution. Kurtosis measures the peakedness of a distribution (Howell, 1989).

3.7.4 Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which the same results are obtained when responses are measured at different times (Christensen, 1994). The reliability of a measurement is indicated by its consistency. Several different kinds of reliability can be distinguished. Instrument reliability refers to an instrument working consistently (Shaughnessy et al. 2000). Cronbach's coefficient alpha (α) was determined to establish the internal consistency of each of the questionnaires used in this study.

3.7.5 **Validity**

Validity is the extent to which the measuring instrument is measuring what the researcher wants to measure (Christensen, 1994). It is important that measurement be both valid and reliable. In general, **validity** refers to the “truthfulness” of a measure. A valid measure of a concept is one that measures what it claims to measure (Shaughnessy et al. 2000).

Construct validity of a test represents the extent to which the test measures the theoretical construct it is designed to measure (Shaughnessy et al. 2000). In this study, factor analysis is considered to be very relevant in determining this kind of validity.

3.7.6 **Statistical significance**

Outcomes that lead researchers to reject the null hypothesis are said to be statistically significant. A statistically significant outcome is one that has only a small likelihood of occurring if the null hypothesis is true (Shaughnessy et al. 2000).

3.7.7 **Analysis of variance**

This is a general statistical procedure appropriate for analysing data generated from a research design that uses more than two levels of one independent variable and/or more than one independent variable (Christensen, 1994).

The simplest form of analysis of variance is the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The one-way ANOVA is the statistical test applied to data collected on the basis of a simple randomised subject design (Christensen, 1994). A one-way analysis of variance will be applied to determine if there is any statistical significance between means. The smaller the p-value, the more evidence there is that statistical significance exists. A p-value of less than 0,05 will be accepted in this study.

3.7.8 Tukey Intervals

Where differences occur at statistically significant level of $p < 0,05$; Tukey's intervals will be calculated to determine between which specific organisational levels of employment and departments these differences occur.

3.7.9 Effect sizes

Shaughnessy et al. (2000) states that:

- A problem with inferential statistics is that they are influenced by the sample size in an experiment;
- Measures of effect size indicate the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, but are not affected by sample size;
- One commonly used measure of effect size, examines the difference between two group means relative to the within-group variability;
- In addition to providing information about the amount of impact an independent variable has had, measures of effect size allow quantitative comparisons of results across experiments and estimates of the average effect of an independent variable.

What is needed to measure effect size is an indicator that reflects the strength of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable and is independent of sample size (Shaughnessy et al. 2000).

3.7.10 Pearson Product-moment Correlation Coefficient (r)

When a researcher is dealing with the relationship between two variables, he is concerned with *correlation*. The measure of the degree or strength of this relationship is represented by a *correlation coefficient*. The most common correlation coefficient is the *Pearson Product-moment Correlation Coefficient (r)* (Howell, 1989).

LaFrance and Mayo (Shaughnessy et al. 2000) obtained measures of reliability when observers recorded how much of the time a listener gazed into the speaker's face during a conversation. The average correlation for observer reliability between pairs of observers was 0,92 in their study.

The degree of relationship between two variables for the same sample of subjects is determined by calculating a correlation coefficient. The product-moment correlation coefficient (r) is used in this study to determine the extent to which one variable is related to another variable. If a relationship exists between the variables, it can be termed a positive or a negative relationship. In the case where a decrease in the measurement of one variable also leads to a decrease in the other variable, it is termed a positive relationship. A negative relationship occurs when a decrease in the measurement of one variable leads to an increase in the other variable (Ferguson, 1981).

The product-moment correlation coefficient varies between -1.00 to $+1.00$. The closer the absolute value of a correlation coefficient (r) to -1.00 or $+1.00$ the more accurate the prediction that one variable is related to another variable (Shaughnessy et al. 2000).

The following cut-off points in terms of the correlation coefficient are recognised as practically significant (Cohen, 1993):

r	=	0,30	Small effect
r	=	0,50	Medium effect
r	=	0,80	Large effect

For the purpose of this study, only medium and large effects will be indicated.

3.7.11 Regression analysis

In many situations in which a researcher has two variables he wants to know whether the variables are related, and is not particularly concerned about the exact nature of the relationship. When a researcher is interested in deriving an equation for predicting one variable from another, he is dealing with *regression* (Howell, 1989). A correlation (r) can be understood better by determining its square (r^2) (Cohen, 1993). In this study, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine whether psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

3.8 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

A hypothesis can be defined as: “the best prediction or a tentative solution to a problem” (Christensen, 1994). The **null hypothesis** represents a statement of no relationship among the variables being investigated (Christensen, 1994).

Based on the problem statement and research objective the following null hypotheses were formulated:

Ho₁ There is no significant difference between employees with different years of service (tenure) in the organisation with regard to their experience of psychological empowerment.

Ho₂ There is no significant difference between employees of different age groups in the organisation with regard to their experience of psychological empowerment.

- Ho₃ There is no significant difference between employees with different qualification levels in the organisation with regard to their experience of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.
- Ho₄ There is no significant difference experienced between organisation level of employment (Executive Team/Leaders, Specialists & Salaried personnel (skilled employees) and Monthly salaried personnel (semi-skilled employees) in terms of the degree of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.
- Ho₅ There is no significant difference experienced between departments (Technical Support Group, Maintenance, Production and Services/Other Departments) in terms of the degree of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.
- Ho₆ There is no significant relationship between psychological empowerment on the one hand, and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction on the other hand.
- Ho₇ Psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour cannot predict the degree of organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the research objectives and research design. The study population and the research procedure followed to obtain the study sample were discussed. The questionnaires used in this study were highlighted. Techniques and measures used in this study were discussed. The research hypotheses based on the problem statement and research objectives were the last point of discussion.

In the next chapter the discussion will deal with research results regarding null hypotheses and findings resulting from the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 3 the empirical study was discussed with regard to the general and specific research objectives. Chapter 3 also focused on the choice and composition of the study population. The hypotheses regarding research objectives were also determined. The chapter ended with the discussion on statistical analysis to be undertaken in this research.

In this chapter the research results of the empirical study will be reported and discussed according to the empirical objectives outlined in chapters one and three. The statistical analysis of the hypotheses will be demonstrated. The following statistical methods are used in analysing the results:

- Descriptive statistics such as sample size (N), average or mean (\bar{X}), standard deviation (SD), skewness and kurtosis.
- Cronbach's alpha (α) was used to determine the reliability of the measuring instruments and construct validity was tested by means of factor analysis.
- ANOVA (one way analysis of variance) is used to indicate significant differences between the means. Statistically significant differences are indicated by $p < 0.05$. T-tests were used to indicate whether significant differences occurred between group means. Cohen's d was used to determine whether statistically significant differences have practical importance.
- Practically significant correlations between the variables are indicated using Pearson-product moment correlations (r).
- This chapter will conclude with regression analysis to indicate if psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

The focus will now be on the descriptive statistics and the internal consistency of the measuring instruments for the total population.

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The mean (\bar{X}), standard deviation (SD), skewness and kurtosis were determined for the questionnaires and their sub-scales. The descriptive statistics of the measuring instruments for the total population will be reported in table 4.1.

TABLE 4.1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

INSTRUMENTS AND VARIABLES	N	MEAN (\bar{X})	STANDARD DEVIATION	SKEWNESS	KURTOSIS
Personal meaning	134	5.812	1.211	-1.475	2.693
Sense of competence	134	6.117	0.823	-1.179	2.392
Self-determination (choice)	134	5.182	1.221	-0.551	-0.111
Perceived impact	134	4.331	1.601	-0.164	-0.775
Total: Psychological Empowerment	134	5.360	0.923	-0.345	-0.123
Delegation of authority	134	5.032	1.403	-0.718	-0.189
Accountability	134	4.993	1.495	-0.653	-0.166
Self-directed and participative decision-making	134	4.845	1.501	-0.738	-0.166
Information sharing	134	4.980	1.437	-0.830	-0.021
Skill development	134	5.463	1.155	-0.843	0.791
Coaching and developing for innovative performance	134	4.907	1.483	-0.760	0.097
Total: Leader Empowering Behaviour	134	5.034	1.299	-0.809	0.099
Continuance commitment	134	3.522	0.727	-0.264	-0.522
Affective commitment	134	3.538	0.853	-0.192	-0.615
Normative commitment	134	3.463	0.858	-0.407	-0.270
Total: Organisational commitment	134	3.507	0.630	-0.254	-0.265
Total: Job satisfaction	134	3.704	0.592	-0.373	0.063

The above table indicates mean values for subdimensions of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Psychological empowerment was evaluated on a seven-point scale. The average score for psychological empowerment is 5,360 indicating that the employees in the organisation feel psychologically empowered. Mean values for the subdimensions of psychological empowerment ranged from 6,117 to 4,331. The highest rating for psychological empowerment was for the subdimension sense of competence (6,117). This indicates that employees feel confident about their ability to do their work well; they know they can perform and they are self-assured about their jobs because they feel they have mastered the necessary skills for it. Although impact was the lowest subdimension for psychological empowerment (4,331) it can still be seen as positive, seeing that it is above mid-point of the scale. The score obtained on impact could, however, indicate that employees feel they have less impact or control as to whether the ideas/systems/processes they propose get implemented. It might also be that employees have not been given enough authority or capacity to mobilise resources to get anything done (Honold, 1997).

The leader empowering questionnaire was evaluated on a seven-point scale. The average score for leader empowering behaviour is 5,034 indicating that employees felt that their leaders engage in empowering behaviour. Mean values for the subdimensions of leader empowering behaviour ranged from 5,463 to 4,845. The highest subdimension of leader empowering behaviour was 5,463 for skill development, indicating that employees feel that they are provided with opportunities to develop new skills. Self-directed and participative decision-making was rated 4,845 which was the lowest subdimension for leader empowering behaviour. There is no reason for concern, seeing that this rating is above mid-point of the scale.

The organisational commitment questionnaire, as well as the job satisfaction questionnaire, was rated on a five-point scale. The average score obtained for organisational commitment was 3,507 and for job satisfaction the average score was 3,704. In general the results for organisational commitment and job satisfaction are positive.

The first empirical objective was to determine the levels of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction within a chemical environment. This objective was discussed above. In general the overall picture is positive. The results obtained in this study correlate with the findings of Dwyer (2001), Rugg (2001) and Malan (2002).

Reliability and validity of the measuring instruments will now be discussed.

4.3 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

The reliability and validity in terms of the measuring instruments will now be discussed. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to determine the internal consistency of the measuring instruments and are reported in table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2
RELIABILITY OF MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

Constructs	Cronbach Alpha (<i>a</i>)
Personal meaning	0.910
Sense of competence	0.789
Self-determination (choice)	0.829
Perceived impact	0.912
Total: Psychological Empowerment	0.886
Delegation of authority	0.890
Accountability	0.854
Self-directed and participative decisionmaking	0.838
Information sharing	0.898
Skill development	0.750
Coaching and developing for innovative performance	0.879
Total: Leader Empowering Behaviour	0.969
Continuance commitment	0.648
Affective commitment	0.772
Normative commitment	0.794
Total: Organisational commitment	0.836
Total: Job satisfaction	0.882

The Cronbach alpha findings will be discussed together with construct validity which were tested by means of factor analysis.

4.3.1 The Measuring Empowerment Questionnaire

As indicated in table 4.2 the Cronbach alpha coefficient for psychological empowerment in this study is high (0,886). These findings indicate that the results from the questionnaire are reliable. These study results are higher than those found by Spreitzer (1995) for her industrial sample (0,72) and her insurance sample (0,62). Konczak et al. (2000) coefficient alpha (0,86) was also lower than the current study. Dwyer's (2001) and Rugg (2001) studies indicate a Cronbach alpha reliability of 0,92 and 0,84 respectively. Khwela (2001) and Hlalele (2003) reported reliability coefficient of 0,91 and 0,94. Malan (2002) also reported alpha coefficient for all four sub-dimensions of psychological empowerment ranging from 0,68 to 0,83.

The following is noted with regard to the construct validity found in this study:

- 4 factors were extracted
- they explain a high (74,4%) percentage of the total variance
- the commonalities are moderate to high (range between 0,54 and 0,91)

The ideal with construct validity is to have 1 factor extracted per subdimension measured, a high percentage variance and high commonalities. The above results are put into perspective by indicating that this questionnaire consists of 12 items and 4 subdimensions. There is a high percentage variance and the communalities are moderate to high, thus we conclude that the questionnaire has construct validity. These findings are supported by Spreitzer (1995), Dwyer (2001), Malan (2002) and Hlalele (2003) who also found construct validity for empowerment in the workplace.

4.3.2 Leader Empowering Behaviour Questionnaire

Cronbach alpha coefficient is high (0,969), which indicates that the results are reliable. The Cronbach alpha's for the subdimensions correlates with research by Konczak et al. (2000) , who found results of 0,92 for delegation, 0,82 for accountability, 0,85 for self-directed decisions, 0,93 for information sharing, 0,86 for skill development and 0,89 for coaching. These findings are supported by Dwyer (2001) who obtained a high Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,95 and Rugg (2001) found an alpha coefficient of 0,97 for reliability. Malan (2002) reported alpha coefficient for all six subdimensions of leader empowering behaviour ranging from 0,45 to 0,93.

The following is noted with regard to the construct validity found in this study:

- 6 factors were extracted
- they explain a high (82,8%) percentage of the total variance
- the commonalities are high (range between 0,78 and 0,90)

The Leader Empowering Behaviour Questionnaire has 19 items and six dimensions. The above results indicate that the questionnaire does have construct validity.

4.3.3 The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire

Cronbach alpha coefficient is high (0,836). These findings indicate that results are reliable. These findings are in accordance with Sulliman and Iles (2000) who found Cronbach alpha coefficient was consistently above 0,80. Konczak et al. (2000) coefficient alpha is higher at (0,87); same as Khwela (2001) at 0,87. Dwyer (2001) found a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,79 and Rugg (2001) found a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,86 for their studies. Malan (2002) reported alpha coefficient for all three subdimensions of organisational commitment ranging from 0,71 to 0,82.

The following is noted with regard to the construct validity found in this study:

- 3 factors were extracted
- they explain a moderate (53,9%) percentage of the total variance
- the commonalities are low to moderate (range between 0,26 and 0,68)

The questionnaire consists of 18 items and measures 3 subdimensions. The above results indicate that the questionnaire does have construct validity.

4.3.4 The Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

The Cronbach alpha coefficient is high (0,882). Results from the questionnaire are thus reliable. These findings are lower than the results (0,91) obtained by Khwela (2001). Thomas and Tymon (1994) are slightly lower at 0,87; which is similar to Konczak et al. (2000) at 0,85. Sagie (1998) obtained alpha coefficients of 0,70. Dwyer (2001) found high (0,92) Cronbach alpha reliability for her studies and Rugg (2001) also reported a high (0,91) Cronbach alpha reliability. Malan (2002), Heymans (2002) and Hlalele reported Cronbach alpha reliability of 0,91; 0,89 and 0,91 respectively. Naudé (1999) reported higher reliability coefficients of 0,96 for his study on the long version of the Minnesota Job Satisfaction questionnaire.

The questionnaire consists of 20 items and measures two distinct components of job satisfaction:

- *Intrinsic job satisfaction*

How people feel about the nature of the job tasks. Job involvement is the degree to which a person is cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in, and concerned with his present job and is more likely linked to intrinsic job satisfaction (Hirschfeld, 2000). Items 3, 7, 9, 11, 15, 16 and 20 comprise the core of intrinsic job satisfaction. These items have standardised factor coefficient on intrinsic job satisfaction of 0,69 (Hirschfeld, 2000). In this study a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,80 were obtained.

- *Extrinsic job satisfaction*

How people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks or work itself. Items 5, 6 and 12 comprise the core of extrinsic job satisfaction. These items have standardised factor coefficient on extrinsic job satisfaction of at least 0,70 (Hirschfeld, 2000). For this study a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0,85 were reported.

The following is noted with regard to the construct validity found in this study:

- 3 factors were extracted
- they explain a moderate (48,6%) percentage of the total variance
- the commonalities are low to moderate (range between 0,29 and 0,64)

The questionnaire consists of 20 items and measures 2 subdimensions. The above results indicate that the questionnaire does have construct validity.

The biographical data of the study sample will now be highlighted.

4.4 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF STUDY SAMPLE

A distribution of biographical data (tenure, age and qualification level) across the variables (psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction) is indicated in table 4.3 below. The p-value indicates where differences are statistically significant with ANOVA and T-tests, indicated between which biographic categories statistically significant differences occur. The practical importance of statistically significant differences are measured by Cohen's d indicating the effect size. The total mean scores for the variables throughout the organisation will be discussed first.

TABLE 4.3

DETERMINING THE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ACROSS THE VARIABLES

MEAN (\bar{X})	TENURE							QUALIFICATION		
	1-5 years	6-10 years	11+ years		18-29 years	30-39 years	40+ years	School: Grade 10-12	Certi- ficate/ Diploma	Univer- sity: Degree/ Post- Graduate
Total Group	(N=66) (49%)	(N=32) (24%)	(N=36) (27%)		(N=56) (42%)	(N=38) (28%)	(N=40) (30%)	(N=69) (52%)	(N=55) (41%)	(N=10) (7%)
5.36	5.3	5.4	5.5		5.1	5.4	5.8	5.2	5.5	5.4
5.03	4.9	5.2	5.0		5.0	4.9	5.2	4.8	5.2	5.5
3.51	3.4	3.5	3.7		3.3	3.5	3.9	3.5	3.5	3.5
3.70	3.7	3.8	3.8		3.6	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.9

p<0.05 statistically significant

The table above indicates the total mean scores for the variables plant-wide. Statistically significant differences between the means are indicated by * (p<0.05) and will be discussed later in this chapter. Statistically significant differences between group means for tenure and age, with regard to organisational commitment and psychological empowerment will be discussed, using T-tests to determine statistically significant differences between various groups. Cohen's d will be used to determine the practical effect size of statistically significant differences. This will be discussed later in the chapter.

From the above table, looking at column two: mean (total group), it is evident that employees in the organisation experience above mid-point of scale levels of psychological empowerment (5,36) and leader empowering behaviour (5,03). The levels of organisational commitment (3,51) and job satisfaction (3,70) experienced by employees in the organisation are also above the mid-point of the scales. Psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour were measured on a seven-point scale whilst organisational commitment and job satisfaction were measured on a five-point scale. These results will be discussed later.

The biographical data (table 4.3 on page 85) will now be reviewed in more detail:

4.4.1 Tenure

The average *tenure* of the sample, as indicated on page 85, is approximately 11 years of service and ranges from employees with one year of service to as much as 32 years of service. 49% of the employees have between 1-5 years of service, 24% of the employees have been working between 6-10 years and the remaining 27% of the employees have been with the company for 11 years and more. The average tenure is similar to the sample used by Konczak et al. (2000), who had an average tenure of 12,75 years and with that of Spreitzer's (1995) industrial sample where the mean tenure was 13 years.

Based on the results obtained in table 4.3 the research hypothesis cannot be rejected as no significant differences occurred in empowerment between the different levels of tenure.

Ho₁ There is no significant difference between employees with different years of service (tenure) in the organisation with regard to their experience of psychological empowerment.

This null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Employees with 11 years and more service within the company, do perceive themselves as being more empowered (5,5) than employees with between 6-10 years of service (5,4) and employees with 5 years and less employment (5,3) do. The differences are small and can be due to chance and are not statistically significant. Dwyer (2001) and Hlalele (2003) reported that tenure showed a positive relationship with psychological empowerment.

The table on page 85 indicated that statistically significant differences exist in organisational commitment and tenure ($p=0,038^*$). T-tests were done to determine the statistical and practical differences.

TABLE 4.4
DIFFERENCES IN ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT EXPERIENCED BETWEEN
VARIOUS LEVELS OF TENURE

Tenure	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Tenure: 6-10 years		Tenure: 11+ years	
			p-value	d	p-value	d
1-5 years	3.38	0.643			0.011*	0.51
6-10 years	3.53	0.632	-	-	0.200	
11+ years	3.71	0.559	0.200		-	-

$p < 0.05$ statistically significant $d > 0.5$ medium practical effect $d > 0.8$ large practical effect

As indicated in the table above a statistically significant differences exists between group 1 (1-5 years of service) and group 3 (11 years plus service) ($p=0,011^*$) with medium practical effect ($d=0,51$). Employees with a long tenure (11 years and more) are more committed to the organisation than their colleagues with a shorter tenure. This is supported by research done by Dwyer (2001) as well as by Gregerson and Black (1992). They found that as individuals remain with an organisation longer, alternative employment opportunities decrease and personal investments in the organisation tend to increase, thus enhancing employees' commitment to the organisation. Findings seems to be contradictory to Khwela (2001) and Xin, Farh and Tsui (1998) who reported that the correlation between organisational commitment and tenure was not significant.

4.4.2 Age

The mean *age* of the sample is approximately 35 years, with a range from 21 to 57 years and a standard deviation of 0,84. According to the frequency table, 42% of employees are between 18-29 years of age, 30% are 40 years and older and 28% of the employees are between 30-39 years of age. The mean age for Spreitzer's (1995) industrial sample was 46 years, which is older than it was for this study.

Table 4.3 (on page 85) indicates that statistically significant differences exist in psychological empowerment between different age groups ($p=0,000^*$). T-tests were done to determine where these differences occurred.

TABLE 4.5
DIFFERENCES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT EXPERIENCED
BETWEEN VARIOUS AGE GROUPS

Group	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Group: 30 – 39 years		Group: 40+ years	
			p-value	d	p-value	d
18-29 years	5.07	0.830	0.156		0.000*	0.82
30-39 years	5.35	0.844	-	-	0.036*	0.49
40+ years	5.76	0.832	0.036*	0.49	-	-

$p < 0.05$ statistically significant

$d > 0.5$ medium practical effect

$d > 0.8$ large practical effect

As indicated in the table above statistically significant difference exists between group 1 (18-29 years) and group 3 (40+ years) ($p=0,000^*$) with large practical significance ($d=0,82$). Statistically significant difference furthermore exists between group 2 (30-39 years) and group 3 (40+ years) ($p=0,036^*$) ($d=0,49$). People between 18-29 feel less empowered than their colleagues in the other two age groups do, whilst employees of 40+ years feel more empowered than the younger colleagues do. This is contra to research done by Dwyer (2001) who reported that employees in all age categories experienced high levels of psychological empowered.

Based on the findings of the above table, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Ho₂ There is no significant difference between employees of different age groups in the organisation with regard to their experience of psychological empowerment.

This null hypothesis is rejected. Older employees (group 3) perceive themselves as being more empowered than their younger counterparts do. This could probably be that older employees experience their work to have more personal meaning, with a sense of competence, a sense of self-determination and perceived impact than their younger colleagues.

Table 4.3 (on page 85) furthermore indicated statistically significant differences in organisational commitment and age ($p=0,000^*$). T-tests were done to determine where these differences occurred. Cohen's d statistic was used to determine whether these statistically significant differences are of practical importance.

TABLE 4.6
DIFFERENCES IN ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT EXPERIENCED BETWEEN
VARIOUS AGE GROUPS

Group	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Group: 30 – 39 years		Group: 40+ years	
			p-value	d	p-value	d
18-29 years	3.25	0.610	0.059	0.39	0.000*	1.04
30-39 years	3.49	0.563	-	-	0.003*	0.70
40+ years	3.88	0.543	0.003*	0.70	-	-

$p < 0.05$ statistically significant $d > 0.5$ medium practical effect $d > 0.8$ large practical effect

As indicated in the table above a statistically significant difference exists between group 1 (18-29 years) and group 3 (40+ years) ($p=0,000^*$) ($d=1,04$). A statistically significant difference furthermore exist between group 2 (30-39 years) and group 3 (40+ years) ($p=0,003^*$) with medium practical effect ($d=0,70$). People between 18-29 experience lower levels of organisational commitment than employees in the other two age groups. It appears that there is

an increase in organisational commitment with an increase in age. This could probably be based on the associated costs involved when leaving an organisation as one gets older, such as setting up a new home, moving pension funds, etc. This correlates with research done by Allen and Meyer (1996), Lok and Crawford (1999) as well as Dwyer (2001) who found positive correlations between age and organisational commitment.

4.4.3 Qualification

The mean *qualification* is at school level (grade 10-12) (52%). Table 4.3 (page 85) indicates that 41% of the sample have a certificate or diploma, and the remaining 7% of the sample have a degree or post-degree qualification. 70% of Spreitzer's (1995) sample had at least a college education, indicating a higher level of education than for this research.

No statistically significant differences between the different qualification levels were observed in psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction (refer table 4.3). This is contra to Khwela (2001), Dwyer (2001) and Jacobsen (2000) who indicate that an increase in qualification leads to a decrease in organisational commitment.

The null hypothesis can not be rejected.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between employees with different qualification levels in the organisation with regard to their experience of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

This concludes the biographical information for the company and the second empirical objective to determine differences in the levels of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction with regard to tenure, age and qualification. The focus will now be on the remaining four hypotheses outlined in chapter 3.

4.5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF EMPIRICAL OBJECTIVES

The first two empirical objectives, outlined in chapters 1 and 3, were discussed under paragraph 4.2 and 4.4. This was done through the use of descriptive statistics, mean (\bar{X}) and standard deviation (SD). Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine reliability whilst factor analysis was used to determine validity. The statistical and practical significance of the differences between various levels was discussed using ANOVA and T-tests.

Correlations will be investigated between psychological empowerment and other variables using Pearson product-moment correlations. Finally, multiple regression analysis will be carried out to determine if psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour could predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction. The remaining three empirical objectives will be discussed under this paragraph. The first focus will be on perceived differences between different organisational levels of employment.

4.5.1 Differences between organisational levels of employment and departments in terms of the degree of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction

The third empirical objective is to determine the difference between different organisational levels of employment and departments in terms of the degree of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Differences with regard to various organisational levels of employment will be highlighted first, whereafter differences within departments will be discussed.

4.5.1.1 *Comparing differences between organisational levels of employment within the organisation*

The first focus area of the third empirical objective is to determine the difference in the levels of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction with regards to different organisational levels of employment.

The levels of employment are divided into three categories, namely: Executive team/Leaders (1), Specialists and Salaried personnel (Skilled employees) (2) and Monthly salaried personnel (semi-skilled employees) (3).

TABLE 4.7
DIFFERENCES IN TOTAL SCORE OBTAINED FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT
BETWEEN VARIOUS ORGANISATIONAL LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT

Organisational Level of Employment	N	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Specialists & Salaried Personnel		Monthly Salaried Personnel	
				p-value	d	p-value	d
Executive Team/Leaders	11	6.16	0.882	1.000		0.796	
Specialists & Salaried Personnel	35	5.66	0.897	-	-	0.709	
Monthly Salaried Personnel	88	5.14	0.855	0.709		-	-

p<0.05 statistically significant d>0.5 medium practical effect d>0.8 large practical effect

As indicated in table 4.7 no statistically significant differences exist between the various organisational levels of employment with regard to psychological empowerment.

TABLE 4.8
DIFFERENCES IN TOTAL SCORE OBTAINED FOR LEADER EMPOWERING BEHAVIOUR
BETWEEN VARIOUS ORGANISATIONAL LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT

Organisational Level of Employment	N	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Specialists & Salaried Personnel		Monthly Salaried Personnel	
				p-value	d	p-value	d
Executive Team/Leaders	11	5.72	1.572	0.841		0.020*	0.64
Specialists & Salaried Personnel	35	5.65	0.821	-	-	0.003*	0.72
Monthly Salaried Personnel	88	4.71	1.309	0.003*	0.72	-	-

p<0.05 statistically significant d>0.5 medium practical effect d>0.8 large practical effect

As indicated in table 4.8 statistically significant differences exist between the Executive Team/Leaders and Monthly Salaried Personnel ($p=0,020^*$) in leader empowering behaviour together with practical significant difference ($d=0,64$). Table 4.8 furthermore indicates that there also exists a statistically significant difference between Specialists & Salaried Personnel and Monthly Salaried Personnel ($p=0,003^*$), with a practical effect size of 0,72. Once again the Executive Team/Leaders obtained the highest score for Leader empowering behaviour (Mean = 5,72).

TABLE 4.9
DIFFERENCES IN TOTAL SCORE OBTAINED FOR ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT
BETWEEN VARIOUS ORGANISATIONAL LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT

Organizational Level of Employment	N	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Specialists & Salaried Personnel		Monthly Salaried Personnel	
				p-value	d	p-value	d
Executive Team/Leaders	11	3.84	0.736	0.156		0.473	
Specialists & Salaried Personnel	35	3.59	0.532	-	-	0.219	
Monthly Salaried Personnel	88	3.43	0.642	0.219		-	-

$p < 0.05$ statistical significant $d > 0.5$ medium practical effect $d > 0.8$ large practical effect

As indicated in table 4.9 no statistically significant differences exist for organisational commitment between various organisational levels of employment. Although the Monthly Salaried Personnel (semi-skilled employees) obtained the lowest score for organisational commitment (Mean = 3,43) the score is above mid-point.

TABLE 4.10
DIFFERENCES IN TOTAL SCORE OBTAINED FOR JOB SATISFACTION BETWEEN
VARIOUS ORGANISATIONAL LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT

Organisational Level of Employment	N	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Specialists & Salaried Personnel		Monthly Salaried Personnel	
				p-value	d	p-value	d
Executive Team/Leaders	11	4.19	0.833	0.258		0.0006*	0.77
Specialists & Salaried Personnel	35	3.95	0.515	-	-	0.0001*	0.76
Monthly Salaried Personnel	88	3.55	0.523	0.0001*	0.76	-	-

p<0.05 statistical significant d>0.5 medium practical effect d>0.8 large practical effect

Monthly Salaried Personnel (semi-skilled employees) differs statistically significant from both the Executive Team/Leaders with p=0,0006* and from Salaried Personnel (skilled employees) with p=0,0001*. Both these differences have a large practical effect. The Monthly Salaried Personnel obtained the lowest score for job satisfaction (Mean = 3,55).

Based on the results obtained and discussed under paragraph 4.5.1.1 the following hypothesis can be partially rejected.

Ho₄ There is no significant difference experienced between organisation level of employment (Executive Team/Leaders, Specialists & Salaried personnel (skilled employees) and Monthly salaried personnel (semi-skilled employees) in terms of the degree of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

This research hypothesis can be partially rejected, since there is no statistically significant difference between the employee levels with regard to their experience of psychological empowerment and organisational commitment. Statistically significant differences, however,

do exist between the organisational levels with regard to leader empowering behaviour and job satisfaction.

The focus will now be on the perceived differences experienced between departments.

4.5.1.2 *Comparing differences between departments within the organisation*

The third empirical objective, furthermore, is to determine the difference between the four departments in terms of the levels of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

The sample sizes for the Technical Support Group (11) and Services/Others (9) are small and therefore findings must be interpreted/viewed with caution.

TABLE 4.11
DIFFERENCES IN TOTAL SCORE OBTAINED FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT
BETWEEN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS

Departments	N	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Technical Support Group		Production		Services/Other Departments	
				p- value	d	p- value	d	p-value	d
Maintenance	46	5.14	0.927	0.257		0.486		0.777	
Technical Support Group	11	5.40	1.184	-	-	0.103		0.579	
Production	68	5.43	0.845	0.103		-	-	0.508	
Services/Others	9	5.91	0.967	0.579		0.508		-	-

p<0.05 statistically significant

d>0.5 medium practical effect

d>0.8 large practical effect

As indicated in table 4.11 no statistically significant differences were obtained for psychological empowerment between various departments. The Services/other departments obtained the highest score (Mean = 5,91) for psychological empowerment.

TABLE 4.12
DIFFERENCES IN TOTAL SCORE OBTAINED FOR LEADER EMPOWERING BEHAVIOUR
BETWEEN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS

Departments	N	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Technical Support Group		Production		Services/Other Departments	
				p- value	d	p- value	d	p-value	d
Maintenance	46	4.79	1.216	0.078		0.445		0.523	
Technical Support Group	11	6.04	0.720	-	-	0.034*	0.76	0.055	
Production	68	5.01	1.354	0.034*	0.76	-	-	0.805	
Services/Others	9	5.23	1.393	0.055		0.805		-	-

p<0.05 statistically significant d>0.5 medium practical effect d>0.8 large practical effect

As indicated in table 4.12 statistically significant differences were obtained for leader empowering behaviour between the Technical Support Group and the Production Department (p=0,034) (d=0,76). This difference indicate a large practical effect.

TABLE 4.13
DIFFERENCES IN TOTAL SCORE OBTAINED FOR ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT
BETWEEN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS

Departments	N	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Technical Support Group		Production		Services/Other Departments	
				p- value	d	p- value	d	p-value	d
Maintenance	46	3.36	0.714	0.266		0.192		0.083	
Technical Support Group	11	3.48	0.515	-	-	0.626		0.473	
Production	68	3.57	0.599	0.626		-	-	0.212	
Services/Others	9	3.78	0.397	0.473		0.212		-	-

p<0.05 statistical significant d>0.5 medium practical effect d>0.8 large practical effect

As indicated in table 4.13 no statistically significant differences were experienced in organisational commitment between various departments. The Maintenance Department obtained the lowest score for organisational commitment (3,36). This score could have been influenced by the lower ratings obtained for both psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour.

TABLE 4.14
DIFFERENCES IN TOTAL SCORE OBTAINED FOR JOB SATISFACTION BETWEEN
VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS

Departments	N	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation	Technical Support Group		Production		Services/Other Departments	
				p- value	d	p- value	d	p-value	d
Maintenance	46	3.66	0.553	1.000		0.664		0.140	
Technical Support Group	11	4.05	0.547	-	-	0.857		0.291	
Production	68	3.66	0.589	0.857		-	-	0.204	
Services/Others	9	3.86	0.780	0.291		0.204		-	-

p<0.05 statistical significant

d>0.5 medium practical effect

d>0.8 large practical effect

As indicated in table 4.14 no statistically significant differences were experienced in job satisfaction between various departments.

From the results obtained and discussed under paragraph 4.5.1.2 the following hypothesis can be partially rejected.

H₀₅ There is no significant difference experienced between departments (Technical Support Group, Maintenance, Production and Services/Other Departments) in terms of the degree of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

The research hypothesis is not rejected with regard to psychological empowerment, organisational commitment and job satisfaction, since there is no significant difference in the scores of the measuring instruments in the various departments. It is rejected with regard to leader empowering behaviour because there are statistically significant differences between the Technical Support Group and two other departments, namely the Production Department and the Services/Other department.

This concludes research with regard to the third empirical objective. The fourth empirical objective will now be discussed.

4.5.2 Relationships between constructs

The fourth empirical objective is to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment on the one hand and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction on the other hand.

Pearson-product moment correlations (r) are determined to give an indication of the strength of the linear relationship between the variables. The correlations between the different variables are indicated in table 4.15 (page 99).

Based on the results in table 4.15, statistically significant correlations are perceived between continuance commitment and self-determination (choice) ($p=0,05^*$). Practically significant correlations are perceived between psychological empowerment, on the one hand, and leader empowerment behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction on the other hand. Taking the aforementioned in consideration, the researcher will only highlight practically significant correlations between the four main constructs.

In summary, practically significant correlations with a medium to high effect were found to exist between the following variables:

- Psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour (0,60)
- Psychological empowerment and organisational commitment (0,60)
- Psychological empowerment and job satisfaction (0,73)
- Leader empowering behaviour and job satisfaction (0,76)
- Organisational commitment and job satisfaction (0,53)

Above-mentioned results correlate with research done by Rugg (2001), Dwyer (2001) and Malan (2002).

TABLE 4.15
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CONSTRUCTS

VARIABLES	Personal Meaning	Sense of Competence	Self-determination (choice)	Perceived Impact	Total Psychological Empowerment	Delegation of Authority	Accountability	Participative Decisionmaking	Information Sharing	Skill Development	Coaching	Total Leader EB	Continuance Commitment	Affective Commitment	Normative Commitment	Total Organisational Commitment	Total Job Satisfaction
Personal meaning	1.00	0.48	0.51	0.32	0.74	0.40	0.33	0.24	0.35	0.35	0.32	0.36	0.19	0.57	0.49	0.56	0.56
Sense of competence		1.00	0.29	0.20	0.56	0.18	0.19	0.12	0.14	0.17	0.16	0.17	0.18	0.25	0.11	0.23	0.32
Self-determination (choice)			1.00	0.67	0.85	0.64	0.62	0.55	0.61	0.52	0.55	0.64	0.05*	0.55	0.44	0.47	0.74
Perceived impact				1.00	0.80	0.49	0.49	0.52	0.48	0.45	0.51	0.54	0.08	0.50	0.50	0.48	0.52
Total: Psychological Empowerment					1.00	0.60	0.57	0.52	0.56	0.52	0.54	0.60	0.15	0.64	0.55	0.60	0.73
Delegation of authority						1.00	0.84	0.75	0.85	0.82	0.79	0.91	0.11	0.57	0.39	0.48	0.73
Accountability							1.00	0.76	0.84	0.81	0.84	0.92	0.07	0.48	0.33	0.40	0.71
Self-directed and participative decisionmaking								1.00	0.83	0.74	0.82	0.89	0.15	0.51	0.41	0.48	0.66
Information sharing									1.00	0.80	0.86	0.95	0.11	0.53	0.37	0.45	0.73
Skill development										1.00	0.78	0.89	0.14	0.47	0.33	0.42	0.66
Coaching and developing for innovative performance											1.00	0.93	0.11	0.48	0.40	0.44	0.69
Total: Leader empowering behaviour												1.00	0.12	0.56	0.41	0.48	0.76
Continuance commitment													1.00	0.10	0.34	0.58	0.06*
Affective commitment														1.00	0.70	0.81	0.64
Normative commitment															1.00	0.90	0.48
Total: Organisational Commitment																1.00	0.53
Total: Job satisfaction																	1.00

Significant correlation is indicated where $p < 0.05$ * (indicated in font colour blue)

Correlation is practically significant: Key: $r < 0.30$ = small effect (font colour red) $r > 0.50$ = medium effect $r > 0.80$ = large effect (font colour green)

Concerning the relationship between psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour, a significant positive correlation (medium effect) were found (0,60). These findings imply that leader influence psychological empowerment in a positive manner when they: (a) share power with employees, (b) hold them accountable for outcomes, (c) encourage independent decision-making and problem-solving amongst employees, (d) share information and knowledge with them, (e) ensure that they develop the necessary skills, (f) encourage calculated risk-taking and new ideas, (g) treat mistakes and set-backs as opportunities to learn and (h) provide performance feedback. Konczak et al. (2000) support correlations between psychological empowerment and the original dimensions of leader empowering behaviour.

This study showed a significant relationship of 0,60 between psychological empowerment and organisational commitment. This indicates that an employee's task assessment is influenced by the extent to which an employee experiences congruence between his own values and the goals of the organisation. This overall feeling of alignment of his goals and values gives him a sense of assessing his tasks in a positive light, leading to a sense of enhanced psychological empowerment.

Work motivation is concerned with the behaviours that occur on the job (McCormick & Ilgen, 1987). Job satisfaction and meaning appear to go together. People with meaning are more committed. Job satisfaction includes mentally challenging work, equitable rewards, supportive working conditions, supportive colleagues and personality-job-fit. People are likely to search for jobs that fit their qualifications, their needs and their job expectations. A review of the literature suggests that empowerment leads to increased job satisfaction (Appelbaum & Honeggar, 1998). The study by Konczak et al. (2000) found correlations between the Psychological Empowerment Scale of Spreitzer (1995) and the measure of general job satisfaction of Hackman and Oldham (1975).

An employee who experience both psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour, will also experience positive levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

From the above discussion, the following hypothesis can be rejected.

Ho₆ There is no significant correlation between psychological empowerment on the one hand, and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction on the other hand.

The research hypothesis is rejected because there is a significant correlation between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

The fifth and last empirical objective will now be discussed.

4.5.3 Regression analysis regarding psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction

The fifth empirical objective is to determine if psychological empowerment and leader empowerment behaviour can predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction within a chemical organisation.

A regression analysis of psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour (as independent variable) vs. organisational commitment and job satisfaction (as dependent variable) was conducted. Table 4.16 indicates the regression analysis of organisational commitment.

TABLE 4.16
REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

R²				
0.3829				
Adjusted R²				
0.3735				
Variables in the Equation				
Independent Variables	B	Standard error of B	T-value	P
Intercept	1.26854	0.25560	4.96	0.0000
Total: Psychological Empowerment	0.32968	0.05869	5.62	0.0000
Total: Leader Empowerment Behaviour	0.09363	0.04170	2.25	0.0264

The above table demonstrates that a total of 38% of the variance in organisational commitment is explained by psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour. These findings indicate that if an employee perceives his work as meaningful, that he can internalise his goals, that he is accountable, has delegation of authority, has self-directed decision-making, sharing information and knowledge and develops his skills, he will experience organisational commitment.

Multiple regression analysis of job satisfaction will now be discussed.

TABLE 4.17
REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF JOB SATISFACTION

R²				
0.6942				
Adjusted R²				
0.6895				
Variables in the Equation				
Independent Variables	B	Standard error of B	T-value	P
Intercept	1.08661	0.16907	6.43	0.0000
Total: Psychological Empowerment	0.27163	0.03882	6.99	0.0000
Total: Leader Empowerment Behaviour	0.23075	0.02758	8.37	0.0000

The above table demonstrates that a total of 69% of the variance in job satisfaction is explained by psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour. These findings indicate that if an employee perceives his work as meaningful, that he is capable to perform task activities skillfully, that he can determine the pace and methods of his work and that he experiences his leader as creating an environment where he can excel, he will experience job satisfaction.

This correlates with research done by Malan (2002) and Hlalele (2003).

From table 4.16 and 4.17 the hypothesis can be rejected.

Ho₇ Psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour cannot predict the degree of organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

This research hypothesis is rejected because psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour can predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

The empirical objectives set out in the beginning of the study have all been achieved.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter the research results of the empirical study were reported and discussed according to the empirical objectives outlined in chapters one and three. The descriptive statistics and the internal consistency of the measuring instruments for the sample from a total population were discussed firstly. Thereafter the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments were discussed. The reliability and validity of the measuring instruments used in this study were high.

A positive level of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction exists within this organisation.

The results of the empirical study indicated that a positive level of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction exists within this organisation. Results indicated that statistically significant differences exist in organisational commitment between tenure and various age groups. It furthermore indicated that there were statistically significant differences in psychological empowerment between different age groups. No statistically significant differences between the different qualification levels were observed in psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Results furthermore indicated statistically significant differences in leader empowering behaviour between various organisational levels of employment and within various departments. Statistically significant differences do exist in job satisfaction between various organisational levels of employment, although no statistically significant differences were reported with regard to various departments. With regard to differences between various organisational levels of employment and various departments, no statistically significant differences were experienced in psychological empowerment and organisational commitment.

Significant correlations, with a medium to large effect, were reported between (a) psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction; (b) leader empowering behaviour and job satisfaction; and (c) organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Concerning the predictive value of the constructs, the findings indicate that psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction. The researcher believes that leaders can assist employees to feel more empowered by providing them with the necessary means, ability, and authority to achieve success and by delegating authority and allowing participation in decisionmaking.

In the next chapter recommendations will be provided, limitations, future research and applicability of findings will be discussed before concluding with the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the research results of the study were discussed. An analysis was done of the results and comparisons thereof. In this chapter the final results of the study will be discussed by explaining the findings and making some recommendations in this regard. Discussions on the limitations of the research will be followed by some proposals on possible future research before coming to a final conclusion. The next paragraph will present a synopsis of the study.

5.2 SYNOPSIS OF THE STUDY

The study focused on the relationship between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Secondly, to determine whether psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour can predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

To reach the general objectives as expressed above, it was decided to integrate insights gained from the literature study with insights gained from the experiential knowledge.

In chapter one the problem statement was discussed. Research objectives were outlined and methods to be followed in the study were discussed. A secondary objective of this study was to establish whether or not there are statistically significant differences between the means of various groupings in terms of tenure, age, qualification, organisational levels of employment and departments.

Chapter two achieved the literature objective of the study. It provided a framework for conceptualising and defining empowerment, psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Situational (contextual factors) approach to empowerment, indicated that empowerment is a set of managerial practices, cascading power and control to employees. Psychological (motivational factors) approach to empowerment focused on individual characteristics that employees have, which enable/empower employees, irrespective of whether power and control is given to them. Leader empowering behaviour focused on the energising aspect of empowerment. The researcher proposed the following definition of empowerment: *“The fine balance between the freedom and willingness to act in a motivating environment and through inspiring leaders, with a mindset of accountability ensuring optimisation of both individual and organisational well-being”*.

The third chapter covered the empirical method followed in the study and listed hypotheses. It also indicated the statistical analysis to be used.

In chapter four the empirical results were described in detail with the aid of figures and tables. A discussion of findings was conducted. Summaries of findings were discussed.

From the experiential insight obtained, the researcher was able to achieve the specific empirical objectives that were set. The following was concluded:

- A positive level of psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction exists in the organisation.
- There were statistically significant differences in organisational commitment between tenure and different age groups.
- Statistically significant differences in psychological empowerment between different age groups were reported.
- No statistically significant differences were observed with regard to different qualification levels.

- Statistically significant differences exist in leader empowering behaviour between various organisational levels of employment and within departments.
- Statistically significant differences were reported in job satisfaction between various organisational levels, although no statistically significant differences were reported within departments.
- No statistically significant differences were reported in psychological empowerment and organisational commitment between different levels of employment and within departments.
- Positive correlation was reported between (a) psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction; (b) leader empowering behaviour and job satisfaction; and (c) organisational commitment and job satisfaction.
- Findings indicate that psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Looking at the above conclusions, it is imperative to consider both situational (contextual) components and psychological (motivational) components in designing interventions to increase feelings of psychological empowerment.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The first stage of Conger and Kanungo's (1988) process of empowerment indicate that certain conditions could lead to a psychological state of powerlessness. The organisation needs to re-visit certain conditions, namely:

5.3.1 Organisational factors

- The organisation's environment needs to reinforce new patterns of behaviour. Empowerment thus includes risk-taking, opening the possibility of making mistakes. If mistakes are punished, employees will become disenchanted with their new way of

thinking and behaving and regress to past behaviour.

- Organisational empowerment focuses on a non-regimented task design and job specific training.
- The organisation need to ensure that there is an “emotional” job fit (match individual competencies and skills with specific jobs). To enhance this, the company need job person specifications for all the positions within the organisation.

5.3.2 Leaders

Jampolsky (1991) describes how individuals give meaning to their world and they alone decide how they see things. It thus stands to reason that for employees to see their leaders as empowering, they themselves need to be empowered. Similarly, unempowered leaders cannot empower employees. Leaders need to create a culture of participation providing a compelling mission, a structure that emphasises flexibility and autonomy, rewards for participation and a lack of punishment for risk-taking, as well as ongoing involvement programs and support for the integration of employee’s work and family lives. Leaders furthermore need to provide positive feedback, information, resources, supportive policies, and a stress-minimising working environment.

Spreitzer and Quinn (1997) recommend that leaders ask themselves the following hard core questions:

- If a sense of vision is characteristic of an empowering environment, do I continuously work towards clarifying a sense of strategic direction for the employees in my own stewardship?
- If openness and teamwork are characteristic of an empowering environment, do I strive for participation and involvement in my own stewardship?
- If discipline and control are characteristic of an empowering environment, do I work to clarify expectations regarding goals, tasks and lines of authority for those under my own stewardship?
- If support and security are characteristic of an empowering environment, do I work to resolve conflict among the people in my own stewardship?

Another set of questions that are grounded in Spreitzer's (1995) definition of empowerment, which leaders need to ask themselves are:

- To what extent do I have a sense of meaning and task alignment, and what can I do to increase it?
- To what extent do I have a sense of impact, influence and power, and what can I do to increase it?
- To what extent do I have a sense of competence and confidence to execute my work?
- To what extent do I have self-determination and choice?

It is also recommended that if leaders cannot find evidence to answer these questions they themselves are not empowered and thus cannot empower others. Specific training and development objectives from the leader empowering questionnaire should be compiled and incorporated into the development of a leadership program. Boshoff and Mels (1995) hypothesised that employees who believe their leaders are considerate leaders will be more committed to their organisations than those who do not perceive their leaders as such. An example of a recommended programme will be "Seven habits of highly effective people" by Franklin Covey or "Investment in Excellence". As you work from the inside out by building your personal trustworthiness, you create trust on an interpersonal level and improve relationships. As trust is built, you can confidently empower individuals and groups within the organisation to produce desired results.

5.3.3 Employees

- In an empowered organisation, employees are able to fully participate as partners; they take initiative, work on teams as well as individually, and have the authority to make strategic decisions. Personal empowerment demands self-confidence and a strong work ethic.
- The company embarked upon an Emotional Intelligence program (focused on learning and growth) to improve self-awareness and self-worth, which is the foundation of any training

program. With Emotional Intelligence as foundation, the company can embark on empowerment strategies and techniques such as participative management and goal setting programs to determine company objectives and KPI's. Both leaders and employees need to redefine their roles within the organisation, as they need to refocus themselves in relation to their work.

- The organisation can empower employees through teams. Empowered teams are more productive, take responsibility for their careers and have a vision of meaningfulness. By creating high performance teams, the company can ensure profitability and bottom line business success.

5.3.4 General

In general, the following recommendations are made:

- The information obtained in this study must be shared with the organisation that participated in this study.
- The results of the study should also be discussed with employees who indicated that they would like to receive feedback.
- A continuous learning culture must be created, specifically focused on the competencies that were identified. No employee, irrespective of position, could claim that no further training is required.

5.3.5 Creating a motivating climate

- The climate needs to be assessed and employees need to understand the company's vision, mission and strategy. Sensitive information regarding strategic, cultural and structural changes taking place in the company, needs to be provided to employees for purposes of personal reflection, in-depth cross-functional discussions and action planning.
- The company furthermore needs to create a motivating climate. Employees need to participate in the changing environment and new culture of the business.

Summary:

Taking all aspects discussed under point 5.3 in consideration, the researcher will recommend that leaders focus on the following key factors in creating a motivating climate:

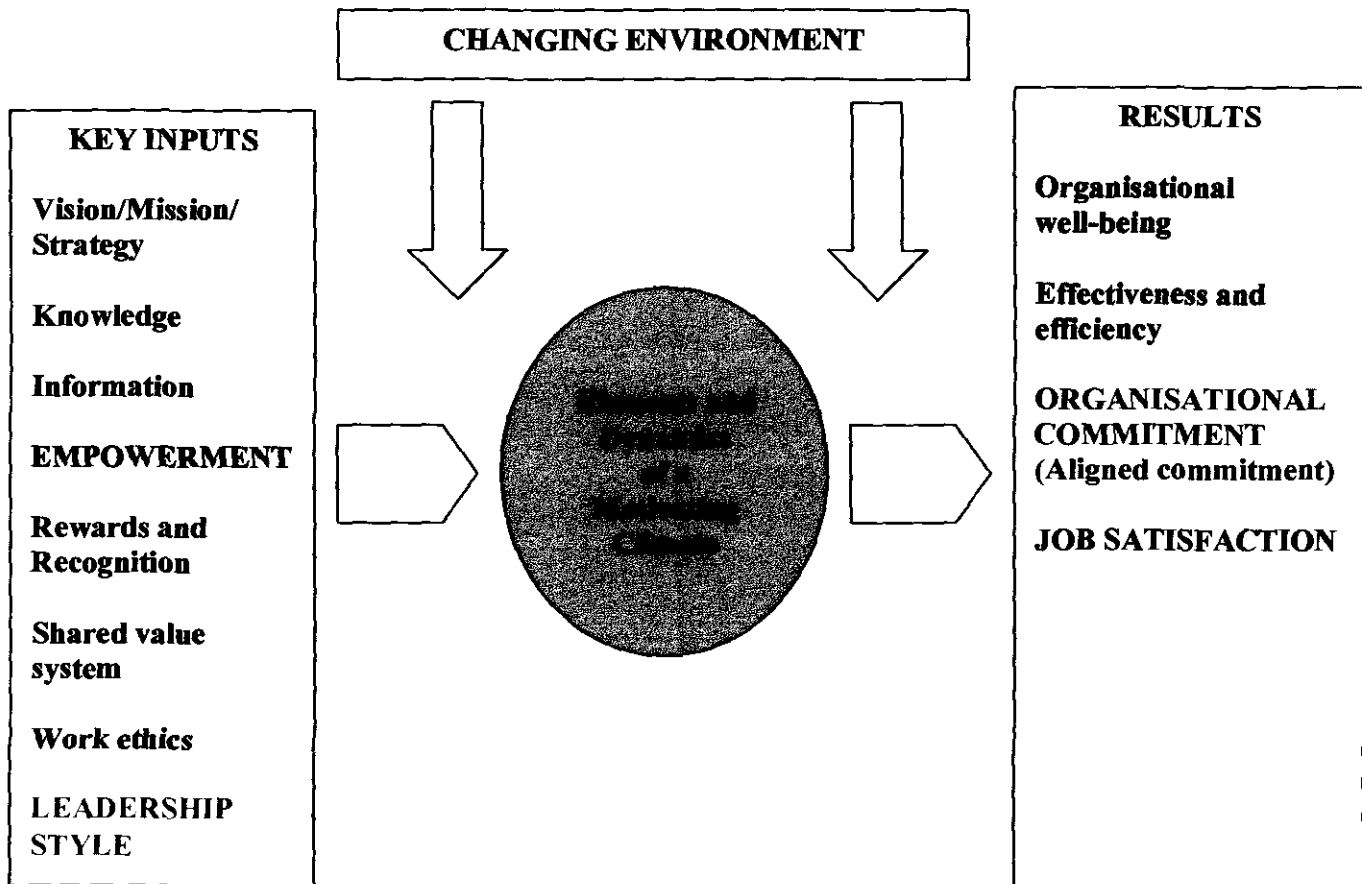


Figure 5.1: Elements of a motivating climate (Coetsee, 1996 – adapted)

The researcher would like to emphasise the importance of all four constructs, used in this study, (empowerment, leadership, organisational commitment and job satisfaction) in establishing a motivating climate.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The researcher regards the following as limitations of this study:

- The literature on psychological empowerment in chemical environments is limited.
- The questionnaires measure perceptions. Interviews with selective employees could have enhanced this study.
- Although the formal business language within this organisation is English, the majority of the employees who completed the questionnaires are Afrikaans-speaking. It is possible that employees might have interpreted the questions differently in their home language.
- The climate within the organisation could have had an effect on the results because the employees were informed about a planned integration intervention with another chemical organisation.
- The study was limited to one chemical organisation. The responses could have been influenced by organisation culture.

The next paragraph deals with future research possibilities.

5.5 FUTURE RESEARCH

The results of this study indicated some approaches that can be explored further. This study contributes to the area of employee empowerment within a chemical organisation.

Additional research is needed to explicate the different contexts that may increase feelings of empowerment:

- A study focusing on the correlation between personality traits and the degree of psychological empowerment experienced.

- Studies to determine the impact of career stages and types of organisational cultures and programs such as mentorship/coaching on individual feelings of empowerment.
- Research to determine the motivational climate that correlates positively with an individual's feeling related to psychological empowerment.
- Research to examine the link between leader empowering behaviour with leadership styles and the personality traits of leaders.
- Research to determine the influence of an employee's internal/external locus of control, work values, self-esteem and job interests on organisational commitment.
- Research to determine if high performance work teams experience psychological empowerment differently.
- The link between an individual's aspiration level and job satisfaction should be investigated. The question is whether aspiration level affects job satisfaction.

5.6 APPLICABILITY OF FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

The researcher considers the applicability of the findings from this study as follows:

- The research findings shed light on how employees of this company perceive psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.
- The practically significant differences that were highlighted are an indication of the need to explore the issue further with the executive team, leaders and employees, getting their commitment for using these results to add value to the continued growth of the organisation.
- The executive team has scientifically been made aware that employees generally feel empowered, experience leader empowering behaviour, are committed and experience job satisfaction.

- These research findings indicated different perceptions between various organisational levels of employment and departments with regard to leader empowering behaviour. The company could make strategic decisions on how to address this.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to conceptualise, define and explore empowerment within a chemical organisation; furthermore, to determine the relationship between psychological empowerment, leader empowering behaviour, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Furthermore, to determine whether psychological empowerment and leader empowering behaviour could predict organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Differences between the various constructs were determined between different levels of employment and departments.

This was established through a literature study providing a theoretical insight and an empirical study providing an experiential insight. The research objectives set in chapters one and three have been accomplished, concluding the purpose of this study.

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