



**INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EFFECTIVE
CHANGE MANAGEMENT, ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND
HOPE AND OPTIMISM IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRIVATE SECTOR
DURING COVID-19**

A research report presented to the

**Graduate School of Business Leadership
University of South Africa**

By

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)

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November 2021

DECLARATION

I, Lana Weideman, hereby declare that this study, Investigating the relationship between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism in the South African Private Sector during COVID-19, is my original work and that all the sources used and quoted from have been indicated and acknowledged through complete referencing.

I further declare that this research was conducted in accordance with the Policy for Research Ethics of UNISA and that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

 _____

Signature

____25 November 2021____

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to my family, without whom this journey would not have been possible. A special mention goes to my husband, Brad, for his incredible patience and support throughout the last two years and for the many sacrifices that came along with it. To our two delightful daughters, Reese and Riley, thank you for keeping me on my toes and inspiring me every day to give my best in the effort to lead by example and show you that nothing is impossible if you set your hearts and minds to it. To my dad, Hans, thank you for all the support and the many long conversations – I hope this makes you proud. To the person who always had my back, Shan, I am incredibly grateful that I got to share this journey with you – onwards and upwards.

My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor, Dr Wim Brits, for his guidance and inputs during this final year of my MBA journey – your calm and constant motivation and direction have been invaluable. I would also like to acknowledge our project leader, Prof Anton Grobler, without whom this incredible opportunity would not have been possible.

My utmost appreciation goes to Christophe and the team at Three6five for allowing me the privilege to conduct my research in their organization.

ABSTRACT

Background: The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about unparalleled changes to the workplace environment, resulting in a rapid increase in the incidence of occupational burn-out. This state, characterised by an increased mental distance from one's work and experiencing feelings of negativity or cynicism, may be considered the antithesis of Hope and Optimism. Hope and Optimism is rooted in the ability to visualise and persevere towards achieving goals yet given the enormity of changes and disruptions in the workplace, employees have been faced with the possibility of no longer having the means, direction or ability to attain goals. This may adversely affect levels of Hope and Optimism in the workplace and consequently, employee wellbeing.

Aim: This study aims to investigate the relationship between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Setting: The sample represented 29 organisations operating in the private sector, with 1 723 participants.

Methods: A positivist methodology was used. The data collected from the surveys underwent a quantitative analysis and the study was cross-sectional by design.

Results: It was found that Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership had strong positive relationships, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism had medium positive relationships, and Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism reported small-to-medium positive relationships. Furthermore, Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership predicted 20% of the variance in Hope and Optimism.

Conclusion: During times of crisis, Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership alone may not be enough to significantly enhance employee Hope and Optimism. Recommendations were made to improve change management practices and leadership behaviours and suggestions for further research were proposed.

Keywords: COVID-19; Effective change management; employee wellbeing; goals; hope and optimism; management; organisational leadership; private sector.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
ECM	Effective Change Management
HandO	Hope and Optimism
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technology
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MBL	Master of Business Leadership
OL	Organisational Leadership
PCQ	Psychological Capital Questionnaire
POB	Positive Organisational Behaviour
PsyCap	Psychological Capital
UNISA	University of South Africa
WHO	World Health Organisation

Chapter 1 - Introduction

This study aims to investigate the relationship between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism during the COVID-19 pandemic in the private sector. The chapter will introduce the background, problem statement, as well as goals and objectives set out for this study. Further to that, the importance of the study will be emphasized, along with the delineation, study limitations, research design and research method. This is followed by the chapter division and summary.

1.1 Background

The study will be conducted in a digital communications and information technology (IT) company, which is one of the first information technology system integrators in South Africa to offer digital business infrastructure operation solutions (Three6five, n.d.-b). The organisation was founded in 2006 and commenced operations with three team members operating out of a garage in Kyalami. It now employs between 201 and 500 employees (Three6five, n.d.-a) with a vision of providing customer solutions towards a user-defined, moment-driven IT reality. The company operates in the South African private sector in which this research was conducted.

It is well-documented that the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about unprecedented changes in the workplace environment. This has resulted in an exacerbation of burn-out (Campbell & Gavett, 2021), which is classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an occupational phenomenon that manifests in a syndrome resulting from unsuccessfully managed chronic workplace stress (World Health Organization, 2019). The WHO further characterises burn-out as a state where there is an increased mental distance from one's work and experiencing feelings of negativity or cynicism in the workplace.

Consequently, it is not surprising that Hope and Optimism, which is generally characterised by positive work expectations and an essential element contributing towards employee wellbeing (Grobler & Joubert, 2020), would be negatively impacted during COVID-19.

Hope and Optimism is rooted in the ability to visualise and persevere towards achieving set goals and redirecting objectives, when necessary, in order to successfully achieve those goals (de Pedro, Fernandez-Valera & Garcia-Izquierdo, 2021). Given the magnitude of changes and disruptions in the workplace as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, employees have undoubtedly been faced with the possibility of no longer having the means, direction or ability to achieve their goals (Ritchie, Cervone & Sharpe, 2021). This may adversely affect levels of Hope and Optimism in the workplace and, given that literature reports Hope and Optimism to be a predictor and mediator of many positive organisational behaviours and outcomes, this could be troublesome for organisations.

The role of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership in enhancing Hope and Optimism has not been researched in the South African private sector. Current literature, as presented in Chapter 2, places much emphasis on Hope and Optimism as an element of Psychological Capital and its mediating effect on employee perceptions of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership. There is thus an absence of empirical evidence relating to Hope and Optimism as a predicted variable of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership. The purpose of this study is to investigate how Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership affect Hope and Optimism in the private sector, particularly during times of crisis, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic.

1.2 Problem statement

Considering the magnitude and nature of goal disruption and changes in workplace dynamics, coupled with increased levels of negativity and cynicism as a result of prolonged periods of stress and uncertainty, low levels of Hope and Optimism may be a major concern for organisations in the private sector.

Given the lack of empirical evidence, the impact of perceived Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership on employee Hope and Optimism in the South African private sector is not known. It could be argued that employees who perceive their leaders and organisations to be exhibiting behaviours and implementing change management processes that are conducive to positive outcomes with regards to goal attainment, may exhibit higher levels of Hope and Optimism.

1.3 Goal and objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate the significance of the relationships between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism during the COVID-19 pandemic. This will be done by achieving the following objectives:

Objective 1: To provide comprehensive definitions for Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism.

Objective 2: To report on empirical research which links Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism.

Objective 3: To empirically investigate the relationships between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism within the context of the South African private sector.

Objective 4: To make recommendations for managers in the private sector based on the empirical findings.

The attainment of the above objectives will result in the goal of this study being achieved.

1.4 Importance of the study

Ascertaining to what degree employee perceptions of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership affect their Hope and Optimism, particularly during times of crisis, adds a valuable context-specific contribution to private-sector organisations and academia alike.

From a business perspective, in a country where the already tenuous socio-economic climate is exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical for leaders, managers and Human Resources (HR) practitioners to foster an organisational climate conducive to their survival in this context. Not recognising how employee perceptions of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership impact their levels of Hope and Optimism during times of crisis, could lead to reduced levels of employee wellbeing and the deterioration of psychological capital, ultimately impacting the success, sustainability and survival of the organisation.

This study contributes to literature and academia though examining Hope and Optimism as a construct in isolation and not as an element of the collective psychological capital. Furthermore, investigating Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership as predictors of Hope and Optimism aims to narrow the current gap in empirical evidence relating to these variables.

From an author's perspective, grasping the importance of understanding the influence of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership on Hope and Optimism, together with the context-specific findings of this study, provides invaluable insight towards creating workplace practices where employees can experience high levels of positive work expectations despite the challenges and changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.5 Delineation

The focus of this research is solely on the private sector. The validated research instruments have been adapted specifically for use in the South African organisational context.

Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism were the only three variables included in this study, thus not all variables that may affect the relationships were included in the analysis. Literature indicates that, apart from Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership, leadership styles such as transformational leadership (Varela, 2015) and authentic leadership (Stander, De Beer & Stander, 2015) can also significantly influence employee Hope and Optimism. It was also found that employee resilience (Wanberg & Banas, 2000) showed strong correlations with their levels of optimism during organisational change.

1.6 Limitations of this study

Although the sample in this study is representative of 29 organisations operating in the private sector, it could not be deemed representative of all organisations in this sector. This is particularly true due to the nature and extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic affected various industries.

Certain limitations of the present study should be acknowledged and are, however, mainly related to the applied methodology. The study measures are based on self-reporting questionnaires which, although study participants were assured confidentiality and anonymity, may lead to common method and response bias.

A second limitation of this study is the possible impediment of using a cross-sectional design in that it may result in an artificially enhanced relationship between the three variables. This is related to the fact that it measures only one group of participants at a particular point in time, thus making it difficult to accurately derive trends and causal relationships (Setia, 2016).

1.7 Research design

At a metatheoretical level, this research adopted a positivist paradigm. Positivism holds that, independently of the research process, an objective reality also exists (Leavy, 2017). Furthermore, positivism relates to the natural scientist's philosophical stance which entails producing law-like generalisations from an observable social reality (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhil, 2016). One could thus argue that a positivist approach can produce, without the bias or influence of human interpretation, pure data related to what is given or posited.

The research approach and methods used in this study are quantitative in nature. Quantitative research involves observing and examining the relationship between variables through numerical measures and statistical analyses (Saunders et al., 2016). The use of quantitative methods, therefore, provides data that can be used to objectively measure the correlation between variables as well as the strength of such correlations (Jain, 2019).

A descriptive research method is used to describe the characteristics of the sample and summarise data relating to the sample and the variables. As Leavy (2017) suggest, descriptive statistics should be used to generate descriptions of social phenomena in order to document how they are perceived or experienced. For example, information such as gender, age, race and tenure of the research participants will be reported in Chapter 4.

The research is cross-sectional by design. It thus provides a snapshot at a particular point in time and is appropriate when studying a particular phenomenon taking place at a specific point in time (Saunders et al., 2016), such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.8 Research method

The research consists of a literature review and an empirical investigation.

1.8.1 Literature review

The key concepts related to the study, namely Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism are introduced. This is done by providing three definitions for each of the variables, followed by a summative definition of each. To explain the third variable, Hope and Optimism, four theories are introduced and discussed.

Following this, the empirical link between Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism, and Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and, Hope and Optimism is reported. Summative reports are provided for each of the empirical links reported and include sample sizes, frequently used instruments and the sizes of the correlations between variables.

The focus in the literature review will be on recent literature and seminal works. Preference is given to academic articles and textbooks, while unidentifiable internet and Wikipedia references were excluded from the review.

Following the literature review, the theoretical and empirical relationships between the predictor variables and the predicted variables became clearer, and gaps were identified with respect to the variables in this study. Furthermore, the summative information derived was found useful in preparing for the empirical investigation.

1.8.2 Empirical investigation

The steps of the empirical investigation were aligned with the overall objectives of the project and consisted of the following steps:

- 1 A thorough literature review was conducted in order to gain clarity, insight and to become familiarised with the constructs: Effective Change Management (ECM), Organisational Leadership (OL) and Hope and Optimism (HandO).
- 2 The Regional Manager of the organisation where the study is conducted was contacted via an e-mail, containing an overview of the research to be carried out. A virtual meeting was arranged with the Human Resources and General Managers, where the researcher was introduced and granted the opportunity to further elaborate on the scope and purpose of the study. Permission was granted for the research to be conducted within the organisation and a letter from the Human Resources Manager was obtained as written consent.
- 3 Electronic questionnaires were administered through a link provided by the researcher and distributed to the sample frame through the Human Resources (HR) Department. The HR Manager sent frequent reminders to all employees when prompted by the researcher.
- 4 A total of 62 questionnaires were returned directly to the researcher through the secure electronic survey link, ensuring the complete anonymity of respondents, and the first 60 responses were included in the sample.
- 5 Data from the completed questionnaires were entered onto the data-capturing Excel template in order of receipt and submitted to the joint Research Facilitator.
- 6 The pooled sample was representative of 29 organisations across industries operating in the private sector and comprised the contributions of fellow-researchers participating in the joint research project.
- 7 The data analysis focused on the relationship between the predictor (Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership) and the predicted (Hope and Optimism) variables. This was done through a simple correlation and regression analysis.
- 8 Results of the data analyses were presented in tables.

1.9 Chapter division

The following chapters will follow:

Chapter 2: Literature review.

Chapter 3: Methodology.

Chapter 4: Results.

Chapter 5: Discussion, recommendations and limitations.

1.10 Summary

The background to the study was provided through this introductory chapter. Further to that, the problem statement along with the objectives and goal of the study were provided to orientate the reader towards the importance of the study from a business and academic perspective as well as from an author's viewpoint.

Acknowledgements of the study delineation and limitations were provided, and the research design and method were introduced. The chapter concludes with an outline of the chapters that will follow. In the next chapter, a review of currently available literature regarding the relationship between the study variables will be presented.

Chapter 2 - Literature review

This chapter provides a general introduction to the difference between Leadership and Management and the impact of crises on employee behaviour. This is followed by defining the key concepts related to the study, namely Effective Change Management (ECM), Organisational Leadership (OL) and Hope and Optimism (HandO). Possible antecedents and predictors of employee Hope and Optimism are presented, followed by the presentation of empirical evidence of the relationship between the variables: Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism, and Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism.

2.1 Leadership versus management, and its impact on employee behaviour in general during times of crisis

There have been decades of debate about how to distinguish between leadership and management roles and behaviours. In a reprint of Abraham Zaleznik's 1977 article (Zaleznik, 1992: 1), it is stated that "Leaders, like artists, tolerate chaos and lack of structure. They keep answers in suspense, preventing premature closure on important issues. Managers seek order, control, and rapid resolution of problems". Nienaber (2010: 661) conducted a literature review to explore the concepts of leadership and management and concluded that "concepts of management and leadership are intertwined". Bolman and Deal (2017) write that overmanaged, yet under-led organisations will, in time, have a diminished sense of spirit and purpose. In addition to this, they add that poorly managed organisations with strong charismatic leaders may experience success of a brief but unsustainable nature, thus supporting the literature that leading and managing are different concepts but are of equal importance for organisational success and sustainability.

Managers' primary activities can be categorised into planning, organising, leading and controlling. The way in which management directs and coordinates people within an organisation constitutes their function of leading. Thus, managers are engaging in leading when they motivate employees, resolve conflicts, direct activities towards reaching goals and communicate effectively (Robbins & Judge, 2017).

Organisations, when faced with a crisis, need to be particularly cognizant of the way that leaders deal with the crisis. Because of the heightened emotional involvement and anxiety during times of crisis, they can play a significant role in organisational culture creation and transmission (Schein & Schein, 2017).

2.2 Defining key concepts

In this section, three key concepts relevant to this study are defined.

2.2.1 Effective Change Management

“Organizational Change is the process by which organizations move from their current or present state to some desired future state to increase their effectiveness” (Jones, 2013: 295) and “Change Management is the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers” (Moran & Brightman, 2000: 1).

In addition, Kotnour and Al-Haddad (2015: 254) state that: “The probability of successful change implementation is increased by planning for change and addressing the critical factors that give rise to successful change management”.

This is supported by Isaacs, Grobler and Mathafena (In Press) who emphasise that much effort should be invested in managing change effectively and that Effective Change Management can contribute towards mitigating negative employee-related behaviours and outcomes, such as stress and uncertainty.

They further identify the critical success factors that lead to effective change management as (i) Communication about the change, (ii) Employee involvement and participation, and (iii) Trust in Management.

From the aforementioned, it is evident that Organisational Change is a process (Jones, 2013; Moran & Brightman, 2000) and that its success is dependent on addressing the critical factors (Kotnour & Al-Haddad, 2015; Isaacs et al., in Press) such as change communication, employee participation and involvement, and trust in management, all of which are necessary to mitigate negative employee-related behaviours and outcomes (Isaacs et al., in Press).

2.2.2 Organisational Leadership

The topic of Organisational Leadership has been widely researched for many decades and yet authors still struggle to reach a consensus on the definition of leadership within the organisational context. Stogdill (1950: 3) considered leadership as: “The process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement”. Some seventy years later, Sonmez, Cakir and Adiguzel (2020: 10) reach a more modern, yet similar conclusion when stating that: “The main purpose of the leadership is to realize the objectives and duties of the enterprise in the best possible manner”.

Prior to this, Zaccaro and Klimoski (2002: 6) emphasise some central defining elements of Organisational Leadership that show some semblance of agreement in literature. They argue that: “Organizational Leadership involves processes and proximal outcomes (such as worker commitment) that contribute to the development and achievement of organizational purpose”. They further explain that organisational leadership is recognised by the application of nonconventional influence on organisational life. In addition, they add that: “Leader influence is grounded in cognitive, social, and political processes, and Organizational Leadership is inherently bounded by system characteristics and dynamics, that is, leadership is contextually defined and caused”.

Similarly, Bryman (2013: 2) went on to state that: “The common elements in leadership definitions imply that leadership involves a social influence process in which a person steers members of the group towards a goal”.

This is supported by Enslin and Grobler (2021: 9) who define Organisational Leadership as: “Leaders who exhibit high levels of overall awareness and demonstrate high ethical standards whilst planning and imagining an ideal future”. They go on to state that: “Organisational leaders create a winning culture, they nurture trusting relationships whilst displaying courage, humility, innovation, integrity; all guided by aligned values”. In addition, they point out that organisational leaders are engaging and transparent in their communication with subordinates, thereby creating a safe environment where individuals are encouraged to appreciate and take on risks.

It is clear that there is no real consensus on an exact definition for Organisational Leadership, but that there is a general agreement in recent literature that it involves processes (Enslin & Grobler, 2021; Stogdill, 1950; Sonmez et al., 2020; Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002) and behaviours relating to influencing (Bryman, 2013; Sonmez et al., 2020; Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002) and motivating a group of people towards setting and reaching goals (Bryman, 2013; Enslin & Grobler, 2021; Stogdill, 1950; Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002).

2.2.3 Hope and Optimism

Hope is defined as “a cognitive set that is composed of a reciprocally derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed determination) and (b) pathways (planning of ways to meet goals)” (Snyder, Harris, Anderson, Holleran, Irving, Sigmon, Gibb, Langelle, & Harney, 1991: 570), while Scheier and Carver (1985: 223) define Optimism as: “A generalized expectancy that good things will happen”.

Nowadays, however, Hope and Optimism form part of the collective term, Psychological Capital (PsyCap) as described by Luthans and Youssef (2004). Psychological capital is defined by Luthans, Youssef-Morgan and Avolio (2015: 2) as:

“An individual’s positive psychological state of development that is characterized by (1) having confidence (efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success”.

Hope and Optimism thus form part of the psychological resources that would best meet the criteria for positive organisational behaviour (POB) (Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007). Furthermore, based on explanations by Dawkins, Martin, Scott and Sanderson (2015), and Luthans et al. (2007) that Hope and Optimism are part of focusing on the future and that they are similar constructs utilising goal-based processes, Grobler and Joubert (2018: 11) found it prudent to merge these original factor definitions. They describe Hope and Optimism as: “Having the explanatory style that attributes positive events to internal and pervasive causes, and further having the willpower to succeed now and in the future, even if this requires a change of paths in order to succeed”.

In other words, it is apparent that the concept of Hope and Optimism can be defined as a goal-directed (Dawkins et al., 2015; Grobler & Joubert, 2018; Luthans et al., 2015; Snyder et al., 1991) and positive (Dawkins et al., 2015; Grobler & Joubert, 2018; Luthans et al., 2007, 2015) psychological state (Luthans et al., 2007) in which there is a motivated willpower (Grobler & Joubert, 2018; Scheier & Carver, 1985; Snyder et al., 1991) and determination to succeed in the present and in the future (Grobler & Joubert, 2018; Luthans et al, 2015; Scheier & Carver, 1985).

2.3 Antecedents or precursors to Hope and Optimism

The Hope Theory, as introduced by Snyder (1991), suggests that individuals who possess the perceived ability to derive pathways to their desired goals and to motivate themselves through agency-thinking to utilise those pathways, will have higher levels of hope.

The theory encompasses pathways-thinking, which involves the cognitive ability to produce a pathway deliberately and intentionally towards achieving a goal and agency-thinking, which involves the intention, confidence and ability to follow such pathways in order to achieve the desired goal. Snyder's Hope Theory is anchored by goal-setting, as the type and value of the goal to provide guidance and direction towards attaining such a goal (Snyder et al., 1991). Helland and Winston (2005) incorporated this theory into their research in the field of organisational leadership (Helland & Winston, 2005) and concluded that leaders may have the ability to raise hope in their followers. Furthermore, those hopeful leaders can inspire hopeful thinking in followers. This theory was aptly interpreted by Varela (2015) who writes that the more hopeful one becomes, obstacles to goal-achieving become learning opportunities and are perceived as challenges rather than hindrances.

Scheier and Carver's (1985) Theory of Optimism suggests that an individual's level of optimism is related to their perceived ability to move towards future goals with valued outcomes. Their theory links to expectancy-value models of motivation that assume that behaviour reflects the pursuit of goals, desired states or actions. In other words, the more important the goal is to an individual, the greater its value, and therefore, the more motivated a person will be to achieve such goals (Carver, Scheier & Segerstrom, 2010; Scheier & Carver, 1985).

Further to this theory, the Goal Setting Theory of Motivation developed by Locke and Latham (1990) is anchored in the premise that conscious goals affect action. The theory states that there are two cognitive determinants of behaviour, namely, values and intentions (goals) and that setting goals will motivate people to develop strategies that lead to goal attainment. Furthermore, more challenging goals, as opposed to simply aiming to do one's best, can mobilise energy, generate action, lead to higher levels of effort and can increase persistent effort. Goal accomplishment leads to satisfaction and generates further motivation (Locke & Latham, 1990), which could ultimately lead to higher levels of Hope and Optimism.

House and Mitchell (1974) offered the Path-Goal Theory of Leadership, which suggests that the role of leadership within an organisation is to engage in and portray different leadership styles to assist employees with defining goals, clarifying the path to achieving these goals, removing obstacles and providing support.

Their theory further suggests that different leadership styles will have different outcomes on employee motivation and goal attainment, depending on the task, environmental and employee characteristics. In other words, leadership behaviour should be adjusted according to the nature and demands of the particular situation. They identify the four types of leader behaviour that are conducive to path-goal clarifying and directed toward satisfying subordinate needs in different situations, such as; directive leader behaviour, participative leader behaviour, supportive leader behaviour and achievement-orientated leader behaviour. House later extended this theory to include charismatic leader behaviour (House & Mitchell, 1974; House, 1996).

2.4 The relationship between Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism, and Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and, Hope and Optimism

In this section empirical evidence of the relationship between Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism, and Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and, Hope and Optimism will be presented.

2.4.1 Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership

In a study conducted by Allen, Smith and Da Silva (2013), the authors examined the relationship between leadership style and members' perceptions of psychological organisational climate relating to change readiness and creativity in a non-profit setting.

The sample consisted of ($N = 172$) church members recruited from six churches within the Presbyterian Church in the USA where the pastor had held his leadership position for five or more years. A 36-item Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ Form 5X) (Avolio & Bass, 2002) was used to assess whether transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviours were exhibited by their church leaders. The psychological climate for change readiness was measured using Daley (1991), Jones and Bearley (1986) and Tagliaferri's (1991) nine-item scale. Psychological climate for organisational creativity was measured using six items adapted specifically for congregational use from Farmer, Tierney and Kung-McIntyre (2003).

Results showed that there are strong and significant relationships between transformational leadership and psychological climate for organisational change ($r = .52$) ($p < .01$) and psychological climate for organisational creativity ($r = .67$) ($p < .01$). Transactional leadership showed similar relationships but to a lesser degree, and laissez-faire leadership behaviour resulted in negative relationships with these variables. From this study, it can therefore be deduced that transformational leadership behaviour is highly conducive to supporting successful organisational change relating to psychological readiness for the change and creativity toward finding new ways of achieving the organisational goals (Allen et al., 2013: 23-42).

In a study conducted in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Ahmad and Cheng (2018) collected a sample of ($N = 147$) employees from five public sector organisations who recently underwent major structural changes. The aim was to investigate if change content, context, process and leadership impacted employees' commitment to change and the authors supported the literature by stating that employees' commitment and attitude towards organisational change was one of the most critical success factors for effective change implementation.

Affective commitment to change (ACC) was measured using the six-item Affective Commitment to Change Scale of Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), quality change communication was measured with a seven-item scale developed by Bordia, Restubog, Jimmieson and Irmer (2004), participation was measured using a three-item scale developed by Lines, Selart, Espedal and Johansen (2005), and transformational leadership was measured with a nine-item scale developed by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman and Fetter (1990).

The results indicate that transformational leadership strongly ($r = .57$) and significantly ($p < .01$) correlated with employees' affective commitment to change which means that transformational leadership behaviour displayed by their direct supervisor played a significant role in the successful implementation of organisational change. Furthermore, it was shown that transformational leadership behaviour also had a positive and significant relationship with employee participation ($r = .24$) ($p < .01$) and quality of change communication ($r = .38$) ($p < .01$) (Ahmad & Cheng, 2018: 1-22).

A study was done by Al-Hussami, Hammad and Alsoleihat (2018) to investigate the extent to which leadership behaviour, organisational commitment and support and subjective career success influenced organisational readiness to change. The study was conducted in the healthcare sector where a sample of ($N = 222$) registered nurses working at selected hospitals in Amman were randomly selected. The Organisational Readiness for Change Instrument was used in this study to measure organisational readiness for change and specifically pertaining to the employees in the nursing environment and based in part on the work of McNabb and Sepic (1995). Organisational commitment was measured using the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire of Mowday, Porte and Steers (1982), and the instrument used to measure perceptions of leadership behaviour was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) form 6S developed by Bass and Avolio (1992).

The results showed that there were moderate and positive significant relationships among: Organizational commitment and perceived organizational support ($r = .60$) ($p < .01$), organizational commitment and leadership behaviour ($r = .50$) ($p < .01$), perceived organizational support and leadership behaviour ($r = .58$) ($p < .01$).

Results further confirmed that leadership behaviour, in particular transformational leadership, is a strong predictor of employee readiness for change and contributes towards organisational commitment which are key factors for managing successful change within organisations (Al-Hussami et al., 2018: 354-370).

In a study by Van der Voet (2014), the focus was to examine to what extent certain approaches to change and transformational leadership style contribute to the effective implementation of change in public organisations. The sample ($N = 580$) consisted of employees working in the urban development and housing industry in Rotterdam during the merger of two companies where changes in both the organisational culture and structure were taking place. The instrument used to measure transformational leadership was Podsakoff et al.'s (1990) questionnaire, which consists of 21 items and contains dimensions such as: Articulating vision, providing appropriate models, fostering acceptance goals, exhibiting high-performance expectancy, providing individual support and intellectual stimulation. The study measured willingness to change using the validated Willingness to Change Scale developed by Metselaar (1997), where, as opposed to commitment to change and cynicism towards change, it measures both employee attitudes about the change as well as their behavioural intentions during such change.

Results indicated positive and significant relationships between willingness to change and transformational leadership ($r = .25$) ($p < .01$), and similar positive correlations between transformational leadership and planned change ($r = .27$) ($p < .01$); and transformational leadership and emergent change ($r = .26$) ($p < .01$), which indicate that transformational leadership behaviour could play an important role in fostering employee willingness to change (Van der Voet, 2014: 373-382).

In a study examining the relationship between attitudes towards organisational change and transformational leadership, Henricks, Young and Kehoe (2020) measured state-readiness (readiness for a specific change) together with trait-readiness (generalised resistance to change) at two specific points in time and investigated the correlation with transformational leadership.

The sample ($N = 165$) consisted of employees from two not-for-profit organisations in Australia that were both undergoing major organisational change at the time and operated within the national employment and regional health services sectors. The instrument used to measure employees' readiness for a specified organisational change initiative was the Readiness for Organisational Change Scale (Holt, Armenaki, Field & Harris, 2007). The subscales used in this measure were: Change appropriateness, management support, change efficacy and personal valence. Oreg's (2003) 17-item scale was used to measure employee dispositional resistance to change. Employee perceptions of managers' transformational leadership behaviours were measured using the Global Transformational Leadership Scale (Carless, Wearing & Mann, 2000). Correlations between these variables were measured at two points in time.

Results indicated that at *Time 1*, leadership and readiness to change had a medium, positive correlation ($r = .46$) ($p < .01$), and similarly, at *Time 2*, the relationship between these two variables correlated in much the same manner ($r = .47$) ($p < .01$). Furthermore, it was shown that leadership had a negative and non-significant correlation ($r = -.14$) ($p > .05$) with resistance to change at *Time 1* and *Time 2* ($r = -.10$) ($p > .05$). Results were also indicative towards leadership, at *Time 1* being a predictor of readiness for change at *Time 2*, thus, transformational leadership was positively associated with readiness for change but not predictive of resistance to change. A significant finding of this study is that leadership had a substantial medial correlation with employee readiness to change at both time points and that leadership at the start of the change (*Time 1*) significantly predicted employee readiness to change six-to-eight months later (Henricks et al., 2020: 202-219).

From the aforementioned articles, research confirms that employee perceptions, readiness and commitment towards organisational change are key factors affecting the success of organisational change and that this is positively correlated to transformational leadership behaviours.

The relationship between Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership has been researched in a variety of public sectors and non-profit settings as can be observed by Al-Hussami et al. (2018) and Henricks et al. (2020) who studied healthcare services employees; Allen et al. (2013) who studied church members; Ahmad and Cheng (2018) who studied employees across five public sectors, while Van der Voet (2014) studied urban and housing development employees and Henricks et al. (2020) also included employees from the national employment sector. Sample sizes ranged from ($N = 147$) to ($N = 222$) (average $N = 257$). The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Avolio and Bass (2002) was utilised twice as the instrument of choice for assessing leadership style, and transformational leadership was assessed in two studies using Podsakoff et al.'s (1990) Transformational Leadership Questionnaire. The relationships between Leadership and the critical factors for effective change management ranged from ($r = .26$ to $r = .57$) with an average positive relationship of ($r = .42$).

2.4.2 Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism

In their article concerning leadership, climate, psychological capital, commitment and wellbeing in a non-profit organisation, McMurray, Pirola-Merlo, Sarros and Islam (2010) explored the relationship between leadership and psychological capital (PsyCap), of which Hope and Optimism contributes to the collective whole (Luthans et al., 2007). The sample consisted of ($N = 200$) randomly selected employees belonging to a non-profit religious organisation in Australia, with an acceptable response rate of 21.50% ($N = 43$). Leadership style was measured using Podsakoff et al.'s (1990) Transformational Leadership Scale (TLS), which also measures the transactional leadership components of contingent reward and punishment behaviour. Psychological Capital was measured using the 24-item PsyCap scale developed by Luthans, Avolio, Avey and Norman (2007).

The results indicate that there is a positive effect of leadership on PsyCap with significant, positive correlations among psychological capital and the leadership scales for the following scales: “provides appropriate model” ($r = .38$), “fosters acceptance of goals” ($r = .50$), “contingent reward” ($r = .41$), “intellectual stimulation” ($r = .48$), “provides individual support” ($r = .38$), “high performance expectations” ($r = .38$), “contingent punishment” ($r = .39$) and “articulates vision” ($r = .46$). Inter-correlations conducted further indicate significant positive relationships among leadership and each component of psychological capital ($r = .53$) ($p < .01$). Thus findings of this study indicate that both transformational and transactional leadership styles provide integral contributions toward enhancing employee efficacy, hope, resilience and optimism (McMurray et al., 2010: 436–457).

Varela (2015) conducted a study to investigate if a relationship existed between transformational leadership and employee hopefulness. The sample ($N = 54$) consisted of employees of a financial services firm who worked for a supervisor; thus no managers were included in the study. The instrument used for the survey was a combination of the subscales of the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Bass and Avolio (1990), which measures inspirational motivation, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, and behavioural idealised influence; and the Work Hope Scale (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006). Results from the correlation analysis reported a correlation coefficient of ($r = .54$) which indicate that there is a significant relationship between workplace hope and transformational leadership and this was corroborated by the linear regression analysis ($r = .29$) which further indicates that transformational leadership behaviour fosters greater workplace hope in employees (Varela, 2015: 34–41).

Stander et al. (2015) conducted a study oriented towards determining whether authentic leadership could influence or predict optimism, trust in the organisation and work engagement among a large sample size ($N = 633$) of healthcare workers from 27 public hospitals and clinics in Gauteng. Authentic leadership was measured using the Authentic Leadership Inventory developed by Neider and Schriesheim (2011).

The questionnaire on experience and assessment of work, the VBBA, by Van Veldhoven, Meijman, Broersen and Fortuin (1997) was utilised to measure the job resources of relationship with colleagues and communication. To measure optimism, the 12-item PsyCap Questionnaire (PCQ 12) by Luthans et al. (2007) was adapted to contain the three items through which optimism is measured. Trust was measured by the Workplace Trust Survey (WTS) (Ferres & Travaglione, 2003) and work engagement was measured through the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2002).

Results indicated that authentic leadership correlates positively with all the latent variables, with a medium and significant effect on optimism ($r = .45$), a large and significant effect on trust in the organisation ($r = .68$), and a medium and significant effect on work engagement ($r = .42$). Furthermore, optimism was significantly correlated to work engagement with a large effect ($r = .60$). The correlation between optimism and trust in the organisation was of medium practical significance ($r = .31$). In addition, trust in the organisation and work engagement were also largely practically significantly correlated with each other ($r = .50$). Lastly, authentic leadership was practically significantly correlated with both relationships with colleagues ($r = .41$) and communication ($r = .64$). The results suggest that authentic leadership will have a positive influence on employee optimism and trust in the organisation which, in turn, will result in higher levels of work engagement, and thus both positive personal and work-related outcomes (Stander et al., 2015: 1-12).

In another study looking at the roles of hope, grit and growth mindset, Lee (2018) set out to determine the moderated mediation effects on authentic leadership and organisational effectiveness. The sample ($N = 374$) consisted of office workers in Chungnam, working for pharmaceutical companies and drug wholesalers. Instruments used were the Authentic Leadership Inventory Scale developed by Linda and Chester (2011) and modified by Koo (2013) and hope was measured using the Korean version of the Hope Scale adapted and validated by Choi and Lee (2008) from the original form developed by Snyder (1994). Hope was composed of four items of agency-thinking to measure goal-setting and four items of pathways-thinking to measure how to reach those goals.

The Organisational Effectiveness Scale used in this study consisted of nine questions on job satisfaction and eight questions on organisational commitment (adapted from Cook and Wall, 1980, and revised by Na, 2001). The scale on organisational commitment used eight questions related to psychological immersion as used by Jung (2011) selected from 24 questions of Allen and Meyer (2004). The Grit-O Scale developed by Duckworth and Quinn (2009) and translated by Lee, Park and Hwang (2016) was used in this study.

This scale comprised a total of 12 items which measured the consistency of interest and persistence of effort. The Growth Mindset Scale developed by Dweck (2006) and translated by Lee et al. (2016) was used in this study. This scale consisted of four items to measure beliefs about change in intelligence and four items to measure beliefs about personality change. Results indicated that the correlations among organisational effectiveness, authentic leadership, hope, growth mindset, and grit were all significant and positive. The correlation coefficient between authentic leadership and organisational effectiveness ($r = .58$) ($p < .01$) was the highest, followed by that between hope and grit ($r = .46$) ($p < .01$) and that between hope and organisational effectiveness ($r = .38$) ($p < .01$). As a mediating effect, authentic leadership was shown to have a significant impact on hope ($p < .001$) and hope had a significant impact on organisational effectiveness ($p < .001$). The study further concluded that hope was found to mediate the association between authentic leadership and organisational effectiveness, thus it is necessary to promote hope within an organisation to improve effectiveness (Lee, 2018: 383–401).

Le, Lei, Phouvang, Than, Ngyuyen and Gong (2018) conducted a study to establish the mediating effects of optimism and self-efficacy between transformational leadership and knowledge sharing. They used a sample of ($N = 365$) participants working for 80 Chinese firms, consisting of randomly selected managers and team members across various departments.

Transformational leadership was measured using a questionnaire developed by Dai, Dai, Chen and Wu (2013) and Masa'deh, Obeidat and Tarhini (2016), and participants' perception of their leaders' transformational leadership behaviour was measured with eight items adapted from Dai et al. (2013). The Life Orientation Test–Revised (LOT–R) developed by Scheier, Carver and Bridges (1994) was used to measure optimism and pessimism. The results showed a significantly strong correlation ($r = .69$) ($p < .001$) between transformational leadership and the construct of optimism which indicates that transformational leadership behaviour will have a strong positive effect on employee optimism (Le et al., 2018: 1833-1846).

The preceding studies were conducted across the private and public sectors and covered a variety of industries, such as financial services (Valera, 2015), pharmaceutical sales office staff (Lee, 2018), healthcare workers (Stander et al., 2015), non-profit religious organisations (McMurray et al., 2010) and randomly selected private firms across multiple industries in China (Le et al., 2018). Sample sizes ranged from ($N = 43$) to ($N = 633$) with the average sample size being ($N = 294$). There were medium-to-strong positive relationships between leadership behaviours and Hope and Optimism ($r = .45$ to $r = .69$) with the average correlation of ($r = .53$). Although the literature did not reveal many recent studies with the specific aim of investigating the direct relationships between Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, there were many investigations relating to the moderating and mediating effects that Hope and Optimism have on organisational effectiveness and work engagement.

2.4.3 Effective change management and Hope and optimism

In their study examining the PsyCap-related predictors of attitudes towards organisational change, Nwanzu and Babalola (2019) aimed to ascertain whether the positive organisational capacities, namely optimism, self-efficacy and self-monitoring, will predict attitude towards organisational change. They selected a sample ($N = 169$) of employees from both public (15) and privately (6) owned organisations in Delta State, Nigeria. The instrument utilised to measure optimism was adopted from Scheier and Carver's (1985) Life Orientation Test–Revised (LOT–R) Scale and Dunham's (1989) 18-item scale was used to measure attitude towards organisational change.

This scale measured the three components, cognition, affection and behaviour tendency of attitude.

Results indicated a positive correlation of ($r = .27$) and were significant at ($p < .001$) between optimism and attitude towards change. These findings imply that higher levels of positivity among employees will result in higher levels of acceptance and commitment towards the change and, ultimately, a higher probability of implementing successful change (Nwanzu & Babalola, 2019: 1-12).

A study by Avey, Wernsing and Luthans (2008) investigated the impact of psychological capital and emotions on attitudes and behaviours towards organisational change, with a total of ($N = 132$) employees from a wide cross-section of organisations in the United States. Psychological capital was measured using the 24-item PsyCap Questionnaire (PCQ) (Luthans et al., 2007). Watson, Clark and Tellegen's (1988) Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) Scale was used to measure positive emotions. Only the positive emotions listed in the scale were used, which included interested, excited, strong, enthusiastic, proud, alert, inspired, determined, attentive and active. Individual organisational citizenship behaviours were measured by Lee and Allen's (2002) eight-item Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Index Scale (OCBI). Results showed positive correlations between organisational citizenship behaviours and positive emotions ($r = .42$) and PsyCap ($r = .44$), and a negative correlation between organisational behaviour and cynicism ($r = -.30$).

Cynicism also had a negative correlation with positive emotions ($r = -.39$). Further results revealed that positive emotions acted as a mediator between PsyCap and employee attitudes and behaviours and emerged as the stronger and significant predictor of both citizenship and deviance behaviours. It can thus be said that positive employees can help achieve positive organisational change (Avey et al., 2008: 48-70).

Wanberg and Banas (2000) conducted a study with the purpose of assessing three individual-differences variables composing personal resilience (self-esteem, perceived control and optimism) and five context-specific variables (change information, participation, change-specific self-efficacy, social support and perceived impact) as predictors of employee openness to organisational change. The sample ($N = 130$) consisted of employees working in the U.S. public housing programme. Optimism was measured using Scheier, Carver and Bridges's (1994) revised eight-item Life Orientation Test (LOT). Openness to the changes being faced was assessed with a seven-item, modified version of the Openness Toward Organisational Change Scale developed by Miller, Johnson and Grau (1994).

The results indicated that the view of organisational change was positively correlated to employee optimism ($r = .11$) and resilience ($r = .11$), and acceptance of the change was positively correlated to employee optimism ($r = .15$) and resilience ($r = .21$). Furthermore, resilience showed a strong ($r = .83$) and significant ($p < .05$) correlation with optimism. It can therefore be deduced that more optimistic employees will exhibit higher levels of resilience, which will result in more positive outcomes during organisational change (Wanberg & Banas, 2000: 132-142).

Diedericks, Cilliers and Bezuidenhout (2019) investigated the interrelationships between psychological capital (PsyCap), work engagement (WE) and employee's resistance to change (RTC). A sample ($N = 208$) was used, comprised of academics from an open distance-learning institute in South Africa. Instruments used were the 17-item version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003), the 17-item Resistance-to-Change Scale (RTC) (Oreg, 2006), and the 24-item Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) (Luthans et al., 2007). Results indicated a medium negative correlation between employee PsyCap and RTC ($r = -.41$). Furthermore, the constructs of hope and optimism both showed significantly ($p < .01$) negative correlations with the RTS constructs emotional reaction, short-term-focus and routine-seeking. Therefore, employees will display higher levels of resistance to change if levels of hope and optimism in the organisation are low (Diedericks et al., 2019: 1-14).

Lizar, Mangundjaya and Rachmawan (2015) conducted a study to identify the role of psychological capital (PsyCap) and psychological empowerment (PE) on employees' individual readiness for organisational change (IRFC). The sample ($N = 175$) consisted of employees of a state-owned construction company in Indonesia. Data were collected through three types of questionnaires as follows: a) Individual Readiness for Change adapted from Hanpachern (1997), consisting of three dimensions: (1) resisting; (2) participating and (3) promoting; b) Psychological Capital adapted from Luthans, Youssef and Avolio (2007); and c) Psychological Empowerment adapted from Spreitzer (1996), which consists of four dimensions: (1) meaning; (2) competence, (3) self-determinant and (4) impact.

Results of the study showed that PsyCap and Psychological Empowerment both have a positive ($r = .67$) and significant ($p < .001$) influence on IRFC, and that PsyCap as a variable on its own also had a positive ($r = .56$) and significant ($p < .001$) influence on IRFC. It is therefore important for organisations to pay attention to PsyCap at both the individual and group levels due to its important role towards creating employee individual readiness for change, which is a contributor towards attaining effective organisational change (Lizar et al., 2015: 343-352).

The aforementioned studies were conducted across the private and public sectors and spanned a wide variety of industries, including public housing programmes (Wanberg & Banas, 2000), state-owned construction companies (Lizar et al., 2015) and academics from an open distance-learning institute (Diedericks et al., 2019). The PsyCap Questionnaire (Luthans et al., 2007) was used in three of the preceding studies and Scheier and Carver's (1985) Life Orientation Test was used in two of the studies. The correlation results ranged from ($r = .11$ to $r = .56$) (average $r = .34$) and the sample sizes averaged at ($N = 163$), ranging between ($N = 130$ and $N = 208$).

2.4.4 Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism

A study by Boga and Ensari (2009) examined the moderational role of organisational change on the relationship between transformational leadership and the perception of organisational success. Participants were employees from small-to-mid-size businesses in Southern California and represented multinational, for-profit and non-profit organisations. The sample consisted of 82 participants of varying ages, ranks and industries. Participants were presented with a three-part questionnaire. The first section contained Ungson and Schwab's (1980) instrument to measure the level of organisational change. The second section measured the participants' perceptions of their organisation's success.

The organisation's success was measured on 15 items and included items such as goal clarity, employee morale and the effectiveness of communication amongst others, adopted from the instrument developed by Kreitner and Kinicki (2001). The third questionnaire assessed the perception of the leadership style through the use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Bass and Avolio (1990). Regression procedures were used for the analysis. Results indicated that there is a significant negative correlation ($r = -.24$) ($p < .01$) between organisational change and employee perception of organisational success, but that a transformational leadership style during organisational change will result in a significantly strong positive correlation ($r = .58$) ($p < .01$) between organisational change and organisational success. A further regression analysis confirmed these results and supported the authors' predictions that the more changes an organisation underwent, the less successful it was perceived by its employees.

Furthermore, transformational leadership had a main effect in that employees perceived the organisation as being more successful as the level of transformational leadership increased, and most importantly, the results revealed that the transformational leadership-success relationship was stronger when an organisation undergoes high levels of change as opposed to low levels of change (Boga & Ensari, 2009: 235–251).

In their study focusing on the influence of transformational leadership and leader attitudes on employee attitudes during change implementation, Farahnak, Ehrhart, Torres and Aarons (2020) set out to test if transformational leadership and leader attitudes could predict staff attitudes and change implementation success.

The study participants included service providers ($N = 478$) and their supervisors ($N = 87$) working in mental health organisations in Southern California. Supervisor and staff attitudes toward new innovations being implemented were measured using the Practice Attitude Scale (Aarons, 2004). The measure consists of four reliable dimensions for both subordinates and supervisors: (1) Appeal, (2) Requirements, (3) Openness, and (4) Divergence. Transformational leadership was assessed using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire of Bass and Avolio (1995) containing subscales such as (1) Idealized Influence, (2) Inspirational Motivation, (3) Intellectual Stimulation, and (4) Individualized Consideration. Successful implementation of the new innovation was measured by a scale developed for the specific study and is based on items to assess supervisors' general perceptions of their subordinate's preparation, competence, fidelity and overall success in implementing the new innovation. The correlation results of this study indicated that the relationship between transformational leadership and employee attitudes towards the change was positive ($r = .12$) and significant ($p < .01$), and that the relationships between leadership attitudes towards the change and change implementation success were also positive and significant ($r = .16$) ($p < .01$). It can therefore be deduced that employees who are positive and optimistic towards the change, as a result of transformational leadership behaviour, would exhibit a positive attitude towards organisational change, which will positively impact the implementation and success thereof (Farahnak et al., 2020: 98-111).

In a study by Gilley, Gilley and McMillan (2009), the main purpose of the study was to investigate employee perceptions of effective change implementation by their managers. Furthermore, the study also sought to establish the frequency with which managers exhibited effective change implementation-related behaviours. A sample ($N = 513$) of students (MBA and PhD in organisational development) from the Midwest, Mountain West and the Southern regions partook in the survey and represented one private and two public universities.

All students were working professionals representing a diverse array of industries and organisational positions. The dependent variable in the study was subjective, whereby respondents were asked to indicate how well “my manager effectively implements change”.

Frequency responses were collected using a five-point scale ranging from “never” (1) to “always” (5). Independent variables in the study were based on research on specific leadership skills and behaviours related to change. Using the same five-point scale, respondents were asked the frequency with which their managers: (1) Coached employees, (2) Effectively rewarded/recognized employees, (3) Communicated appropriately with employees, (4) Motivated employees, (5) Involved employees in decision-making and (6) Encouraged teamwork and collaboration. The results indicated that all of the independent variables showed significant ($p < .001$) and high positive intercorrelations with all greater than ($r = .60$). Motivation had the highest positive correlation ($r = .70$) with change effectiveness and was closely followed by communication ($r = .68$). These particular leadership behaviours are also positively related to employee hope and optimism due to high levels of motivation and effective communication of goals and strategies. The results of this study thus suggest that a substantial percentage of variance in leader change effectiveness can be predicted by leadership proficiency in motivating others and their ability to effectively communicate with employees (Gilley et al., 2009: 75-94).

In their article concerning successful change implementation, Tsai and Harrison (2019) examined three of the critical actions that organisations should take to gain employee support during change implementation. The study further examined the roles of affective commitment to change, organisational justice, and organisational cynicism in the connection between these critical change actions and employee support. A large sample ($N = 467$) of full-time working adults were recruited for the study and were found eligible after having indicated that they had experienced organisational change within their current employing organisation within the past three years.

Participants were employed in the United States and represented a variety of occupations. Employee participation was assessed using a four-item scale specifically created for this study. To assess employee perceptions of communications during the change process, two measures were created for the study, one assessing how thorough the change communications were and another measuring how helpful those communications were during the change process. To evaluate employee perceptions of the adequacy of the organisation's change justifications, a three-item measure was created. Procedural, informational and interpersonal justice were assessed individually by using four items that were modified from Colquitt (2001). The seven-item scale by Wilkerson, Evans and Davis (2008) was used to assess organisational cynicism and a modified version of Herscovitch and Meyer's (2002) six-item scale was used to measure affective commitment to change. Two separate measures were used to assess behavioural support for change: (1) a five-item scale created for this study that asked about participants' behaviour during the change they had experienced and (2) a 101-point continuum created by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002).

Results indicated that all the study factors showed significant correlations ($p > .001$). Results further showed a positive relationship between affective commitment to change and behavioural support for the change from both instruments used ($r = .51$) ($p = .61$), suggesting that employees are more likely to show behavioural support towards the change if they are more affectively committed to the change. Affective commitment to change had positive relationships with all three of the communication factors, with the strongest correlation being with communication relating to change justification ($r = .72$). This confirms that communication is critical during organisational change processes if affective employee commitment to the change is to be achieved. Employee participation had a moderate correlation with affective commitment to change ($r = .56$), strong correlations with procedural justice ($r = .74$) and informational justice ($r = .61$). This suggests that perceptions of procedural justice may play an important role in obtaining affective commitment to a change when there is effective communication during the change and employee participation is encouraged.

Organisational cynicism had negative correlations with all factors in this study, which could suggest that employees who are not hopefully optimistic about the future of the organisation will perceive all organisational justice factors negatively (procedural justice $r = -.66$; informational justice $r = -.71$; and interpersonal justice $r = -.62$).

The results indicated that the higher the degree of cynicism, the less fair employees viewed the organisational actions. There was a significant negative relationship ($r = -.66$) between cynicism and affective commitment to change and further negative correlations between behaviour support (both instruments) ($r = -.50$; $r = -.54$). Furthermore, strong, negative correlations between organisational cynicism and communication factors; thorough communication ($r = -.67$); helpful communication ($r = -.64$); change justification ($r = -.61$) and employee participation ($r = -.61$), suggest that employees experiencing organisational cynicism will be less likely to participate in change discussion and will be more likely to perceive organisational communication in a negative way, compared to optimistic employees (Tsai & Harrison, 2019: 141-155).

In an empirical analysis conducted in Germany by Faupel and Süß (2019), the effect of transformational leadership on employees during organisational change was investigated. The sample ($N = 328$) consisted of a majority of white-collar workers (79.60%) from various organisations and industries with the inclusion criteria being that they were experiencing organisational change at the time of the study. To investigate the way in which transformational leadership affects employees during organisational change, work engagement and valence were analysed as motivational mechanisms for explaining the influence that transformational leaders have on employees during organisational change.

The validated German version of the Transformational Leadership Inventory (TLI) of Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Bommer (1996) and Podsakoff et al. (1990) was used and participants were required to rate their leaders' behaviours on six dimensions of transformational leadership: (1) identifying and articulating a vision, (2) providing an appropriate model, (3) fostering the acceptance of group goals, (4) high-performance expectations, (5) providing individual support and (6) providing intellectual stimulation.

A four-item subscale of valence from the Organizational Change Recipients' Beliefs Scale (Armenakis, Bernerth, Pitts & Walker, 2007) was used after being translated into German. Work engagement was measured with a shortened German version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) by Schaufeli, Bakker and Salanova (2006). Herscovitch and Meyer's (2002) Championing Behaviour Scale was used to conceptualise employee behaviour during organisational change. Employee belief that some change is necessary (discrepancy) was also measured, using four items from the Organisational Change Recipient's Beliefs Scale due to its importance in predicting employees' reactions when organisational change takes place.

Results indicated a positive ($r = .46$) and significant ($p < .001$) relationship between transformational leadership and valence. Valence was also identified as a mediator to explain how transformational leadership elicits positive and championing behaviour from employees during organisational change. Valence had a strong ($r = .66$) and significant ($p < .001$) relationship with championing behaviour. Thus, transformational leadership increased valence through creating a positive vision of the change and for the future and thereby leading employees to perceive the consequences of change as beneficial, which in turn, elicited championing behaviour towards the change. Transformational leadership also positively ($r = .44$) and significantly ($p < .001$) correlated with work engagement, which was identified as a second motivating factor mediating the level of championing behaviour. The positive ($r = .51$) and significant ($p < .001$) relationship between work engagement and championing behaviour was confirmed. Transformational leadership was therefore shown to positively affect work engagement, which resulted in positive championing behaviour and more favourable organisational outcomes relating to the changes.

The aforementioned studies were conducted across private and state-owned organisations across a variety of industries and employee levels (white-collar workers, managers, supervisors, and healthcare workers). Sample sizes ranged from ($N = 82$ to $N = 565$) with an average ($N = 391$).

Bass and Avolio's (1995) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire was used twice as the instrument to measure organisational leadership behaviour.

All results showed positive and significant relationships between leadership behaviour (particularly, transformational leadership) and employee attitudes and behaviours which lead to effective organisational change management. There is, however, very little literature investigating the impact of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership on Hope and Optimism as a single construct. It is therefore the intention of the current study to contribute towards filling this gap in the presently available literature.

2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter provided a general introduction into the difference between Leadership and Management and the impact of crises on employee behaviour. This was followed by defining the key concepts related to the study: Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism. Possible antecedents and predictors of employee Hope and Optimism were presented and based on the Hope Theory (Snyder, 1991), the Theory of Optimism (Scheier & Carver, 1985), the Goal-setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 1990), and the Path-Goal Theory of Leadership (House & Mitchell, 1974).

Empirical evidence of the relationship between the variables: Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism, and Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism was presented. Although the variables have all been studied independently or as mediators, predictors and moderators of other variables, little work has been done in studying these specific variables and how they correlate with each other, specifically during times of crisis.

In the next chapter, the research methodology adopted for this study will be discussed.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

This chapter discusses the aim of the empirical investigation, the selected sample, the measuring instruments per variable, the study design, the research method and data analysis.

3.1 The aim of the empirical investigation

This study aims to investigate the relationship between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Employee Hope and Optimism during the COVID-19 pandemic in the private sector.

3.2 The sample

A sample refers to a group of participants representing a targeted population (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Similarly, Saunders et al. (2016) refer to a sample as being a subgroup forming part of a larger population. In this study, 60 participants will have been sampled, forming part of a pooled sample and thus, reporting of the results will be based on the pooled results of a broader population.

A population is a collection of elements from which later inferences and claims may be made (Leavy, 2017). In this study, the population will be represented by all the employees of an information technology company operating in the private sector.

A sample frame can be described as the list of elements within the population from which the potential participant sample is derived (Blumberg et al., 2014). In this study, the sample frame will comprise the full list of employees from both core business and support service roles and will include employees performing management and non-management tasks.

To ensure that each element of the population stands an equal chance of participating, random sampling will be utilised. Random sampling consists of the probability sampling procedure which ensures that randomly selected elements from the population have an equal chance at inclusion (Saunders et al., 2016).

Based on the central limit theorem, a sample size of 60 has been decided upon. The central limit theorem suggests that the larger the absolute size of a sample, the more closely its distribution will resemble the normal distribution (Saunders et al., 2016). Blumberg et al. (2014) state that sufficiently large samples are those consisting of ($n = >30$). The sample size of this study can therefore be considered sufficient.

3.3 Measuring instruments

Information will be gathered using four measures.

3.3.1 Effective Change Management

The Perceived Effective Change Management Scale will be used to measure Effective Change Management. This measure was developed by Isaacs et al. (In Press) who combined three existing questionnaires namely: Appraisal of Change Management Questionnaire by Pakkin, Mattila-Holappa, Nielsen, Wiezer, Widerszal-Bazyl and de Jong (2011); the Intervention Process Measure developed by Randall, Nielsen and Tvedt (2009) and the Trust in Management and Social Influence During the Change Process instrument developed by Oreg (2006).

Effective Change Management is measured using The Perceived Effective Change Management Scale by measuring the elements of Communication by Management; Communication by Line Management; Employee Involvement in Organisational Change, as well as Trust in Management During Change. The measure is based on the premise that the critical success factors that lead to effective change are; change communication, involvement and participation of employees, and employee trust in management. The instrument consists of 20 items.

The first element, the Magnitude of Change (items 1-7), is only included to gauge employee perceptions of changes experienced at work because of COVID-19. This element is, however, not included as part of the main instrument to measure Perceived Effective Change Management. The instrument utilised, therefore, consists of 13 items in total which measure communication (seven items), employee involvement (three items) and trust (three items). The first item reads as follows: “management has informed staff clearly about the goals of the change” and is measured on a five-point Likert scale, where the maximum score is 65 and the minimum score is 13. A high score represents higher levels in positive perceptions of how effectively the change was managed, whereas lower scores will be representative of employees perceiving management of the changes in a negative manner.

The composite reliability of the scale delivered an acceptable Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .88 with the guideline for acceptability ($\alpha > .70$) being applied (Blumberg et al., 2014).

This measure was included as per the joint research project and was developed specifically for the measurement of organisational effectiveness in the management of change within the South African context. Dimensions of this measure will be useful in developing and implementing change management interventions in this context.

3.3.2 Organisational Leadership

The Organisational Leadership Behaviour Scale was used to measure Organisational Leadership in the South African context.

The measure was developed by Enslin and Grobler (2021) and measures Organisational Leadership Behaviours through the elements: Leader Awareness, Leadership Culture, Leader Vision, Leadership Style and Characteristics, Engaging Communication, Support, Team Dynamics and Delivering Strategy. The aforementioned eight affinities were identified to conceptualise the true nature of leadership behaviours within the South African context.

It consists of 32 items with four items allocated to each of the eight elements. The first item reads as follows: “in my organisation, managers manage their own emotions effectively”. The measurement scale consists of a five-point Likert scale with the maximum score being 160 and the minimum score 32 and the score range representing a high = 15 - 20, moderate = 8 - 14 and low = 0 – 7. A high score represents participants agreeing that organisational leaders display high levels of the eight factors related to organisational leadership, whereas low scores indicate the contrary, where participants disagree with statements that organisational leadership displays the requisite behaviours.

The reliability of the measure will be included in a battery of instruments used by fellow researchers pursuing a Master of Business Leadership (MBL) and Master of Business Administration (MBA) degrees through the University of South Africa’s Graduate School of Business Leadership. This forms part of the joint research project to develop a reliable measurement, specifically designed for use in the South African organisational context.

3.3.3 Hope and Optimism

Hope and Optimism is measured as an element of a reconfigured three-factor instrument developed by Grobler and Joubert (2018), which is an adaptation of Luthans, Youssef and Avolio’s (2006) Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ).

The measure is based on Luthans et al.’s (2006) original hope and optimism factors with the two negative items removed by Grobler and Joubert (2018: 7) to support Psychological Capital as “falling within the domain of positive organisational behaviour”.

It consists of eight items with the first four items representing Hope and the remaining four items representing Optimism. The construct Hope and Optimism is therefore measured as a composite of these two elements. The first of the eight items reads as follows: “at the present time, I am energetically pursuing my work goals”.

The measurement scale consists of a six-point Likert scale with a maximum score of 46 and a minimum score of 8. A high score represents stronger feelings of Hope and Optimism among employees, whereas lower scores indicate that employees are less hopeful and optimistic about setting and obtaining future goals. The reliability of the scale delivered an acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficient (.85).

This measure was included as per the joint research project and was developed specifically for the measurement of employee Hope and Optimism within the South African context. Dimensions of this measure will be particularly useful in creating a culture of positive organisational behaviour.

3.3.4 Demographic items

Seven items were included which could indicate the representativity of the sample within the South African workforce.

The items included:

- Gender: Male; Female.
- Race: Asian; Black; Coloured; White.
- Age: Years.
- Years of formal schooling: Less than 12 years; 12 years (matric); 1st Degree/Diploma; Higher degree/Higher diploma.
- Number of years with present employer: Years.
- Type of work: Support/admin; core business/operations.
- Post level: Top/Senior management, Middle management/Professional, Junior management/Supervisors, Semi-skilled workers.

In total 53 items were included in this study with Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism constructs contributing 13, 32 and eight items respectively. The measures as they appeared in the quantitative survey questionnaire are presented in Annexure A.

3.4 Design of the study

The research design will be cross-sectional in nature. This study design will provide a snapshot at a particular point in time and is appropriate when studying a particular phenomenon taking place at a specific point in time (Saunders et al., 2016).

The research strategy will be of a quantitative nature and relies on figures and numbers (Blumberg et al., 2014). Leavy (2017) states that a quantitative approach provides processes that are aimed at supporting, proving or disproving existing theories and that such strategy is appropriate when the primary research purpose is to evaluate or explain.

Text box 1: Scope of study

This study forms part of a research project within the research focus area of the role of human resource management, transactional leadership, task-centred leadership behaviour as well as spiritual and organisational leadership on individual work attitudes and wellbeing during COVID-19. The overarching project comprised of 13 constructs. The instruments measuring these constructs were identified and in some instances adapted by the project leaders. Each participant in the project administered all 13 instruments. The analysis and the reporting of the statistical results were based on the pooled data of the research project, which is a composite of all datasets of participating students with each student researcher focusing on three variables.

Based on the three concepts allocated to each research student, they needed to identify and contextualise a research problem in the environment where they intend to collect the data. Following the identification of a suitable research site, students had to obtain permission to conduct the study from the appropriate authority, as per the granted ethical clearance from the SBL Research Ethics Committee, ref nr: 2021_SBL_AC_005_CA (see Annexure B).

Students were trained in research ethics, appropriate sampling techniques and the administration of the instruments. The students then had to draw samples independently, contact respondents, and obtain consent from participants before administering the instruments. The data was captured in a pre-set Excel spreadsheet.

An administrator merged all data files from all the participants and prepared the files for import into SPSS. Students were trained in the relevant and appropriate statistical techniques applicable to their study and were also informed of alternative methods of analysis. They consequently received the SPSS outputs related to their studies, which they needed to report and interpret independently.

The project leader is Prof A Grobler; the author of this text box.

The same strategy was followed by all involved in the study.

3.5 Method

The researcher elected to be part of a research project that met her needs to investigate the impact of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership on Hope and Optimism during the COVID-19 pandemic in the private sector. During the project induction, important information pertaining to research ethics was provided to the researcher, which included a copy of the Unisa Research Ethics Policy.

The first step was to identify an appropriate organisation from which to collect the data and the researcher elected to approach an Information Technology and Digital Communications company operating in the private sector.

The researcher contacted the regional manager via e-mail, which comprised an overview of the research that was to be conducted. A virtual meeting was arranged with the Human Resources and General Managers, where the researcher was introduced and granted the opportunity to further elaborate on the scope and purpose of the study. Permission was granted for the research to be conducted within the organisation and a letter from the Human Resources Manager was obtained as written consent (Annexure C).

The researcher received training in drawing a random sample and administering the battery of tests during a virtual contact session with the joint Research Facilitator. The sample frame consisted of the entire organisation and excluded only the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Committee. Electronic questionnaires were administered through a link provided by the researcher and distributed to the sample frame through the Human Resources (HR) Department. The HR Manager sent frequent reminders to all employees when prompted by the researcher. A total of 62 questionnaires were returned directly to the researcher through the secure electronic survey link, ensuring the complete anonymity of respondents. The first 60 responses were included in the sample. Data from the completed questionnaires were entered onto the data-capturing Excel template in order of receipt and submitted to the joint Research Facilitator.

This was followed by a virtual contact session where the researcher was guided on analysing and interpreting the data. Heading 3.6 of this chapter provides specifics and the results of this study will be reported in Chapter 4. The final step of the research was to interpret the results and report on the conclusions of the study. This will be reported in Chapter 5.

3.6 Data analysis

Data describing the sample was generated first and was done in the form of means for continuous variables (e.g., age and tenure) and frequencies for categorical data (e.g., qualifications and race). This was done to gain insight into the characteristics of the sample.

The descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were calculated for all the variables, namely Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism.

According to Saunders et al. (2016), the mean represents the average of all values included in the dataset and measures its central tendency, whereas the standard deviation indicates the extent to which the values in the dataset differ from the mean. This was done to provide the researcher with knowledge of the standing of the groups on the various variables.

Reliability information was generated by calculating the Cronbach's alpha. It represents a coefficient that measures internal consistency and indicates the reliability of a measurement that is based on multiple items (Blumberg et al., 2014). This is supported by Leavy (2017) who states that the Cronbach's alpha is commonly used to test the internal consistency of scales used in survey research. The researcher calculated the Cronbach's alpha coefficients to assess the efficacy of the instruments that were used to measure Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism. Instruments with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient above .70 were considered acceptable measurements (Saunders et al., 2016).

To assess the homogeneity of the mean scores between organisations, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. ANOVA is used to analyse the distribution of data values within, as well as between groups of data through comparing means of more than two groups (Polonsky & Waller, 2019). An alpha level ($p < .05$) was utilised as the significance level to indicate whether similarities between organisations exist or to what extent they differ (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2019). This was done to establish if all organisational data could be pooled or if there were fundamental differences on the various levels of the phenomena.

T-tests were performed to determine if any significant differences in mean scores were present when comparing two groups. A statistically significant difference between mean scores is indicated by ($p < .05$).

The effect size was measured to determine if statistically significant differences, relationships or associations between variables are of practical significance (Saunders et al., 2016). This was performed for the T-tests.

The practical significance is expressed as a Cohen's *d* value. In their review of Cohen's *d* effect sizes and their confidence intervals, Goulet-Pelletier and Cousineau (2018: 243) refer to the interpretation of Cohen's guidelines as values of ".20 being small, .50 being medium, and .80 being large". Thus, the larger the Cohen's *d* value, the larger the magnitude of the difference between the mean scores.

The correlation between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism was calculated and interpreted using Pearson correlation coefficients (*r*). This is described by Saunders et al. (2016: 545) as a method to "quantify the strength of the linear relationship between two ranked or numerical variables". The correlation coefficient can represent any value between -1 to +1 with a positive value representing a positive correlation (direction) and, conversely, a negative value representing a negative relationship (direction) between two variables. The number represents the strength of the relationship, with values closer to 1 indicating a stronger relationship and those closer to 0 indicating weaker relationships, and thus an exact value of 0 will imply that the two variables are perfectly independent of one another. Correlation values below $\pm.35$ will be considered as weak (small), between $\pm.35$ and $\pm.60$ will be considered as moderate (medium) and correlation values above $\pm.60$ as strong (high) (Saunders et al., 2016). This was done to determine whether the variables, Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism relate to each other in a meaningful manner.

A linear regression analysis (R^2) was performed in order to assess how the combination of variables relate. As stated by Adams, Khan and Raeside (2014: 202) this model is "often utilised to explain changes in a phenomenon that are brought about by means of influencing the variables" and "involves estimating the coefficients of the independent variables that go on to predict the dependent variable".

R^2 values of .75, .50, and .25 can respectively describe the independent variables as having substantial, moderate, or weak relationships with the dependent variable (Hair, Tomas, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016). This was done to ascertain if combining variables could predict the dependent variable in a meaningful manner.

3.7 Summary

This chapter discussed the following: The aim of the empirical investigation, the selected sample, the measuring instruments per variable, the study design, and the research method and data analysis. The results of this study will be presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 - Results

In this chapter, the results of this study will be presented. This includes the demographic statistics of the sample, descriptive statistics of the variables, correlation analysis and inferential statistics. Furthermore, the relationship between predictor and predicted variables, as well as mediation will be reported.

The variables used in this study are multi-dimensional, thus, Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism consist of several factors. For the purpose of the study, the descriptive, correlational, as well as reliability analyses, will include the respective factors of the variables, whereas the inferential statistics and the multiple regression will only be performed on the total scores of the three main variables, as included in the purpose of this study.

4.1 Sample

The individual sample size consisted of ($N = 60$) participants working in the information technology and communications industry. The pooled sample was representative of 29 organisations across industries operating in the private sector and consisted of ($N = 1\,723$) participants.

The age of the participants will be reported on, with reference to mean and standard deviation. The organisations appear in ascending order and according to their unique numbers allocated for this study, which is not necessarily sequential. This is done to protect the identity of individual organisations and is applied throughout the reporting in this study. The age statistics, pooled as well as per company, is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Age statistics: Pooled as well as per company

Organisation	Mean Age	Standard Deviation
4	39.90	9.28
5	40.50	9.84
6	38.45	9.18
7	34.72	7.93
8	38.44	9.13
9	35.23	8.46
10	44.59	8.34
14	37.73	6.20
15	44.28	8.05
16	37.65	8.21
18	34.37	4.62
19	40.02	8.31
21	43.64	8.76
22	37.47	8.26
24	37.22	5.68
26	36.98	7.20
27	37.83	8.93
29	36.20	8.50
31	39.03	9.76
32	37.37	7.97
33	36.97	9.57
35	38.35	8.64
36	35.07	7.23
37	38.92	9.83
40	39.28	11.32
41	39.66	9.50
42	43.58	7.04
44	39.20	8.79
45	36.93	6.55
Pooled	38.59	8.77

In Table 4.1 the mean age of participants in the sample is reported across 29 organisations as 38.59 ($SD = 8.77$). The highest mean age reported was for organisation 10 ($M = 44.59$, $SD = 8.34$) and the lowest mean age was reported by organisation 18 ($M = 34.37$, $SD = 4.62$). Because of this relatively high mean age, it can be assumed that the participants were relatively mature in terms of their age. The mean age of the sample is representative of the largest age group (35 - 44 years) in the South African working population (Galal, 2021) and provides a fair representation of the general working environment.

The tenure of the participants is reported in Table 4.2, with reference to mean and standard deviation. As for Table 4.1, the organisations appear in ascending order and according to their unique numbers allocated for this study.

Table 4.2: Tenure statistics: Pooled as well as per company

Company	Mean Tenure	Standard Deviation
4	11.40	6.60
5	10.05	8.47
6	9.47	5.89
7	3.23	2.32
8	4.22	3.14
9	4.85	2.70
10	11.85	9.05
14	4.17	2.21
15	16.70	8.20
16	6.67	4.74
18	2.83	1.06
19	11.15	7.75
21	11.80	7.54
22	6.12	4.81
24	4.73	2.92
26	7.42	4.53
27	10.28	6.86
29	5.78	3.97
31	7.87	6.51
32	9.45	7.71
33	9.62	7.10
35	9.70	6.72
36	7.48	4.80
37	8.02	6.28
40	5.35	3.81
41	10.34	8.43
42	12.00	5.19
44	9.69	7.98
45	5.68	4.41
Pooled	8.18	6.71

As can be seen in Table 4.2, the mean tenure of participants in the sample is reported across 29 organisations as 8.18 ($SD = 6.71$). The highest mean tenure reported was for organisation 15 ($M = 16.70$, $SD = 8.20$) with the lowest mean tenure reported by organisation 18 ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.06$). The mean tenure of the sample is considerably higher when compared to that of the general South African working population (StatsSA, 2018). Because of this relatively high mean tenure, together with the relatively high mean age, it can be assumed that the average participant in this study was familiar with their organisation's working dynamics and possessed adequate age maturity and working experience to raise an informed opinion of the organisation.

In Table 4.3 the gender of the sample is reported in terms of the percentage composition. The organisations appear in ascending order and according to their unique numbers allocated for this study, which is not necessarily sequential and is done to protect the identity of individual organisations.

Table 4.3: Gender statistics: Pooled as well as per company

Company	Male	Female
4	24 (40%)	36 (60%)
5	41 (68.30%)	19 (31.70%)
6	19 (31.70%)	41 (68.30%)
7	21 (35%)	39 (65%)
8	18 (29.50%)	43 (70.50%)
9	40 (66.70%)	20 (33.30%)
10	31 (57.40%)	23 (42.60%)
14	24 (40%)	36 (60%)
15	22 (36.70%)	38 (63.30%)
16	34 (56.70%)	26 (43.30%)
18	30 (50%)	30 (50%)
19	32 (54.20%)	27 (45.80%)
21	26 (42.60%)	35 (57.40%)
22	23 (38.30%)	37 (61.70%)
24	36 (60%)	24 (40%)
26	22 (36.70%)	38 (63.30%)
27	27 (45%)	33 (55%)
29	9 (15%)	51 (85%)
31	35 (58.30%)	25 (41.70%)
32	40 (66.70%)	20 (33.30%)
33	33 (55%)	27 (45%)
35	35 (58.30%)	25 (41.70%)
36	43 (71.70%)	17 (28.30%)
37	5 (8.30%)	55 (91.70%)
40	20 (33.30%)	40 (66.70%)
41	29 (50%)	29 (50%)
42	17 (28.30%)	43 (71.70%)
44	21 (35%)	39 (65%)
45	32 (53.30%)	28 (46.70%)
Pooled	789 (45.50%)	944 (54.50%)

Table 4.3 reported that the sample was composed of 45.50% male participants and reported females as representing the highest contribution of 54.50%. When compared to the average South African workforce, as reported by the Commission for Employment Equity (2021), the sample in this study does not necessarily correspond. It can, however, be observed that the pooled results do not heavily favour a particular gender.

The race contribution of the sample is reported in terms of the percentage composition as explicated in Table 4.4. The organisations appear in ascending order and according to their unique numbers allocated for this study, which is not necessarily sequential and is done to protect the identity of individual organisations.

Table 4.4: Racial statistics: Pooled as well as per company

Company	Asian	Black	Coloured	White
4	3 (5%)	14 (23.30%)	28 (4.70%)	15 (25%)
5	1 (1.70%)	12 (20%)	30 (50%)	17 (28.30%)
6	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	60 (100%)
7	3 (5%)	10 (16.70%)	0 (0%)	47 (78.30%)
8	4 (6.60%)	38 (62.30%)	6 (9.80%)	13 (21.30%)
9	0 (0%)	4 (6.70%)	1 (1.70%)	55 (91.70%)
10	1 (1.90%)	29 (53.70%)	9 (16.70%)	15 (27.80%)
14	0 (0%)	56 (93.30%)	3 (5%)	1 (1.70%)
15	1 (1.70%)	51 (85%)	2 (3.30%)	6 (10%)
16	12 (20%)	20 (33.30%)	5 (8.30%)	23 (38.30%)
18	16 (26.70%)	26 (43.30%)	13 (21.70%)	5 (8.30%)
19	14 (23.70%)	40 (67.80%)	2 (3.40%)	3 (5.10%)
21	6 (9.80%)	40 (65.60%)	5 (8.20%)	10 (16.40%)
22	0 (0%)	24 (40%)	31 (51.70%)	5 (8.30%)
24	8 (13.30%)	46 (76.70%)	2 (3.30%)	4 (6.70%)
26	2 (3.30%)	25 (41.70%)	21 (35%)	12 (20%)
27	3 (5%)	46 (76.70%)	3 (5%)	8 (13.30%)

Table 4.4 continued: Racial statistics: Pooled as well as per company

Company	Asian	Black	Coloured	White
29	2 (3.30%)	13 (21.70%)	12 (20%)	33 (55%)
31	10 (16.70%)	43 (71.70%)	3 (5%)	4 (6.70%)
32	2 (3.30%)	47 (78.30%)	2 (3.30%)	9 (15%)
33	10 (16.70%)	34 (57.70%)	9 (15%)	7 (11.70%)
35	11 (18.30%)	21 (35%)	5 (8.30%)	23 (38.30%)
36	1 (1.70%)	43 (71.70%)	6 (10%)	10 (16.70%)
37	15 (25%)	28 (46.70%)	9 (15%)	8 (13.30%)
40	1 (1.70%)	35 (58.30%)	5 (8.30%)	19 (31.70%)
41	13 (22.40%)	21 (36.20%)	3 (5.20%)	21 (36.20%)
42	3 (5%)	7 (11.70%)	1 (1.70%)	49 (81.70%)
44	2 (3.30%)	39 (65%)	2 (3.30%)	17 (28.30%)
45	8 (13.30%)	28 (46.70%)	11 (18.30%)	13 (21.70%)
Pooled	152 (8.80%)	840 (48.50%)	229 (13.20%)	512 (29.50%)

Table 4.4 shows that the sample consisted of Asian (8.80%), Black (48.50%), Coloured (13.20%) and White (29.50%) participants. The Black respondent group was the largest, followed by the White, Coloured and Asian respondent groups respectively. The sample thus provides an inherent representation of the composition of the economically active population in South Africa in terms of ranking (The Commission for Employment Equity, 2021).

Next, the descriptive statistics will be discussed. This will be discussed per variable.

4.2 Descriptive statistics of variables

The item descriptive statistics for Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism will be presented and discussed. In Table 4.5, the item descriptive statistics are first presented in terms of their sample size, mean and standard deviation.

Table 4.5: Descriptive statistics per item

Item	N	Mean	SD
Perceived Effective Change Management Scale			
ECM8	1733	3.67	1.08
ECM9	1732	3.70	1.05
ECM10	1733	3.57	1.08
ECM11	1733	3.60	1.05
ECM12	1733	3.73	1.05
ECM13	1733	3.58	1.22
ECM14	1724	3.59	1.09
ECM15	1732	2.50	1.29
ECM16	1733	2.54	1.27
ECM17	1733	2.80	1.27
ECM18	1730	3.52	1.07
ECM19	1733	3.51	1.11
ECM20	1733	3.65	1.03
Organisational Leadership Behaviour Scale			
OL1	1733	3.46	1.01
OL2	1733	3.37	.10
OL3	1732	3.58	1.04
OL4	1732	3.54	.10
OL5	1733	3.97	.84
OL6	1733	3.79	.97
OL7	1733	3.92	.91
OL8	1733	3.73	.96
OL9	1733	3.50	1.06
OL10	1731	3.65	.10
OL11	1733	3.54	1.07
OL12	1733	3.65	.97
OL13	1733	3.68	1.02
OL14	1732	3.54	1.05
OL15	1733	3.59	1.04

Table 4.5 continued: Descriptive statistics per item

Item	N	Mean	SD
Organisational Leadership Behaviour Scale			
OL16	1733	3.64	.97
OL17	1733	3.54	1.09
OL18	1733	3.68	.99
OL19	1732	3.43	1.11
OL20	1726	3.47	1.03
OL21	1733	3.56	1.08
OL22	1733	3.36	1.10
OL23	1732	3.65	1.03
OL24	1733	3.30	1.09
OL25	1733	3.65	.99
OL26	1732	3.64	1.01
OL27	1733	3.60	1.06
OL28	1732	3.55	1.04
OL29	1731	3.57	.97
OL30	1732	3.73	.95
OL31	1733	3.94	.85
OL32	1733	3.63	1.06
Hope and Optimism as derived from the PsyCap Questionnaire			
HandO1	1733	4.43	1.10
HandO2	1733	4.38	1.11
HandO3	1732	4.45	1.04
HandO4	1733	4.40	1.06
HandO5	1733	4.08	1.19
HandO6	1733	4.58	1.05
HandO7	1732	4.38	1.15
HandO8	1733	4.47	1.07

As can be seen in Table 4.5, the Effective Change Management items are all reported in terms of a five-point Likert scale. Based on this, the item ECM12 measured the highest, with a mean score of 3.73 ($SD = 1.05$). This item reads as follows: “My immediate line manager has informed me clearly about the goals of the change”. The item ECM9 measured second-highest with a mean score of 3.70 ($SD = 1.05$).

This item reads as follows: “Management has informed me about the current state of the change progress”. ECM15 measured the lowest ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.29$) and reads as follows: “I was involved in the change”. ECM16 followed with the second-lowest mean score ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.27$), reading as follows: “I had the opportunity to give my views about the change before it was implemented”. Both items reporting the lowest mean scores were set in the context of recent organisational changes that occurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Total scores reported for items in the Perceived Effective Change Management Scale were relatively high.

Organisational Leadership items are reported employing a five-point Likert scale. The item reporting the highest mean score ($M = 3.97$, $SD = .84$) was OL5 which reads as follows: “In my organisation, leaders trust me to get the job done”. The second-highest mean score was reported for the item OL31 ($M = 3.94$, $SD = .85$).

This item reads as follows: “In my organisation, leaders keep me accountable for my results”. OL24 reported the lowest mean score of 3.30 ($SD = 1.09$) and reads as follows: “In my organisation, leaders encourage me to take risks” and the item OL22 which reads: “In my organisation, leaders understand my individual development needs” reported the second-lowest mean score of 3.36 ($SD = 1.10$). The total scores reported for items in the Organisational Leadership Behaviour Scale were relatively high. The lowest reported mean scores also placed relatively high on the five-point scale.

Items for measuring Hope and Optimism were reported on a six-point Likert scale. Item HandO6 reported the highest mean score ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 1.05$) while item HandO5 reported the lowest mean score ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.19$).

Item HandO6 reads as follows: “I always look at the bright side of things regarding my job” while item HandO5 reads as follows: “When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best”. The item reporting the second-highest mean score was HandO8 ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 1.07$). This item reads as follows: “I approach this job as if *every cloud has a silver lining*”.

Two items reported the second-lowest mean scores: Item HandO2 ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 1.11$) reads as follows: “Right now, I see myself as being pretty successful at work”, and HandO7 ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 1.15$) reads as follows: “I’m optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work”. The total scores for the measurement of Hope and Optimism were relatively high.

The descriptive statistics and Cronbach’s alpha coefficient per instrument are presented in Table 4.6 below. All variables are reported as unidimensional constructs.

Table 4.6: Descriptive statistics and Cronbach’s alpha coefficient per instrument

	Mean	SD	Cronbach’s Alpha
	Perceived Effective Change Management Scale		
Effective Change Management	3.38	.82	.93
	Organisational Leadership Behaviour Scale		
Organisational Leadership	3.61	.79	.98
	Hope and Optimism as derived from the PsyCap Questionnaire		
Hope and Optimism	4.40	.80	.87

From Table 4.6 it can be observed that all three variables reported relatively high scores with Hope and Optimism reporting a mean score of 4.40 ($SD = .80$), followed by Organisational Leadership ($M = 3.61$, $SD .79$) and Effective Change Management ($M = 3.38$, $SD = .82$). All three instruments delivered acceptable values and met the reliability requirements of a Cronbach’s alpha above .70 as described by Saunders et al. (2016).

The Organisational Leadership Behaviour Scale reported the highest reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of $\alpha = .98$. This was followed by the Perceived Effective Change Management Scale was ($\alpha = .93$) and Hope and Optimism ($\alpha = .87$).

4.3 Correlation analysis

In this section, the relationship between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism are presented. The relationship between the constructs of this study are expressed by means of Pearson correlations and are reported in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Correlation matrix of Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism

	ECM		OL		HandO	
	Correlation	Sig.	Correlation	Sig.	Correlation	Sig.
ECM	1	-	.68	$\leq .001$	.38	$\leq .001$
OL	.68	$\leq .001$	1	-	.44	$\leq .001$
HandO	.38	$\leq .001$	.44	$\leq .001$	1	-

Table 4.7 shows that moderate-to-strong positive relationships were reported between all three variables and all relationships were of statistical significance ($p < .05$). Effective Change Management (ECM) and Organisational Leadership (OL) were highly correlated ($r = .68$) ($p \leq .001$) and the correlation between Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism (HandO) reported a medium correlation ($r = .38$) ($p \leq .001$). Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism also reported a medium correlation ($r = .44$) ($p \leq .001$). Correlations between all three variables represent a medium practical significance but with the correlation between Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership reporting a relatively higher magnitude by comparison (Goulet-Pelletier & Cousineau, 2018). This means that the difference is large enough to be meaningful in real life.

4.4 Inferential statistics

To determine the homogeneity of the private sector, an ANOVA was conducted for all constructs across the 29 organisations measured within the private sector as a grouping variable. However, because one organisation's data was not eligible, it was omitted and therefore the table reports only on 28 organisations. The results for Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism are reported in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Test of homogeneity (ANOVA) of the Private sector

		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Effective Change Management	Between Groups	303.98	28	10.86	21.18	≤.001
	Within Groups	873.60	1704	.51		
	Total	1177.58	1732			
Organisational Leadership	Between Groups	257.51	28	9.20	18.88	≤.001
	Within Groups	830.27	1704	.49		
	Total	1087.79	1732			
Hope and Optimism	Between Groups	83.71	28	2.99	5.03	≤.001
	Within Groups	1013.14	1704	.60		
	Total	1096.86	1732			

As displayed in Table 4.8, an ANOVA was conducted to determine the possible differences between organisations in the private sector, as represented in this study. From the ANOVA it is evident that there were statistically significant differences ($p \leq .001$) between the organisations.

This is reported for Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, indicating that the private sector organisations in this study do not form a homogenous group and therefore, the generalisation of the pooled results must be treated with caution.

Levene's test for equality of variances was conducted to determine the level of homogeneity within the groups. Further to that, T-tests were conducted to determine if any significant differences in mean scores were present when comparing two groups. This will be reported between core functions and support functions in Table 4.9 (i) followed by managerial and non-managerial functions in Table 4.9 (ii).

Table 4.9 (i): Comparing the mean scores of those involved in core functions to those in support positions

	Levene's test for equality of variances			t-test for equality of means			
	Equal variances ...	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean difference
ECM	... assumed	.01	.92	-.73	1725	.46	-.03
	... not assumed			-.73	1683.84	.46	-.03
OL	... assumed	.80	.37	1.72	1725	.09	.07
	... not assumed			1.72	1713.47	.09	.07
HandO	... assumed	1.12	.23	-1.62	1725	.11	-.06
	... not assumed			-1.61	1673.62	.11	-.06

A=Effective Change Management (ECM); B=Organisational Leadership (OL); C=Hope and Optimism (HandO)

To remind the reader, in Chapter 3, it was reported that if the p -value is lower than .05 ($p < .05$) the results will be statistically significant. However, as shown in Table 4.9 (i), Levene's test for equality of variances within the groups, no significant differences between the mean scores were reported, suggesting that the core function and support position groups are homogenous across all three variables.

The T-test reported very little difference between mean scores especially when considering the five-point scales used for Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership, and the six-point scale used for Hope and Optimism. The results across all three variables did not reach statistical significance ($p < .05$). Effective Change Management reported the least significant ($p = .46$) difference between the mean scores ($MD = -.03$) with the negative mean difference indicating that higher scores were reported by support positions. Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism reported significance values of ($p = .09$) and ($p = .11$) respectively.

Organisational Leadership reported a mean difference of ($MD = .07$) indicating higher mean scores among the core functions, and conversely, Hope and Optimism reported a negative mean difference ($MD = -.06$) indicating higher scores reported by support positions. The effect sizes for all three variables were found to be below Cohen's convention for a small effect ($d = .20$) (Goulet-Pelletier & Cousineau, 2018). The effect sizes of Effective Change Management ($d = -.04$), Organisational Leadership ($d = .08$) and Hope and Optimism ($d = -.08$) all demonstrate a low practical significance when comparing core and support functions.

Levene's test for equality of variances was conducted to determine the level of homogeneity within the groups representing managerial and non-managerial positions. Next, T-tests were conducted to determine if any significant differences in mean scores were present when comparing two groups. Table 4.9 (ii) shows the comparative mean scores of those involved in managerial positions and those who are not in managerial positions.

Table 4.9 (ii): Comparing the mean scores of those involved in managerial positions and those who are not in managerial positions

	Levene's test for equality of variances			t-test for equality of means			
	Equal variances	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig.	Mean difference
ECM	... assumed	6.33	.01	5.86	1726	≤.0001	.26
	... not assumed			6.22	947.07	≤.0001	.26
OL	... assumed	6.57	.01	3.27	1726	.001	.14
	... not assumed			3.43	926.51	.001	.14
HandO	... assumed	.71	.40	3.45	1726	.001	.15
	... not assumed			3.53	879.36	≤.0001	.15

A= Effective Change Management (ECM); B=Organisational Leadership (OL); C=Hope and Optimism (HandO)

As reported in Table 4.9 (ii) Levene's test for equality of variances within the groups reported statistically significant variances ($p < .05$) within the groups for Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership as well as Hope and Optimism, suggesting that the groups were heterogeneous. The T-test reported statistically significant differences between the mean scores ($p < .05$), taking into account the five-point scales used for Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership and the six-point scale used for Hope and Optimism. These statistically significant results are observed across all three variables. Effective Change Management reported a statistically significant ($p \leq .0001$) difference between the mean scores ($MD = .26$). A similar outcome is reported for Organisational Leadership ($p = .001$) ($MD = .14$) and Hope and Optimism ($p = .001$) ($MD = .15$). Results suggest that there were statistically significant differences in mean scores between management and non-management positions, with management reporting higher mean scores across all three variables.

The effect sizes were measured using Cohen's convention for a small effect ($d = .20$) (Goulet-Pelletier & Cousineau, 2018). The effect sizes of Organisational Leadership ($d = .18$) and Hope and Optimism ($d = .19$) were found to be small and demonstrate a low practical significance when comparing management to non-management. A small-to-medium effect size is observed for Effective Change Management ($d = .32$) indicating practically significant differences between the mean scores of management and non-management.

4.5 The relationship between predictor and predicted variable, as well as mediation

The relationship will be discussed with reference to Pearson's correlation, and linear regression. The correlation coefficients were reported in Table 4.7.

To remind the reader, the study found that Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership reported a strong and statistically significant correlation ($r = .68$) ($p \leq .001$), Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism reported a medium and statistically significant correlation ($r = .44$) ($p \leq .001$) and Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism reported a medium and statistically significant correlation ($r = .38$) ($p \leq .001$).

The correlations between all three variables are of a medium practical significance, with the correlation between Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership reporting a relatively higher magnitude by comparison.

A linear regression analysis (R^2) was performed to assess how the combination of variables relate. The results are reported in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Regression analysis (Contribution of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate	R square change	F change	Sig. F change
1	.38 ^a	.14	.14	.74	.14	287.97	≤.0001
2	.45 ^b	.20	.20	.71	.06	129.18	≤.0001

^a Model with Effective Change Management predicting Hope and Optimism

^b Model with Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership predicting Hope and Optimism

In Table 4.10, it can be observed that both models contribute a statistically significant change to the predicted variable, Hope and Optimism ($p \leq .0001$). In Model 1, the overall model explains 14% (R square = .14) of the variance in Hope and Optimism with Effective Change Management as a predictor of Hope and Optimism. In Model 2, with the addition of Organisation Leadership, the total variance explained by the model as a whole is 20%, which means that this addition explains an additional 6% of the variance in Hope and Optimism.

This is a statistically significant contribution, as indicated by the Sig. F change of .0001. The correlation in Model 1 ($R = .38$) represents a small-to-medium practical significance. Model 2 also represents a small-to-medium practical significance ($R = .45$). Based on the R^2 values, both models describe the independent variables as having weak relationships with Hope and Optimism. It can, however, be observed that Organisational Leadership positively influenced the relationship between Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism.

4.6 Summary

In this chapter, the results of this study were presented. This included the demographic statistics of the sample, descriptive statistics of the variables, correlation analysis and inferential statistics. Furthermore, the relationship between predictor and predicted variables, as well as mediation was reported through a regression analysis. The models reported the influence of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership on Hope and Optimism.

In the next chapter, the results and findings presented in Chapter 4 will be discussed. Further recommendations and study limitations will also be presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 - Discussion, recommendations and limitations

This study investigated the impact of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership on Hope and Optimism, particularly during times of crisis, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic. The objectives set out for this study were four-fold and aimed at providing comprehensive definitions of the study variables, reporting on current empirical research, conducting an empirical investigation into the relationship between the study variables, and providing practical recommendations for managers and HR practitioners in the private sector, based on these empirical findings.

Chapter 5 provides discussions relating to the aforementioned objectives and further presents some practical recommendations for managers and HR practitioners. The study's limitations are discussed, future research suggestions are proposed, and the study conclusion is provided.

5.1 Discussion

A discussion per objective is set out below.

5.1.1 Discussion pertaining to Objective 1

The first objective was to provide comprehensive definitions for the study variables, namely: Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership, and Hope and Optimism. This was done as part of a comprehensive review of the available literature and encompassed a rigorous review of the acquirable definitions. Multiple definitions were explored and consequently defined by this study as follows.

Organisational Change was defined as a process (Jones, 2013; Moran & Brightman, 2000) and that its success is dependent on addressing the critical factors (Kotnour & Al-Haddad, 2015; Isaacs et al., in Press) such as change communication, employee participation and involvement, and trust in management which are necessary to mitigate negative employee-related behaviours and outcomes (Isaacs et al., in Press).

The literature further revealed that there is no real consensus on an exact definition for Organisational Leadership, but that there exists a general agreement in the literature that it involves processes (Enslin & Grobler, 2021; Stogdill, 1950; Sonmez et al., 2020; Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002) and behaviours relating to influencing (Bryman, 2013; Sonmez et al., 2020; Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002) and motivating a group of people towards setting and reaching goals (Bryman, 2013; Enslin & Grobler, 2021; Stogdill, 1950; Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002).

Lastly, the concept of Hope and Optimism was defined as a goal-directed (Dawkins et al., 2015; Grobler & Joubert, 2018; Luthans et al., 2015; Snyder et al., 1991) and positive (Dawkins et al., 2015; Grobler & Joubert, 2018; Luthans et al., 2007, 2015) psychological state (Luthans et al., 2007) in which there is a motivated willpower (Grobler & Joubert, 2018; Scheier & Carver, 1985; Snyder et al., 1991) and determination to succeed in the present and in the future (Grobler & Joubert, 2018; Luthans et al., 2015; Scheier & Carver, 1985).

5.1.2 Discussion pertaining to Objective 2

The second objective aimed to report on empirical research which link Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism. During the literature review process, 15 recent articles were identified and examined to ascertain how Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism are related.

It was found that Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership shared positive relationships of medium strength with the mean correlation reported as ($r = .42$). Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism reported medium-to-strong positive correlations and resulted in a mean of ($r = .53$). The literature further reported a positive small-to-medium mean correlation ($r = .34$) between Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism. Furthermore, all correlations were found to be statistically significant.

Effective Change Management was frequently measured as a predicted variable. Empirical studies obtained during the literature review commonly reported on employee attitudes, readiness and willingness towards accepting organisational change, and affective commitment to change using leadership styles and behaviours as mediating factors and predictors of successful change. The majority of studies were conducted in the public sector and non-profit organisations during or after organisational change implementation. It is important to note that these change management studies were conducted in relation to organisational processes to adapt to ever-changing internal and external customer needs and environments, thus not specifically during times of crisis.

Relevant literature provided an abundance of empirical evidence relating to Organisational Leadership with considerable attention directed towards leadership styles, such as transformational, authentic and transactional leadership behaviours. Further patterns observed from literature indicated that Bass and Avolio's (1990) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, and variants thereof, was frequently utilised to assess leadership styles as was the Transformational Leadership Scale developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990).

Hope and Optimism was most frequently measured as an element of PsyCap utilising the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PSQ) developed by Luthans et al. (2007). Many studies reported on Hope and Optimism as a predictor or mediator of employee perceptions of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership. There was, however, a lack of research aimed at investigating Hope and Optimism as a predicted variable.

Current literature lacked studies and empirical evidence linking all three variables, Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, although these variables have all been studied independently or as mediators, predictors and moderators of other variables.

Further to this, the author could retrieve only limited relevant literature within the South African organisational context. This is also the aim of the current study, to fill the void in current literature, as discussed in 5.1.3 below.

5.1.3 Discussion pertaining to Objective 3

In this, the third objective of the study, the aim was to empirically investigate the relationships between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism within the context of the South African private sector.

Data was collected from a pooled sample of participants ($N = 1\,723$) working across 29 organisations operating in the South African private sector. Results of the gender statistics indicated that the sample in this study did not necessarily reflect that of the average workforce in South Africa. It was, however, observed that the pooled results did not heavily favour any particular gender.

Data gathered from the race statistics reported that the sample in this study provided an inherent representation of the composition of the economically active population in South Africa in terms of ranking. Age statistics reported a relatively high mean age, which was representative of the largest age group in the South African working population. It could therefore be assumed that the participants in this study were relatively mature in terms of their age. When considering the mean tenure of the study participants, it was found to be considerably higher than that reported by StatsSA (2018).

However, from the high mean tenure together with the relatively high mean age reported in this study, it can be surmised that the average study participant was familiar with their organisation's working dynamics and possessed adequate age maturity and sufficient working experience to raise informed opinions of their organisations. The sample size of this study was relatively small and the conclusions drawn are conservative.

The variables were measured using instruments specifically designed for the South African organisational context. Effective Change Management (ECM) was measured with the Perceived Effective Change Management Scale (Isaacs et al., In Press). Whereas Organisational Leadership (OL) was measured through the Organisational Leadership Behaviour Scale developed by Enslin and Grobler (2021), and Hope and Optimism Hope (HandO) was measured as an element of a reconfigured three-factor instrument developed by Grobler and Joubert (2018), which is an adaptation of Luthans et al.'s (2006) Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ). The instruments used in this study all delivered acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficients ($\alpha > .70$) thus verifying the reliability and validity of these instruments.

Statistically significant differences were observed between the private-sector organisations participating in this study after conducting the ANOVA and independent t-tests. Such differences were reported across all three of the study variables, indicating a lack of homogeneity in this sector. It is therefore suggested that generalisation within this sector be approached with caution.

T-tests reported no significant differences between the mean scores of participants in core functions and those in support positions, indicating homogeneity between these groups. This was reported across all three variables signifying that generalisation may be possible for this group and that it can be assumed that the study participants in core and support functions thought alike. The differences between the variables were of very low practical significance. In contrast, statistically significant differences in mean scores were reported between participants in the management and non-management groups. Equal variances could not be assumed in this group. This was observed for Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership, and Hope and Optimism and suggests that heterogeneity exists within this group. Thus, generalisation should be approached with caution. It was further reported that participants in management positions reported higher mean scores than those in non-management positions across all three variables.

The effect sizes of Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism were found to be small and demonstrated a low practical significance when comparing management to non-management. However, a small-to-medium effect size was observed for Effective Change Management indicating practically significant differences between the mean scores of management and non-management regarding this variable.

Next, the most salient part of the results will be discussed: The relationship between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism.

Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership presented a strong positive correlation ($r = .68$) of statistical significance. This correlation is considerably higher than mean correlations ($r = .42$) obtained from the current literature. Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism correlated positively and significantly (mean $r = .44$) in a moderate way. These results, in contrast to those reported in the literature (mean $r = .53$), are considerably lower, although it does support the findings of Stander et al. (2015) who reported a statistically significant medium correlation between authentic leadership and optimism ($r = .45$) in the South African context.

The present study reported a small-to-medium, positive correlation between Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism ($r = .38$), which supports the average findings from current literature ($r = .34$). Relationships between the study variables were all found to be statistically significant.

Correlations between all three variables yielded results of medium practical significance with the correlation between Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership reporting a relatively higher magnitude, by comparison than Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, and Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism. Consequently, the correlations reported in this study are large enough to be meaningful in today's organisational climate, where organisations are faced with the challenges of managing change during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The regression analysis revealed that Effective Change Management was found to predict 14% of the variance in Hope and Optimism (Model 1). With the addition of Organisational Leadership to Effective Change Management (Model 2) as a further predictor of Hope and Optimism, the strength of Model 1 was improved by a further 6%. The second model thus predicted 20% of the variance in Hope and Optimism and demonstrated a weak relationship with Hope and Optimism. Thus, both Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership have an effect on the predicted variable, Hope and Optimism.

5.1.4 Discussion pertaining to Objective 4

Objective 4 set out to make recommendations for managers in the private sector based on the empirical findings from the present study.

The correlation between Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism ($R = .38$) represented a small-to-medium practical significance as did Model 2, with the addition of Organisational Leadership ($R = .45$) yielding an improvement, yet still of small-to-medium practical significance.

Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership can be considered as having a weak effect on Hope and Optimism. This could imply that in real-world scenarios during periods of crisis, Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership alone, may not be sufficient to improve Hope and Optimism.

Since the probability of achieving success during change implementation can be increased by appropriately addressing the critical success factors and planning for the change (Kotnour & Al-Haddad, 2015; Isaacs et al, In Press), managers should devise ways of accelerating change processes whilst paying particular attention to the critical success factors thereof. This may be crucial, as a crisis by its very nature, is an unanticipated event that could drastically alter the desired future outcomes and goals of organisations, as well as the means by which to achieve them.

Leadership behaviour should be adjusted according to the nature and demands of the particular situation (House & Mitchell, 1974). Supporting this narrative, as leadership is defined and caused by the context in which it operates (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002), leaders and managers should pay careful attention to the way in which their influence is exerted during times of crisis.

The present study indicated that Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism showed stronger correlations than Effective Change Management and Hope and Optimism, supporting Schein and Schein's (2017) suggestion that, when faced with a crisis, organisations should be particularly cognizant of leadership behaviours. Levels of overall leadership awareness may need to be heightened and high ethical standards maintained (Enslin & Grobler, 2021), whilst engaging openly and transparently with employees about processes, changes, future goals and ways by which to attain them.

The positive correlations between Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism, indicate that any effort made by management and HR practitioners to improve employee perceptions of these processes and leadership behaviours could result in higher levels of Hope and Optimism.

5.2 Recommendations

The practical recommendations following this study, support the notions of Snyder's (1991) Hope Theory, the Theory of Optimism (Scheier & Carver, 1985), the Goal Setting Theory of Motivation (Locke & Latham, 1990) and House and Mitchell's (1974) Path-Goal Theory of Leadership. Moreover, recommendations are specifically formulated in accordance with Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership as the predictor variables of Hope and Optimism amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in the South African organisational context (private sector).

The items yielding the highest scores for Effective Change Management were directly related to employees' perceptions of clear communication apropos the goals and current state of the change process.

The highest mean score was recorded for the question: “My immediate line manager has informed me clearly about the goals of the change”. This means that managers should ensure that their direct subordinates are clearly informed of and have an in-depth understanding of the goals related to the change. This can be done through consistent and transparent communication and by providing clear guidance and direction on how strategies should be implemented in order to achieve the goals. It is further recommended that HR practitioners reassess employee competencies and capabilities as, due to the current pandemic their altered work environment may require additional skills, for example, higher levels of computer literacy or improved virtual and telephonic communication skills.

Care should be taken to ensure that there is no disconnect between leadership/senior management and employees in non-managerial positions. It is recommended that line managers keep the communication of goals consistent and in line with the vision set out by the leadership to prevent gaps in communication and misalignment of goals.

Further to this, the question: “Management has informed me about the current state of the change progress” reported the second-highest score for Effective Change Management. This supports the notion that communication is one of the key critical success factors for the implementation of successful change (Isaacs et al., In Press).

It is therefore recommended that management frequently communicates the progress made towards achieving goals. In doing so, employees may gain a more positive perception of how the change is being managed, whilst moving closer to goal attainment, and this may elevate levels of Hope and Optimism.

Items regarding employee involvement and participation in the change process scored relatively low in this study. This could imply that these critical success factors for Effective Change Management, as supported by literature, may not be as crucial when implementing change during times of crisis. Managers should therefore rather focus their efforts on acting decisively, communicating the goals and required outcomes of the change, and maintaining frequent and transparent contact with employees.

The purpose of an organisation's leadership is to realise its goals in the most optimal manner (Sonmez et al., 2020). This means that it is a dynamic process, which is well documented in literature as having to change and adapt according to the environment in which the organisation finds itself.

The question: "In my organisation, leaders trust me to get the job done" reported the highest mean scores. It is important for managers and leaders to foster an environment where employees have job autonomy and feel that management trusts them to pursue and achieve their goals. This may be particularly relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the working landscape has changed dramatically for many employees, for example, working from home. The item reporting the second-highest mean scores for Organisational Leadership read as follows: "In my organisation, leaders keep me accountable for my results". Managers should therefore adapt their leadership styles accordingly, to provide more autonomy whilst holding employees accountable for their results. It is also suggested that managers explore employee performance measurements that place more emphasis on results as opposed to being activity-driven.

Aspects, such as encouraging risk-taking and understanding individual development needs reported lower mean scores, which could suggest that during times of crisis, management need not place as much emphasis on these factors to improve employee perceptions of Organisational Leadership.

In addition, management and HR practitioners should explore ways of frequently measuring progress and revising strategies during unexpected and vastly accelerated organisational changes. In doing so, employee Hope and Optimism may improve as revised strategies may provide alternative means towards obtaining goals.

5.3 Limitations

Due to the varying nature and extent to which various industries and organisations were affected during the COVID-19 pandemic, the sample size and number of South African organisations representing the private sector in this study may not be sufficient to draw generalised conclusions. Results and subsequent recommendations should therefore be treated conservatively. Further to this, Effective Change Management, Organisational Leadership and Hope and Optimism were the only three variables included in this study, thus not all variables that could affect the relationships were included in the analysis.

Finally, the cross-sectional design may have resulted in artificially enhanced relationships between these variables due to the fact that it measures only one group of participants at a particular point in time, thus making it difficult to accurately derive trends and causal relationships.

It is recommended that, for future studies, the number of private sector organisations participating in such a study should be increased in order to derive results that could be generalised with less caution.

A further recommendation is to include other variables that could affect the relationship between the study variables, particularly with reference to leadership styles and behaviours.

Lastly, it is recommended that a similar study be conducted using participants in non-managerial positions only. It is noted that, in this study, the participants in managerial positions reported higher mean scores that were of practical significance when it came to their perceptions of Effective Change Management.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided discussions relating to the set objectives and further presented some practical recommendations for managers and HR practitioners. Study limitations were acknowledged, and future research suggestions were proposed.

Effective Change Management was reported to have a small-to-medium effect on Hope and Optimism in the South African private sector, and the addition of Organisational Leadership showed a slightly higher effect on Hope and Optimism, although it remained of small-to-medium practical significance.

In conclusion, this study revealed that, during times of crisis, Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership alone may not be sufficient to significantly increase employee levels of Hope and Optimism. The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed the way in which organisations conduct their business, and safeguarding employee wellbeing through management and HR practices that could elevate Hope and Optimism, should be a high priority.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure A - Quantitative Survey Questionnaire

31 May 2021

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Lana Weideman and I am doing research with Professor Anton Grobler at the Graduate School of Business Leadership towards a Master of Business Administration at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study.

The aim of the study is to assess the link between various task directed management / leadership styles / human resource management and effective change management practices on employee as well as organisational wellness, specifically during these challenging times of COVID-19. By determining how these variables influence each other, recommendations will be made to guide managers towards creation of a conducive work environment, to the benefit of not only the organisation, but all employees and the community at large.

You were selected to participate in this study as an employee of Three6Five. Carmen Green from your Human Resource Department granted permission for the study to be conducted. All Employees were approached to participate in the study and a total of 60 random responses will be used, which minimises the possibility that anyone could be identified.

Your role in the study involves completing one questionnaire which enquires about all the constructs explained earlier. A typical question may read as follows: *“Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized”*. The questionnaires consist of ± 150 items (questions) in total and expected duration of participation is no more than 60 minutes.

Some of the items might be viewed as duplications, but the similarity is due to the theoretical and conceptual overlap between constructs and will be dealt with in a scientific way.

Being in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep for future reference. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. As the project involves the submission of non-identifiable material, it will not be possible to withdraw once they have submitted the questionnaire. There is no penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation.

You will not benefit directly from your participation in the research. You will receive no payment or reward, financial or otherwise. The results of the research will, however, be of scientific and practical value in understanding how people react to the prevalent leadership style and positive organisational behaviour. There are no foreseeable physical or psychological risks involved in participation. You will be mildly inconvenienced by the time it takes to complete the questionnaires (60 minutes). If you would like to discuss the research and your reactions to the questionnaires, you are welcome to do so after the session.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by legislation (The Mental Health Care Act, Act 17 of 2002). Confidentiality is however not a concern in this research as the tests will be answered anonymously and individual identifiers will not be requested. The data will be destroyed on completion of the study.

The data collected will be used to write research reports, which include but may not be limited to journal articles, conference presentation, and dissertations. Your privacy, and that of the organisation you represent, will however be protected and no identifiable information will be included in such reports.

Hard and soft copies of your answers will be stored by Prof Anton Grobler for future research or academic purposes including scientific publications in accredited journals. Soft copies will be stored on a password protected computer.

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the Graduate School of Business Leadership, Unisa; Ref no: 2021_SBL_AC_005_AC.

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Lana Weideman on 084 449 1143 or lane.mbasurvey@gmail.com. The findings will be accessible early in 2021. Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Prof Anton Grobler at grobla@unisa.ac.za.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact the Research Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa.

CONSENT: I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study.

Kindly note that you will not be required to sign this declaration, but that you will be indicating your consent by completing the answer sheet. (A signed copy is not required, as this may identify you, and this research is done in such a way that you cannot be identified after participating in this study.)

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for considering participation in this study.

General information (the shaded cells are for official usage)

Batch #	10759735		A1
Sector	Private Sector		A2(i) Pub/Pr
Company:	Three6Five		A3(ii)
Industry:	IT and Communication		A4
Gender:	Male	0	A5 0/1

	Female	1	
Your role:	Core Business	0	A6 0/1
	Support services	1	
Your role:	Management	0	A7 0/1
	Non-management	1	
Age:			A8
Number of years with company:			A9
Highest education:	Less than 12 years	1	A10 1/2/3/4
	12 years (matric)	2	
	1st Degree / Diploma	3	
	Higher degree / Higher diploma	4	
Race:	Asian	1	A11 1/2/3/4
	Black	2	
	Coloured	3	
	White	4	
Post level	Unskilled and defined decision making	1	A12 1/2/3/4/5
	Semi-skilled and discretionary decision making	2	
	Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior Management, supervisors, foremen and superintendents	3	
	Professionally qualified, experienced specialists and Middle Management	4	
	Top Management, Senior Management	5	
Contact with direct manager before Covid 19	Daily (5); Weekly (4); Monthly (3); Very few contacts (2) or No contact at all (1)	Man	A13 1/2/3/4/5
Contact with direct manager during Covid 19		Man(C19)	A14 1/2/3/4/5

Contact with leadership before Covid 19		Lead		A15 1/2/3/4/5
Contact with leadership during Covid 19		Lead (C19)		A16 1/2/3/4/5
Due to Covid 19, my normal work conditions have	Not changed at all		0	A17 0/1/2
	Changed somewhat		1	
	Changed dramatically		2	
I am currently working	From home	N	Y	A18 0/1
	From home and my workplace (office)	N	Y	A19 0/1
	Fully back at work	N	Y	A20 0/1

NB – All the instruments refer to leadership, my supervisor, my manager, my boss interchangeably. The term "work unit" refers to the team, department, division, or company for which your boss is the formal leader, and the term "members" refers to the people in the unit who report directly to your boss. Please note that some questions may seem the same, but it has to do with different aspects, so, please answer all the questions if possible.

Q1: IHRp

The organisation generally, and specifically before Covid-19 offered:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

Question	Answer
An attractive compensation and benefits package	
An attractive bonus structure	
Innovative perks e.g. onsite gym/ day-care/ etc.	
Training	
Job Autonomy	
Recognition and career advancement	
Workplace flexibility e.g. flexible timing/place	
A positive organisational image e.g. brand/ethics	
Good organisational support structures e.g. mentoring programme	
Job security	
An opportunity to work in teams	
An opportunity to work as an individual	
An appealing job-fit	

I have experienced the following at my organisation recently, specific during the Covid-19 pandemic:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5
Question	Answer			
An attractive compensation and benefits package				
Performance-related bonus structure				
Innovative perks e.g. onsite gym /day-care /etc.				
Training				

Job Autonomy	
Recognition and career advancement	
Workplace flexibility e.g. flexible timing/place	
A positive organisational image e.g. brand/ethics	
Good organisational support structures e.g. mentoring programme	
Job security	
An opportunity to work in teams	
An opportunity to work as an individual	
An appealing job-fit	

Q2: TLb

Not at all, or Not Applicable	Not To a Limited extent	To a Moderate extent	To a Considerable extent	To a Very great extent
1	2	3	4	5

These questions are posed in light of the current Covid-19 working realities.

Question	Answer
1 Clearly explains task assignments and member responsibilities.	
2 Explains what results are expected for a task or assignment.	
3 Sets specific performance goals and quality standards for important aspects of the work owed.	
4 Makes an inspiring presentation about what the work unit can accomplish.	
5 Develops short-term plans for accomplishing the unit's tasks.	
6 Plans and organizes unit activities to use people, equipment, and resources efficiently.	
7 Schedules work activities to avoid delays, duplication of effort, and wasted resources.	
8 Checks on the progress and quality of the work.	
9 Evaluates how well important tasks or projects are being performed.	

Q 3: ECM

No	Yes (significantly got worse)	Yes (slightly worse)	Yes (no worse, no better)	Yes (a bit; better)	Yes (significantly got better)
0	1	2	3	4	5

What has changed as a consequence of the COVID 19 pandemic?	
1	Your tasks at work.
2	Your superior / supervisor or immediate line manager.
3	Your working team.
4	Quantity of work.
5	Risk of job loss.
6	Conditions of employment.
7	Your salary / fringe benefits.

Very poorly	Rather poorly	Neither poorly or well	Rather well	Very well
1	2	3	4	5

This section is concerned about communication during the COVID 19 pandemic	
Management has:	
8	Informed clearly about the goals of the change
9	Informed about the current state of change progress
10	Made sure that there are sufficient change support services for whole personnel
11	Actively solved problems that have emerged during change process
My immediate line manager has:	
12	Informed clearly about the goals of the change
13	Informed about the current state of change progress
14	Clarified new roles for subordinates

Strongly disagree	Rather disagree	Somewhat disagree agree	Rather / agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

This section is about the employees' involvement during the recent organisational changes as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic:		
15	I was involved in the design of the change	
16	I had opportunity to give my views about the change before it was implemented	
17	Management has made a great effort to involve employees in the change process	

Strongly disagree	Rather disagree	Somewhat disagree	Rather agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

Trust in Management during the COVID 19 pandemic:

18	There was a feeling that the leader of this change knows what he or she is doing	
19	Overall, there was the feeling that you can count on the organisation's management	
20	I believed that if managers is suggesting this change, they are well informed and have good reasons for it	

Q4: Trs_L

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

Question		Answer
1	Leaders in my organisation fail to interfere until problems become serious.	_____
2	Leaders in my organisation provide assistance to others in exchange for their efforts.	
3	Leaders in my organisation focus their attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions and deviations from standards.	
4	Leaders in my organisation wait for things to go wrong before taking action.	_____
5	Leaders in my organisation discuss in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets.	
6	Leaders in my organisation concentrate their attention on dealing with mistakes, complaints and failures.	
7	Leaders in my organisation are firm believers in "if it isn't broken, don't fix it".	_____
8	Leaders in my organisation make it clear in terms of what we can expect should the performance goals are achieved.	
9	Leaders in my organisation keep track of mistakes.	
10	Leaders in my organisation will take action only when problems become chronic.	_____
11	Leaders in my organisation express their satisfaction when we meet expectations.	_____
12	Leaders in my organisation direct their attention towards failures to meet standards.	_____

Q5: SpL

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

	Question	Answer
1	My leader cares about people in the true sense of Ubuntu.	
2	My leader includes everyone when communicating	
3	My leader's passion for people makes him/her kind.	
4	My leader has a clear vision.	
5	My leader takes full responsibility for his/her actions	
6	My leader's decisiveness leads to respect.	
7	My leader is able to take corrective action swiftly if something goes wrong	
8	My leader is self-driven.	
9	My leader is trustworthy.	
10	My leader makes decisions without being unduly influenced.	
11	My leader shows compassion through nurturing.	
12	My leader is responsible.	
13	My leader encourages a team spirit.	
14	My leader's ability to be transparent encourages honesty.	
15	My leader inspires others by being a co-operative team player.	
16	My leader's behaviour reduces people's intent to leave the organisation.	
17	My leader's engagement improves performance.	
18	My leader's creativity helps improve productivity.	

Q6: OL

Strongly disagree Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5

	Question	Answer
In my organisation, leaders:		
1	manage their own emotions effectively	
2	share their feelings appropriately	
3	value and care for people	
4	consider different viewpoints with compassion and understanding	
5	trust me to get the job done	
6	demonstrate high ethical standards	
7	understand what winning means	
8	recognise me as an important member of the team	
9	provide me with a clear picture of the ideal future	
10	direct me with clear objectives	
11	frequently discuss the future state and where we are now	
12	develop workable plans to achieve organisational objectives	
13	take responsibility, even when under pressure	
14	are inspirational because of their actions	
15	are humble and act with integrity	
16	change and innovate processes and procedures	
17	communicate openly and transparently	
18	regularly provide clear expectations of what I need to do	
19	coach and mentor me to achieve success	
20	challenge me through engaging conversations	
21	create a safe emotional space to work in	
22	understand my individual development needs	
23	are available when I need them	
24	encourage me to take risks	
25	embrace diversity	
26	use collective energy of team members to achieve goals	

27	create a sense of belonging and unity amongst team members	
28	inspire us by developing healthy relationships	
29	challenge my results (what is possible?)	
30	drive results intensely	
31	keep me accountable for my results	
32	recognise consistent performance	

Q7: WLB

Not at all	Rarely	Not often	Sometimes	Regularly	Frequently	All the time
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Question		Answer
1	Personal life suffers because of work during Covid-19.	
2	My current job makes personal life difficult.	
3	I currently neglect my personal needs because of work.	
4	I am currently putting my personal life on hold for work.	
5	I miss personal activities because of my current work.	
6	I struggle to juggle work and non-work.	
7	I am happy with the amount of time for non-work activities.	
8	My personal life drains me of energy for work.	
9	I am too tired to be effective at work.	
10	My work suffers because of my personal life.	
11	It is currently hard to work because of personal matters.	
12	My personal life gives me energy for my job.	
13	My job gives me energy to pursue personal activities.	
14	I am in a better mood at work because of personal life.	
15	I am in a better mood because of my job.	

Q8: H&O

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

Question	Answer
1 At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my work goals.	
2 Right now, I see myself as being pretty successful at work.	
3 I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals.	
4 At this time, I am meeting the work goals that I have set for myself.	
5 When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best.	
6 I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job.	
7 I'm optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work.	
8 I approach this job as if "every cloud has a silver lining."	

Q9: PsS

Strongly disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

All these questions are posed within the current Covid-19 reality in the workplace

Question	Answer
1 If you make a mistake on this team, it is often held against you.	
2 Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues.	
3 People on this team sometimes reject others for being different.	
4 It is safe to take a risk on this team	
5 It is difficult to ask other members of this team for help	
6 No one on this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts	
7 Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized	

Q10: WSE

	Not well at all	Not well	Uncertain	Well	Very well	
	1	2	3	4	5	
	Question					Answer
Thinking about your current working realities, how well can you.....						
1	..... achieve goals that are assigned.					
2	..... respect schedules and work deadlines.					
3	..... learn new working methods.					
4	..... concentrate all energy on work.					
5	..... finish assigned work.					
6	..... collaborate with other colleagues.					
7	..... work with people of diverse experiences and ages.					
8	..... have good relationships with direct supervisors.					
9	..... behave in an efficacious way with clients.					
10	..... work in a team.					

Q11: PerS

	Not at all	Rarely	Not often	Sometimes	Regularly	Frequently	All the time	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	Question							Answer
Thinking about your current working realities, how well can you.....								
1	I have too many things to do							
2	I do not have enough time for myself							
3	I feel under pressure from deadlines							
4	I feel I am in a hurry							
5	I have many worries							
6	My problems seem to be piling up							
7	I fear I may not manage to attain my goals							
8	I feel frustrated							
9	I feel tense							
10	I feel mentally exhausted							
11	I have trouble relaxing							
12	It is hard to feel calm							

Q 12: JSc

	Completely false	Mostly false	Somewhat false	Somewhat true	Mostly true	Completely true	
0		1	2	3	4	5	
	Question						Answer
1	I am concerned about the possibility of being dismissed.						
2	The possibility of losing my job puts a lot of strain on me.						
3	I would feel stressed if I had to fight for my job.						
4	I believe that my job is secure.						
5	I believe that my career is secure.						
6	I clearly know my chances for advancement in the coming years.						
7	In my opinion I will keep my job in the near future.						
8	In my opinion I will be employed for a long time in my present job.						
9	I look forward with confidence to the introduction of new technologies.						

Q13: Marker variable (MV)

	Not at all	To a Limited extent	To a Moderate extent	a To a Considerable extent	a To a Very great extent
1		2	3	4	5

	Question	Answer
1	There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.	
2	I like to gossip at times.	
3	There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.	
4	There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.	
5	There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things.	

Annexure B - Ethical Clearance Certificate (UNISA)

Graduate School of Business Leadership, University of South Africa, PO Box 392, Unisa, 0003, South Africa
Cnr Janadri and Alexandra Avenues, Midrand, 1685. Tel: +27 11 652 0000. Fax: +27 11 652 0299
E-mail: sbl@unisa.ac.za Website: www.unisa.ac.za/sbl

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS LEADERSHIP RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (GSBL CRERC)

30 April 2021

Ref #: 2021_SBL_AC_005_CA
Name of applicant: Prof A
Grobler
Staff #: 90166124

Dear Prof Grobler

Decision: Ethics Approval

Main Researcher: Prof A Grobler, grobla@unisa.ac.za, 011 652 0277

Project Title: The role of human resource management, transactional leadership, task centred leadership behaviour as well as spiritual and organisational leadership on individual work attitudes and wellbeing during Covid-19

Thank you for applying for research ethics clearance, SBL Research Ethics Review Committee reviewed your application in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics

Approval is granted for the duration of the Project for the class group for 2021 only and on condition a list of students and their agreements to participate be submitted to the ethics office by 30 May 2021.

The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the SBL Research Ethics Review Committee on 28/04/2021.

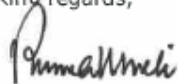
The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached
2. The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology,

should be communicated in writing to the SBL Research Ethics Review Committee.

4. An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.

Kind regards,



Prof P Msweli

Chairperson: SBL Research Ethics Committee

011 - 652 0256/ mswel@unisa.ac.za



Prof P Msweli

Executive Dean: Graduate School of Business Leadership

011- 652 0256/ mswel@unisa.ac.za

45
years

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UNISA

Annexure C - Permission Letter to Conduct Research



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International Business
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Midrand, 685

PO Box 335
Fourways North
Johannesburg
2086

info@three6five.com

three6five.com

27th May 2021

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Permission granted to conduct MBA research

This letter serves as permission from Three6Five to allow its employees to participate in a study entitled: Investigating the impact of Effective Change Management and Organisational Leadership on employee Hope and Optimism during Covid-19 in the Private Sector.

I, Carmen Green, Human Resources Manager give Lana Weideman, together with Prof Anton Grobler of the Graduate School of Business Leadership, permission to conduct research through distribution and collection of employee questionnaires at Three6Five.

I trust that you find the above in order.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carmen".

Carmen Green
Human Resources Manager



Annexure D - Declaration of Authenticity

Graduate School of Business Leadership, University of South Africa, PO Box 392, Unisa, 0003, South Africa
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E-mail: sbl@unisa.ac.za Website: www.unisa.ac.za/sbl

Prof Anton Grobler
Room 4-10
SBL Campus
Midrand
20 October 2021

To: All examiners
MBA and MBL research reports
Structured Leadership (MBL) and Human Resource (MBA) research projects

Dear examiner

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY OF MBL and MBA RESEARCH REPORTS (Structured Leadership and Human Resource research projects)

1. I firstly want to thank you for your willingness to do the examination of this research report and your continuous support of the academic activities at the SBL.
2. As project leader of the structured Leadership and Human Resource research projects research projects, please allow me to give you some background and to specifically clear the perception that it is group research which is definitely not the case. Herewith some basic background:
 - Each student did work independently, which is in line with the learning objectives of this module.
 - There are various permutations of the topics, that are mainly centred around 3 – 4 independent variables (e.g. the respective leadership styles / ethical climate measurements) and 5 – 6 dependent variables (e.g. psychological capital / ethical attitudes). All three the projects had one additional independent variable that has been included consistently across the 3.
 - It is also important to mention that some of these variables had been included in previous years' projects to test its relationship with new variables in 2021 and to do the standardisation of instruments across studies.
 - Many of these variables are quite new or little previous research has been conducted on it (and the combinations of it), which limits the literature sources, resulting in students referencing the same work by the same authors.

45 years Building leaders who go beyond



- In order to give students the opportunity to research a topic of their choice (based on the identification of a researchable problem within their context), the sector was used as multiplier. In other words, 2 students might have the exact same topic, but one doing it in the public sector and one in the private sector.
 - The reporting is done on the pooled data.
3. Taking all of this into consideration, it is clear that this structured approach would have a serious impact on the similarity index, as determined by Turnitin. The baseline of around 35% was set in the module overview, but experience has taught us that for an approach like this, it might be ranging between 45% and 60%, which is acceptable, as long as the research has been done independently, that the results reported are authentic and that the literature sources used are appropriately acknowledged.
 4. When examining these reports, please focus on the unique contribution which is specifically in terms of the problem statement, as well as the information provided in Chapter 5 (the findings, conclusion and recommendations).
 5. Due to the fact that I was involved in the conceptualisation of these projects, the facilitation of 3 compulsory contact sessions with all the students, as well as statistical analysis of each of these studies, I am able to declare that all these reports are based on individual and independent research, and that it is authentic.

Yours sincerely



Professor Anton Grobler

Annexure E - Proof Reading and Editing Certificate

Jill Stevenson
Copy Editor/Proofreader
4 Chesterton
12 Blackheath Road
Kenilworth 7708

November 2021

To whom it may concern

Re: Proofreading and copy editing of a research report entitled:
**INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EFFECTIVE CHANGE
MANAGEMENT, ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND HOPE AND
OPTIMISM IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRIVATE SECTOR DURING
COVID-19**

Prepared by: Student: LANA WEIDEMAN, Student No.: 10759735

I, Jill Diane Stevenson, hereby confirm that the changes made to the above report were to ensure consistency of grammar and language (concord, spelling, punctuation) and to the conformity of format (headings, indexing, citations and references).

No other changes were made to the body of work submitted by the candidate (conclusions, recommendations, data, factual reporting or commentary).

Yours faithfully



Jill Stevenson

Certified Copy-Editor and Proofreader

Cell: 0833092927

Email: Jilldiane18@gmail.com

Annexure F - Consent to submit Research Report

The Programme Administrator: MBL / MBA 3
Graduate School of Business Leadership
P O Box 392
UNISA
0003

PERMISSION TO SUBMIT RESEARCH REPORT

Permission is hereby given to:

Student name ____Lana Weideman__

Student number ____10759735____ to submit his/her research report in its final form.

Supervisor Dr. D.W. Brits

Date: 10 November 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D.W. Brits', written over a horizontal line.

Supervisor signature

The student acknowledges that sufficient guidance was provided by the supervisor and that s/he takes full responsibility for the outcome of the examination of the research report. The student further declare that s/he is responsibility to attend to the feedback (after examination) in a way that satisfies the requirements for a research dissertation on the MBL / MBA level.

Student signature..... Date: 12 November 2021..._

Students must obtain permission from their supervisors to submission of a final report.

Please follow the instructions (as communicated by Prof Henning on the Eds) in terms of the submission of the final report.