THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES, ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND WORK SELF-EFFICACY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

Research report presented to the

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by

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DECLARATION OF OWN WORK

I**, LINEO FAITH LEBATA,** student number **33977941** hereby declare that the contents of this report is my own work, and I have not shared my work with another student nor received another student's work in writing thing this report.

12/12/2021

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SIGNATURE **DATE**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & DEDICATION

This report was put together during the Covid-19 pandemic, which presented a number of challenges. I however received a lot of support and guidance from various individuals I would like to thank and acknowledge.

I would first like to acknowledge Professor Anton Grobler for an unwavering leadership and guidance throughout the the project. I also would like to acknowledge my supervisor, Dr Oliver Pwaka who provided me with much insight and direction throughout the project. I would also like to acknowledge the UNISA SBL's MBL/MBA Programme team for providing needed resources to carry the project to completion. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge my family, who understood that I had to sacrifice a lot of 'family time' due to this project.

This Report is dedicated to organisations leaders and employees in the private sector, who had to face challenges and endure hardships due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is my wish that this report adds value in the private sector to some extent, by providing a bit of insight and knowledge on how organisations can better manage a pandemic.

12/15/2021

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LINEO FAITH LEBATA DATE

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the significance of the relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and Work Self-Efficacy (WSE) in the private sector. This study was necessitated by the low performance of organisations in the private sector during Covid-19 pandemic; as employees in these organizations were affected by the changes brought by the pandemic.

The study is based on a cross-sectional survey of 1,733 private-sector employees in South Africa. The survey consisted of predetermined set of questions given to a sample in which participants were required to rate the given statements along a predetermined set of questions. A 5 point Linkert point scale was used in this regard, and a correlation and regression analyses were used to analyse collected data.

In line with previous studies, the study revealed that human resource practices have a positive effect on WSE. Organisational leadership was identified as having a positive moderating effect on the relationship between human resource practices and WSE. The implications of these findings is that private sector managers who wish to improve the levels of employees' WSE in their organisations should focus on improving both human resource practices and organisational leadership. Though these findings are significant to practicing managers in the private sector, they should be treated with caution due to some limitations of the study. For example, the sample was significantly lower than the private sector work force and the cross-section design meant that effects of intervening factors were ignored. Future studies can build on the current study and improve its validity by increasing sample size and adopting a longitudinal design.

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The global coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in early 2020 required organisations to re-evaluate priorities and place employee wellbeing and general workforce considerations into sharp focus (Mills, 2020). Managers and leaders of organisations were compelled to evaluate existing systems, processes and procedures, and make necessary changes to ensure business sustainability. The employees were the most affected by these organisational and systematic changes. Due to these changes, the research on employee's perceptions of human resource practice, organisational leadership and work self-efficacy (WSE) during the COVID-19 pandemic was commissioned. The study's overall purpose was to investigate the extent to which human resource practices and organisational leadership could influence the levels of WSE in private sector organisations. Chapter 1 conceptually introduces the synopsis of the study.

For the chapter to achieve the above objective, it discussed the background of the study that gives a contextual introduction to the study, followed by the problem statement that presented an existing problem in the private sector, warranting the need for investigation. In addition, the other sections presented included the research objectives, followed by the significance and delineation of the study. Furthermore, the limitations of the study, research design, and methods were also presented. Finally, the chapter ended with a presentation of the outline of this study.

1.2 Background

"An essential focus in a crisis is to recognise the impact the uncertainty is having on the people that drive the organisation. At such times, emotional intelligence is critical. In everything the organisations do during a crisis, resilient leaders express empathy and

compassion for the human side of the upheaval—for example, acknowledging how radically their employees' personal priorities have shifted away from work to being concerned about family health, accommodating extended school closures, and absorbing the human angst of life-threatening uncertainty" (Renjen, 2020).

The above extract paints a picture of the risk extent faced by the organisations regarding employees having to cope with changes brought by the COVID-19 pandemic in the workplace. During the COVID-19 pandemic, at a global level, employees priorities' intuitively shifted to an extent from focusing on work to 'survival' and other health and safety priorities for themselves and their families. Furthermore, the pandemic changed organisations' work structures and demands globally. For example, employees were forced to work from home and had to adapt to the new way of completing their tasks (Nur, Afiqah, Akmal & Abdullah, 2020). At an organisational and individual level, employees priorities intuitively shifted to adhering to government protocols that ensure individual safety, such as maintaining social distance, wearing masks at all times, and frequently sanitising one's hands to protect themselves and reduce chances of contracting the virus. These challenges/shifts in priorities meant that organisations' productivity and general performance levels might have been negatively impacted.

According to Mujeeb (2021), the pandemic has highly impacted employee performance in every organisation. The same study by Mujeeb (2021) revealed that the employee's level of WSE influences employee performance. Furthermore, Pereira, Gonçalves and Assis (2021) explained that COVID-19 has increased employees' burnout and has led to low levels of employees' WSE. Therefore, the odds were against the organisations' leadership and management. However, as alluded to above, the extent of this impact was dependant on how well these leaders and managers managed the changes through applying emotional intelligence towards their employees. Thus, to ensure that the employee shift from work is optimally managed and controlled, leaders and managers had to ensure that employees are supported, reassured, and motivated to work optimally during the pandemic.

As alluded to above, employee WSE was lowered by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, thereby leading to low employee performance in organisations. Therefore, this meant that organisations' leaders had to make prompt and sound decisions necessary to adapt to the changes and reduce the impact of the pandemic on employees. Moreover, organisations had to evaluate their human resource practices and processes, and ensure that they assist employees in coping better with the changes brought by the pandemic.

In this study, it is suggested that the level of employee WSE would determine the effectiveness of the organisation's human resource practices employed by the organisation and the effectiveness of the organisational leaders during the pandemic. According to Bandura (2012), high work efficacy results in more challenging goals and improved performance because of the discrepancy between the individual's current state and the desired state. Therefore, organisations need employees to have high self-efficacy levels at all times, particularly during a time of crisis.Therefore, the fundamental question is, do human resource practices and organisational leadership directly influence employees' WSE?

On the face of it, the influence of human resource practices and organisational leadership on WSE has not been widely researched in the private sector. Previous studies limited the study investigations to the relationship between WSE, human resource practices' sub-elements, and organisational leadership's sub-elements; these studies were investigated individually. Moreover,there is no evidence of research conducted to investigate the direct relationships between WSE, human resource practices, and organisational leadership and how these three variables directly influence each other. This study aims to close this gap and add value to the academic body of knowledge.

Therefore, the purpose of the study is to establish whether a relationship exists between WSE, human resource practices, and organisational leadership, the extent of this potential existence, how these three variables influence each other, and their impact on employee perceptions during a time of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic in the

private sector. To achieve this, a research study was conducted in the private sector to determine how employees' WSE was affected by their perceptions of human resource practices and organisational leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3 Problem statement

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought significant implications to the workplace and highly impacted employee performance in every organisation (Mujeeb, 2021). Among all the economic sectors, the private sector in developing countries is mainly affected by the pandemic (International Financial Corporation, 2020), thereby indemnifying the private sector employees as some of the most affected. Therefore, when an unprecedented event like COVID-19 occurs, affecting economic sectors and employees, it is prudent for the affected organisations to reflect on the depths of this impact in order to orchestrate long-term sustainable solutions, devise preventative measures and better coping mechanisms in case a pandemic of this kind and magnitude reoccurs in the future. In this case, employees in the private sector were highly affected by the pandemic, which ultimately affected the performance of organisations in the sector. However, could organisations in the private sector have done better to reduce this impact on employees?

It has been revealed that WSE predicts employee performance (Mujeeb,2021). There is, however, a lack of information on what organisations can do to ensure that employees maintain high WSE during a time of crisis. Organisations in the private sector ought to ask themselves, did our workforce offerings, processes, systems, and practices worsen how the employees were affected (Renjen, 2020)? What do we now understand in order to manage the situation better in the future? What solutions will we implement going forward to ensure that employees' self-efficacy is maintained and improved in times of crisis? Did our leaders make the right decisions?

The answers to these questions should inform the organisations in the private sector on how the human resource practices and organisational leadership decisions taken and

implemented before and during the COVID-19 pandemic influenced how employees felt/their perceptions, thereby affecting their self-belief in executing their tasks (work self-efficacy). As a result, organisations in the private sector should understand whether employee self-efficacy is directly influenced by human resource practices and organisational leadership, and how it is influenced.

1.4 Goals and objectives

This study aims to determine the significance of the relationship between human resource practices, organisational Leadership, and WSE in the private sector.

- Objective 1: To comprehensively define human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE.
- Objective 2: To report on empirical research, which links human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE.
- Objective 3: To empirically investigate the relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE within the context of the private sector.
- Objective 4: To make recommendations for managers in the private sector based on the empirical findings.

Achieving the above-listed objectives will result in the study achieving its goals.

1.5 Importance of the studyAs alluded to above, the private sector in developing countries is mostly affected by the pandemic (International Financial Corporation, 2020), thereby indemnifying the private sector employees as some of the most affected. Therefore, the leaders and managers in the private sector need to determine why the sector was highly impacted and what could have prevented the impact of the pandemic in the private sector.

From a business perspective, not knowing how human resource practices and organisational leadership influence WSE can cause challenges for managers since their departments' productivity may be affected due to employees' lack of self-confidence in performing their tasks. Furthermore, a lack of understanding the relationships between these variables will also make it difficult for the managers to support employees and assist

them in improving employees' confidence in their abilities to complete assigned tasks. For academia, understanding how human resource practices and organisational leadership influence WSE can provide additional insights into the existing body of knowledge in either of the three variables. From an researcher's perspective, understanding the role of human resource practices and organisational leadership on influencing WSE can assist in developing human resources management strategies that can be valuable at the executive level on which the researcher serves as part of the executive management team.

This study investigates the influence of human resource practices and organisational leadership on WSE in the private sector. It should be noted that the same study could have been conducted in other sectors or a combination thereof. Moreover, three variables were included in this study. However, not all variables that could influence the relationship were included. For example, WSE has been found to be influenced by motivation (Mathis & Jackson, 2018), work-family enrichment (Chan, Kalliath, Brough, Siu, O'Driscoll & Timms,2016), and servant leadership (Chen, Shu & Shou, 2014). These have not been considered in this study.

1.6 Limitations of this study

Despite all the efforts in this study, limitations still existed. Although, for instance, the sample consisted of 1733 participants from 29 organisations, this was a relatively low sample compared to the private sector workforce within South Africa.

Additionally, obtaining survey responses from employees was challenging at first. Several follow-ups had to be done to obtain the required responses from the respective employees.

1.7 Research design

At a metatheoretical level, this research was positivist. A positivist study is one involving the development of knowledge through the collection, analysis, and interpretation of objective quantitative data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). It is a philosophy that is based on the belief that knowledge is objective and can only be developed through testable means

(Kothari, 2015). The methods used were quantitative in nature. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2015), a quantitative study involves collecting, analysing, and interpreting quantitative data. Since this study adopted a positivist paradigm, it was appropriate that a quantitative methodology was chosen.

In addition, this study was descriptive. A descriptive study is one in which the researcher seeks to assess the current state of a phenomenon without inferring why such a state exists (Kothari, 2015). Lastly, this study adopted a cross-sectional design. In a cross-sectional study, the researcher investigates a phenomenon at a particular point in time rather than over time (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015).

1.8 Research method

The research consists of a literature review, highlighting the previous studies conducted on the three variabes under investigation. The research also consists of an empirical investigation conducted in one of the private organisations in the private sector, which forms part of the private sector organisations on which the study is based.

A quantitative research method was utilised to conduct the research.

1.9 Literature review

In this study, three definitions of each of the research variables were provided, culminating in one working definition for the variable. These variables were human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. In this study, human resources practices were defined as the integrated and strategic processes, systems, and procedures of managing employees so that they are highly motivated, committed, developed, and capable of delivering the organisation’s goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve competitive advantage. In addition, organisational leadership is defined as the process through which a person (the leader) influences and motivates other people (followers) to work together towards the achievement of the organisation’s shared goals and objectives developed or adjusted in alignment with organisational needs, which ultimately lead to the achievement of the organisation’s cohesive strategy. Finally, WSE

was defined in this study as employees' self-belief in their abilities to perform and accomplish work assigned to them.

Moreover, three theories were found to describe WSE, namely the Work Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1977), the Creative Performance WSE Theory (Mathisen, 2011), and the Creative Self-Efficacy Model (Puente-Díaz, 2016:192). These theories are discussed in Chapter 2. The discussion of these theories was followed by a report on the empirical literature linked to human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. Finally, a summative report on empirical literature was provided, focusing on sample sizes, frequently used instruments, and correlation sizes.

The literature review focused on recent literature and seminal works. More specifically, preference was given to academic articles and textbooks, excluding unidentifiable internet and Wikipedia references. The literature review revealed a positive correlation between WSE and various typologies of organisational leadership (Niyogi & John, 2017; Chen, Shu & Shou, 2014; Jaiswal & Dhar, 2015; Walumbwa, Lawler, Avolio, Wang & Shi, 2005). Also, the review revealed a positive correlation between WSE and the perceptions of the various dimensions of human resource practices such as daily job crafting (Tims, Bakker & Derks, 2014:497), work engagement and human resource development climate (Chaudhary, Rangnekar & Barua, 2012), High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) (Ma, Gong, Long, & Shang, 2021), and work-family enrichment (Chan, Kalliath, Brough, Siu, O'Driscoll & Timms, 2016).

Following the literature review, the theoretical and empirical relationship between the human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE was more apparent, and the summative information helped prepare for the empirical investigation.

1.10 Empirical investigation

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

1. Students were required to familiarise themselves with the constructs in the project through the literature review.

2. Permission was obtained from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of AM Consulting Engineers (AMCE) to conduct the study at AMCE. Thereafter,an ethical clearance was applied for and granted by the university.
3. A list of personnel from AMCE was obtained from the human resources department from which a random sample of 60 participants was drawn. The sample was drawn based on random numbers generated from an Excel spreadsheet using the random function. Selected participants were then sent invitations to participant in the study through emails.
4. The participants completed the questionnaires manually and returned them to the researcher physically and through emails.
5. The data were captured on Excel and cleaned up.
6. The data were then pooled with those of other students whose studies were based on the private sector.
7. The data analysis focused on the relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. This was done with a simple correlation and regression analysis.
8. These results were presented in tables in Chapter 4.

1.11 Chapter division

Proceeding from Chapter 1, Chapter 2 will follow. Chapter 2 discusses the literature review relating to the study under investigation. In addition, this chapter details the variable definitions, related concepts, and previous studies conducted in relation to this study. Thereafter, Chapter 3 discusses the methodology that will be adopted to collect, analyse, and interpret the data for this study. The chapter further discusses the instruments used to collect data and the statistical techniques adopted to analyse and interpret the data collected in this study. Chapter 4 then presents the results of the study conducted in this research. Thereafter, Chapter 5 follows, which discusses the results of the study and recommendations based on the study's results. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a discussion on the study's limitations, together with suggestions for further research.

1.12 Summary

This chapter began with the background of the study before moving on to the problem statement. The following section then presented the research objectives, followed by sections on the significance and delineation of the study. The limitations of the study were also discussed, together with research design and methods. The chapter ended with a presentation of the outline of this study. The next chapter will focus on the relevant literature.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature pertaining to human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE constructs in the private sector. It starts by defining what 'management' and 'leadership' are and how the two concepts relate. It further details the impact of management on employees' wellbeing during a crisis. Thereafter, the chapter reviews the literature on the definitions of human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. The purpose of reviewing such definitions is to develop the working definitions relevant to this study. Furthermore, the chapter reviews the precursors and antecedents of WSE as an independent variable. Thereafter, literature on the relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE is reviewed. Finally, the chapter summarises the chapter in the conclusion.

2.2 Management and its impact on employee behaviour in general during times of crisis

There is substantial evidence that leaders and managers are necessary for any organisation (Thompson, 2018). Although the terms leaders and managers are sometimes used interchangeably, they refer to different roles. According to Attah, Obera and Isaac (2017), leadership is a process of influencing others to work towards and accomplish a defined goal. In other words, leaders need to define the imagined future of an organisation and motivate followers to work towards reaching that imagined future. In addition, leaders should have certain qualities such as future orientation, communication skills, and the ability to let followers believe in and work towards an imagined future (Louw & Venter, 2018).

On the other hand, management can be defined as the effective use and co-ordination of business resources to achieve key objectives with maximum efficiency (Kaplan, 2021:448). Therefore, management's main aim is to ensure that everything that should be done within the organisation is done timely while following organisational standards. It is all about following systems and procedures to accomplish identified tasks. One of the earliest and well-known characterisations of management was given by Henry Fayol, who explained that management's role could be classified into five functions: planning, organising, commanding, co-ordinating, and controlling (Kaplan, 2021:452). Through these five management functions, managers in organisations can effectively develop and manage systems pertaining to their particular line of service, which cohesively contributes towards achieving organisational goals, surviving, and overcoming adversities. One of the common goals of each private organisation is to remain profitable and sustainable, regardless of any unforeseen challenges or crises the business may face.

In response to a critical concept of sustainable development during the pandemic, Gorgenyi-Hegyes, Nathan and Fekete-Farkas (2021) conducted large-scale research that included a corporate level study on the development of health awareness. The corporate level implementation of health awareness development as a social sustainability factor was through human resource management, primarily based on internal corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities such as 'workplace health promotion'. The research discovered new relationships among employee workplace wellbeing, satisfaction, and loyalty variables. It revealed that the employees highly appreciated home office arrangements, flexible working hours, work/life balance, and healthcare support during the pandemic (Gorgenyi-Hegyes, Nathan & Fekete-Farkas, 2021). Nonetheless, these activities and programmes are the management's responsibilities. Therefore, Gorgenyi-Hegyes, Nathan and Fekete-Farkas' (2021) study reveal that in a case where management does not implement programmes and plans such as home office arrangement, flexible working hours, work/life balance, and healthcare support in the workplace during a time of crisis, employee wellbeing and satisfaction may be highly impacted. Employee dissatisfaction leads to high labour

turnover, low productivity, disengaged employees, which impact customer service, and ultimately a loss in revenue.

Generally, in times of crisis, managers are necessary to ensure that they bring about stability within organisational systems (Atilgan, 2020). In contrast, leadership is practised with the assumption that the processes and systems within the organisation operate effectively (Attah, Obera & Isaac, 2017). Crises, by their very nature, destabilise these established processes and procedures. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic destabilised several business processes and procedures, including communication, place of work, and social interaction among employees. In such cases, management is thus more important than leadership to establish new and acceptable standards, processes, and procedures. By establishing systems to stabilise the organisation in times of crisis, managers provide employees with the assurance that everything within the organisation is still in place and that there is a way out of the situation.

2.3 Defining key concepts

This section defines human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. Defining them in this section helps ensure a common understanding of the concepts pertaining to this study. That way, when the terms are mentioned as variables later in this chapter and subsequent chapters, the reader will appreciate what the concepts mean.

2.3.1 Human resource practices

According to O'Riordan (2017), good human resources (HR) practices refer to organisational practices intended to enhance staff motivation and commitment, which positively impact productivity and performance. The researcher alludes to six HR practices that were shown to improve performance when jointly applied. These are career development and opportunities for advancement, training opportunities, job influence and challenge, involvement and communication, performance management and appraisal processes, and work-life balance. The definition by O'Riordan (2017) denotes that the objective of HR practices is to encourage and motivate employee commitment to their work. Ultimately, this positively influences employees' efforts towards their work

performance and productivity, yielding positive output for the organisation. This definition depicts a direct and operational take of HR practices, as they directly influence employee productivity and performance.

On the other hand, Armstrong (2018:7) defines HR practices as a strategic, integrated, and coherent approach to the employment, development and wellbeing of the people working in an organisation. Furthermore, Armstrong (2018) adds an important dimension to HR practices, namely the explicit mentioning of the strategic nature of HR practices. In other words, HR practices should be seen as having strategic implications for the organisation rather than being relegated to low-level tactical and operational levels. That way, the HR strategy can be adopted in an integrated and coherent manner.

Finally, Mathis and Jackson (2018:27) define HR practices as a distinctive approach to employment management that seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly committed and capable workforce, using an integrated array of cultural, structural, and personnel techniques. This definition supports Armstrong (2018) by viewing HR practices as a strategic activity. Critical to Mathis and Jackson (2018) is their link of HR practices to competitive advantage, a key objective of private sector strategic management (Thompson, Peteraf, Gamble & Strickland, 2018).

Although the three definitions of HR practices differ in that O'Riordan (2017) approaches HR practices from an operational perspective, while Mathis and Jackson (2018) and Amstrong (2018) view HR practices from a strategic perspective, there are identified congruences in a context of the overall purpose of HR practices. This overall purpose is to ensure employee development, motivation, commitment, and overall wellbeing. In this study, HR practices are defined as the integrated and strategic processes, systems, and procedures of managing employees (Armstrong, 2018) in such a way that they are highly motivated (O'Riordan, 2017), committed, developed, and are capable of delivering the organisation's goals, objectives and strategies to achieve a competitive advantage

(Mathis & Jackson, 2018). Therefore, HR practices should be viewed as a strategic matter by the organisation's leadership as they seek to create a competitive advantage for the organisation. The definition's reference to strategic processes, systems, and procedures aligns with the current topic of study, with organisational leadership as one of the variables. Organisation leadership is in itself a strategic matter.

2.3.2 Organisational leadership

According to Ejimabo (2017:6), organisational leadership is the plan leaders have for the organisation. Plans by nature are future-oriented, meaning that leadership involves expressing future plans about the organisation. As indicated in section 2, leadership involves the leader imagining a future course for the organisation and motivating followers to work towards that future.

Moreover, Grobler and Singh (2018:1) explained that organisational leadership revolves around influencing and facilitation of individual and collective efforts of people within the organisation to accomplish shared objectives towards a cohesive organisational strategy. This definition also recognises the leader's role in influencing others to achieve objectives. In addition to this definition, the objectives must be shared between the leader and followers as a collective unit. The collectiveness of objectives is necessary since leaders are not required to coerce others but to motivate their followers. Again, Grobler and Singh (2018) point out the long-term nature of leadership by adding organisational strategy in their definition to emphasise the fact that leaders should focus on imagining the organisation's long-term future rather than focusing on the immediate tasks only.

Finally, leadership has also been defined as a process in which a person or persons inspire(s) and motivate(s) people to meet the shared goals or objectives, which may be changed or added as per the needs and challenges (Malik & Azmat, 2019:25). Again, the leaders' role in providing inspiration and motivation to followers and shared goals and objectives are reinforced by this definition. This definition alludes to organisational leadership having to add or change goals and objectives in alignment with the

organisational needs and challenges. These challenges can stem from external influences such as economic downfall, legislation changes, technological advances, etc. The COVID-19 pandemic can also be regarded as an external influence that has forced organisations' leaders to re-evaluate their objectives in order for the business to survive the pandemic and sustain itself.

According to the above-mentioned authors, organisational leadership's narrative seems to have the same context regarding the existence of a follower and influence, except for Ejimambo's (2017) definition that aligns leadership to organisational plans. In addition to this leadership perspective, other leadership definitions have distinct references that differentiate the definitions from each other, namely Kaplan's (2021) referencing influencing followers to attain a goal (Grobler & Singh, 2018), referencing the shared objectives and cohesiveness. Lastly (Malik & Azmat, 2019), referencing the adjustment of organisational objectives aligned with the business needs and challenges. However, all these leadership references contribute to a greater context of understanding organisational leadership in a broader perspective.

For this study, organisational leadership is defined as the process through which one person (the leader) influences and motivates other people (followers) to work together (Malik & Azmat, 2019) towards the achievement of the organisation's shared goals and objectives developed or adjusted in alignment with organisational needs (Grobler & Singh, 2018), which ultimately lead to the achievement of the organisation's cohesive strategy (Ejimabo, 2017).

2.3.3 Work self-efficacy

According to Gangloff and Masilescu (2017:1), WSE refers to how people judge their ability to organise and carry out sets of actions required to achieve expected types of performances. This definition shows that WSE is all about individuals' beliefs and is, therefore, psychological in nature. In this context, self-efficacy beliefs are knowledge structures that reflect the degree of control employees exert over actions to achieve

expected performances. These beliefs attest to the propensity of employees to reflect on themselves and regulate their conduct in accordance with goals and standards aligned to their work (Pepe, Farnese, Avalone & Vecchione, 2010). Therefore, this implies that employees with strong self-efficacy perceive themselves as having the ability to exert more effort towards the assigned tasks and achieve maximum results. In addition, these employees also see themselves as being able to successfully adapt to changes/difficult situations and have the tenacity to persevere more when faced with challenges at work.

Tweed, Purdie and Wilkinson (2020) gave a similar definition; they defined WSE as how one believes his/her abilities are sufficient to achieve or perform a task. The main difference between the two definitions is the rate or level of performance one believes they can achieve (Tweed, Purdie, & Wilkinson, 2020). This differentiating factor is of a distinct significance in that these employees with WSE judge themselves on their ability to carry out tasks, and how well they carry them, as the latter is also important to them. The concept of person-behaviour-environment interaction, referred to as triadic reciprocality, supports this definition (Bandura, 1986). This concept implies that the inter-relationship between a person, behaviour, and environment work interactively as determinants. As a component of the triadic reciprocality, the cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) emphasises the idea of human belief that one can exert a considerable measure of control over the important events in one's life. Therefore, this theory can be related to the ‘rate/level of performance’ one believes they can achieve. These efficacious employees can decide to exert considerable control on some tasks to ensure the level of performance they want to achieve. Furthermore, it denotes the notion of ‘empowerment’ through goal-directed actions (Schunk & De Benedetto, 2016). That is, if an employee perceives a particular event or aspect to be important, they will make a decision to exert more effort towards the attainment of that particular aspect. That means that the individual is empowering himself/herself to achieve that particular goal.

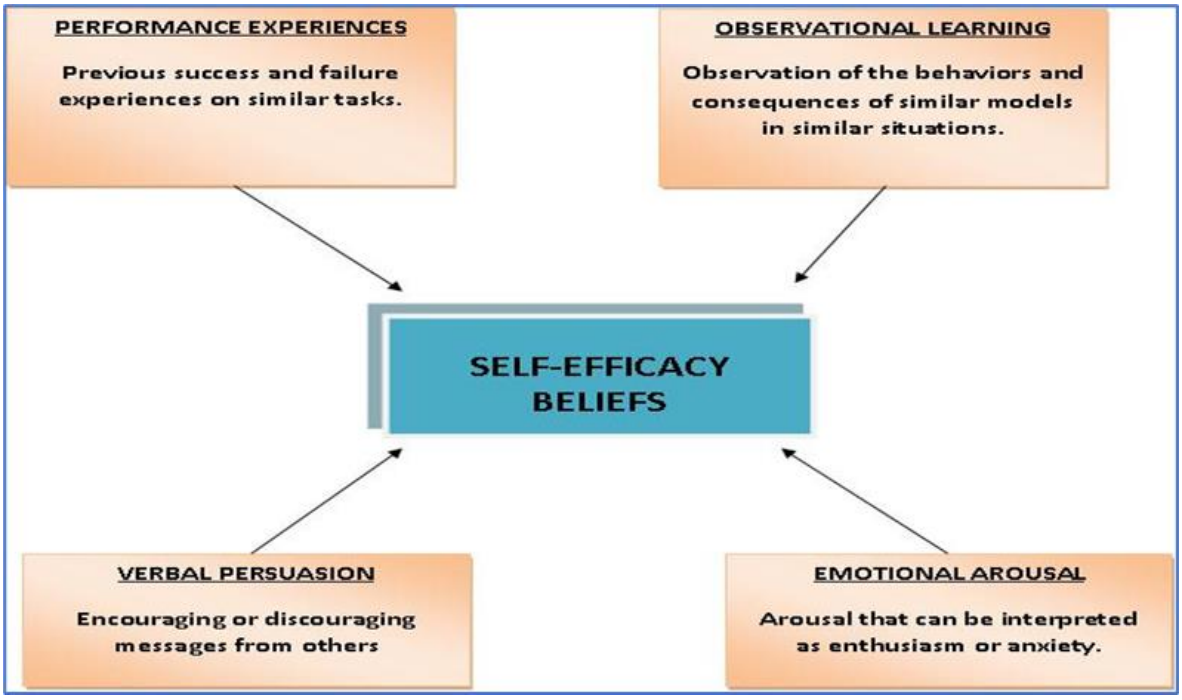
On the same note, Bandura (1986) alludes further by explaining that self-efficacy beliefs affect thought patterns that may be self-aiding or self-hindering, and these cognitive

effects take various forms. The stronger their perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goals people set for themselves and the firmer their commitment (Bandura, 1986).

In addition, Karwowski and Kaufman (2017:3) defined WSE as one's perceived confidence to perform a particular task. This definition aligns WSE with 'confidence' that is perceived in performing a task, which is somewhat contrary to the other two definitions that aligned it to the 'judgements' of one's beliefs and abilities in performing tasks. However, looking at all the three definitions considered here, WSE is viewed as personal; it is dependent on one's belief about themselves. Secondly, it is clear from the definitions provided that WSE cannot be defined in isolation. It is defined in relation to a particular task that the individual seeks to accomplish. In summary, WSE is defined in this study as employees' self-belief in their abilities to perform and accomplish work assigned to them. Here, leadership and HR practices play an important role in building employees' WSE. For example, leadership empowerment, training, and development can help build employees' WSE.

2.4 Antecedents or precursors to work self-efficacy

To understand WSE, an analysis of their antecedents is paramount. This starts by examining the theories governing the WSE. The research is underpinned by three theories of WSE by Bandura (1977), Mathisen (2011), and Puente-Díaz (2016:192). The WSE theory presented by Bandura (1977) holds that WSE is driven by people's interpretation of information deriving from four sources, namely performance experience, observational learning, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal. The efficacy theory can be represented as follows:



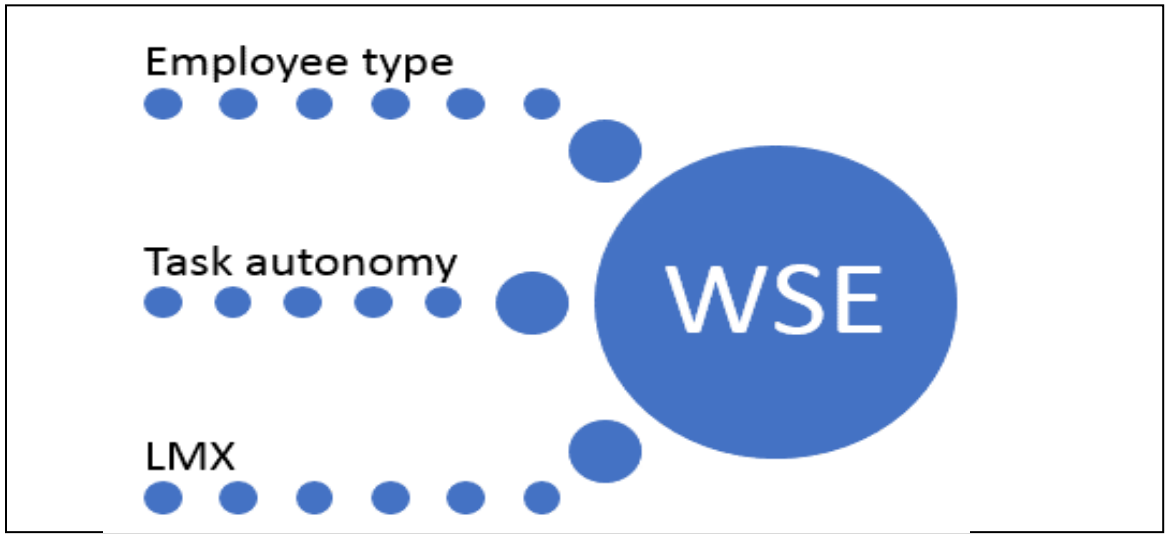
Source: Bandura (1977)

Figure 1: The theory of self-efficacy

The theory states that people's beliefs about their abilities are mainly shaped by their interpretation of past experiences or mastery experiences. According to Bandura (1977), people's success builds on their efficacy by helping them realise their potential and what they can achieve. The theory further notes that people's efficacy is built through observing how others in similar situations succeed. That raises one's expectations that they too can succeed. Bandura called the experiences gained through such observations vicarious/performance experiences. The self-efficacy theory further states that verbal feedback from others about one's abilities and performance is also one of the precursors of self-efficacy. The feedback can be positive (encouragement) or negative (discouragement). Finally, the theory states people's emotional, physical, and psychological states are also precursors of their beliefs about their abilities. Bandura (1977) explained that the perception and interpretation of these emotional and physical reactions are more important than their actual intensity in influencing people's self-efficacy.

The theory implies that employees' self-efficacy depends on how they interpret their past experiences in the workplace context. Employees who have accomplished their tasks in the past have high confidence levels that they will accomplish their future tasks. Again, employees' confidence is built through having role models whom employees observe while performing tasks. For the managers' part, it is necessary to provide positive verbal feedback to employees and reassure them that they have the necessary abilities to perform their tasks. Managers should also continuously implement and enhance initiatives that support their employees' emotional, physical, and psychological wellbeing in order to build employees' self-efficacy.

Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory has been used by several authors. For example, Mathisen (2011) applied the theory in developing a theory linking self-efficacy and creative performance. Mathisen (2011) identified three creative self-efficacy antecedents, namely employees' task type, task autonomy, and leader-member exchange (LMX). Mathisen's (2011) model is summarised in Figure 2.2 below.



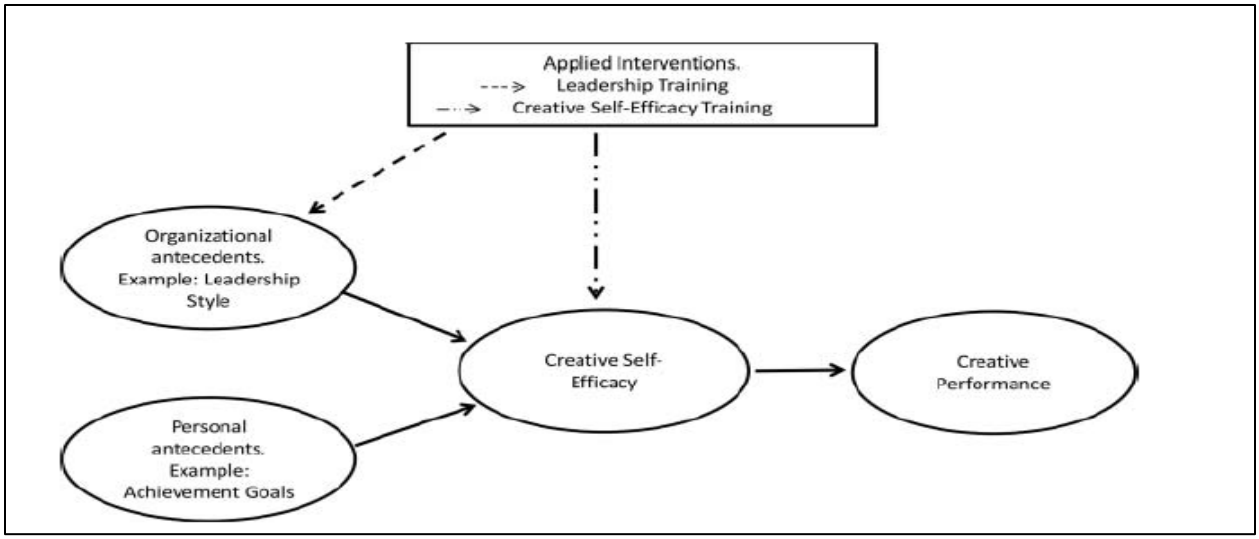
Source: Mathisen (2011)

Figure 2: The Theory of Self-Efficacy and Creativity

According to Mathisen (2011), some employees generally have self-belief which may be influenced by factors within and outside the organisation. These factors include opportunities afforded to individuals during their upbringing and the extent to which employees feel superior to their fellow employees. Secondly, Mathisen (2011) explains that affording employees autonomy is a precursor of employee WSE. Employees with high self-belief are more likely to accept task autonomy than those with low WSE. Finally, Mathisen (2011) explains that the level of LMX and the quality of the relationship between supervisors and subordinates is also a precursor of WSE. The author explains that high LMX means that employees have easy access to resources and support for accomplishing their tasks, which provides learning opportunities.

Therefore, managers can enhance employees' WSE by providing them with opportunities for development throughout their careers. Where necessary, managers should provide employees with autonomy to accomplish their tasks and assist employees in building self-belief. Managers can also improve their subordinates' WSE by improving manager-subordinate relations so that employees can have access to the resources and support they need for accomplishing their tasks. Learning opportunities should also be provided to employees to build their WSE.

Another WSE theory is proposed by Puente-Díaz (2016), who identified organisational leadership style and personal achievement of goals as antecedents of creative self-efficacy. The theory is illustrated in Figure 2.3 below.



Source: Puente-Díaz (2016)

Figure 3: Creative self-efficacy model

Puente-Díaz's theory states that leadership style provides an important contextual factor for determining creative efficacy. The theory also predicts that leaders provide the much-needed social influence that influences employees' beliefs about their creative self-efficacy. Finally, Puente-Díaz (2016) argues that where employees are faced with ill-defined problems requiring creativity to solve them, leadership support in terms of resources and emotional support can enhance employees creative self-efficacy. The theory states that achieving goals provides antecedents of employees' creative self-efficacy from a personal level. Puente-Díaz (2016) also argued that employees who achieve their goals gain more confidence to achieve future goals.

Like Bandura (1977), Puente-Díaz (2016) advises that leaders in organisations should provide employees with the necessary emotional and physical support they need to accomplish their tasks. Tasks assigned to employees should also be clearly defined to improve employees' WSE.

The discussion in this section shows that theories on WSE are diverse. However, several factors can improve employees' WSE. From the theories discussed, it can be derived that antecedents of WSE are performance experience, observational learning, verbal

persuasion, and emotional arousal (Bandura, 1977), task type and task autonomy, LMX (Mathisen, 2011), organisational (leadership style), and personal (achievement of goals) (Puente-Diaz & Cavazos-Arroyo, 2018). Thus, managers who wish to improve their employees' WSE should provide models of desired performance and provide employees with both verbal and emotional encouragement. Managers should also carefully select their employees to ensure that they fit the assigned tasks and provide employees with the required empowerment to allow them to complete their tasks autonomously. All these actions can enhance employees' confidence in their ability to complete assigned tasks.

From these theories, the common antecedents of WSE are performance, experience, and leadership. As alluded to above, Bandura's theory suggests that employees' self-efficacy depends on how they interpret their past experiences. Puente-Díaz's (2016) theory also suggests that employees who perform well and achieve their goals gain more confidence to perform well in the future and achieve future goals. Mathisen's (2011) theory suggests that people's efficacy is built through observing and modelling others to succeed. This gives them confidence that they can also achieve the same success. Bandura's theory also alludes to verbal feedback from others about one's abilities and performance influencing their confidence in performing tasks. Puente-Díaz (2016) also alludes to that leadership support can enhance employees creative self-efficacy.

2.5 The relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and work self-efficacy

This section presents empirical evidence on the relationship between HR practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. First, empirical evidence on the relationship between HR practices and organisational leadership is presented. This is followed by the relationship between organisational leadership and WSE. Thereafter, the relationship between HR practices and WSE is presented. Finally, the section presents the relationship between HR practices, orgnisational leadership, and WSE.

The way the variables were studied shows that there is a critical shortage of studies that focus on either of the three variables as constructs at the macro-level. However, sections 2.2 and 2.3 already show that HR practises, organisational leadership, and WSE are multidimensional. For example, HR practices include sub-variables such as HR selection, development, and wellbeing (Armstrong, 2018). Therefore, studies on these micro-level dimensions of variables are also included in this section. The reason for studying the relationship between these variables is to assist in building a conceptual framework for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data for this study.

2.5.1 Human resource practices and organisational leadership

At the macro-level, organisational leadership is positively correlated to HR practices. This means that organisations that adopt effective HR practices have high chances of having effective leaders. This should be expected given that HR practices are aimed at influencing employees' behaviour (Saifalislam, Osman & AlQudah, 2014), who in turn become leaders. Therefore, effective HR practices should be expected to influence organisational leadership positively.

For instance, in a study to model the relationship between organisational commitment, leadership style, HR management practices, and organisational trust, Laka-Mathebula (2004) investigated the relationship between leadership styles and HR practices focusing on 246 employees from 11 South African institutions of higher learning. The study measured HR practices using Snell and Dean's (1992) human resource practices scale, using a 5-point Linkert scale. In addition, a 51-item questionnaire developed by Ferres, Travaglione, Munro, Albercht and Boshoff (2001) was used to measure leadership style. The study revealed that leadership style was positively and strongly correlated to human resource practices ($r = .58$, $p < .001$). This correlation was significant.

Moreover, Tetteh and Brenyah (2016) studied the relationship between HR practices and organisational leadership in their study entitled "Organisational Leadership Styles and their Impact on Employees' Job Satisfaction: Evidence from the Mobile Telecommunications Sector of Ghana." The study was based on a random sample of 400

participants working in the mobile telecommunication sector in Accra, Ghana. The study used a self-developed instrument with a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 – Strongly Disagree to 5 –Strongly Agree). The study revealed that the HR practice of contingent rewards was negatively related to the various elements of transformational leadership, namely idealised influence ($R = -.11$, $p < .05$), intellectual stimulation ($R = -.21$, $p < .05$), and individualised consideration ($R = -.07$, $p < .05$). Generally, this means that leaders are seen as less transformational if they set uncertain (contingent) rewards for their employees. The study revealed that contingent rewards could only improve employees' satisfaction if leaders employ an inspirational motivation style. This was revealed by a positive correlation between contingent rewards and inspirational motivation ($R = .18$, $p < .05$).

At the micro-level, organisational leadership and HR practices are all multifaceted. At such a level, HR practices may refer to training programmes, developmental opportunities, performance management, pay for performance, internal promotional opportunities, autonomy, and participation in decision-making. For instance, Ahsan (2018) conducted a study to analyse the impact of effective recruitment and selection and succession planning towards leadership development, employee retention, and talent management towards organisation effectiveness in Pakistan. The study focused on a sample of N = 200 employees in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Pakistan. The study used various instruments to measure HR practices, namely effective recruitment, selection, and succession planning. Leadership development was measured using the instrument developed by Gothard and Austin (2013). All the instruments used five-point Linkert scales ranging between 1 (Strongly Disagree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). The study found that leadership development is positively correlated to HR practices as measured by effective recruitment and selection ($R = .58$, $p < .01$) and succession planning ($R = .67$, $p < .01$). This implies that organisations with effective recruitment, selection, and succession planning practices are more likely to develop better leaders than those with inferior records in these HR practices.

In another study to determine the mediation effect of perceived organisational support on the relationship between HR practices and job performance among engineers in the Penang free trade zone, Desa, Hasmi and Asaari (2020) investigated the relationship between HR practices and perceived organisational support, an element of organisational leadership. The authors used several instruments to measure HR practices, namely training programmes (Conway & Monks, 2008), developmental opportunities (Allen et al., 2003), performance management (Allen et al., 2003), pay for performance (Rhoades et al., 2001), internal promotional opportunities (Wayne et al., 1997), autonomy (Conway & Monks, 2008), and participation in decision-making (Govino, 2005). The perceived organisational support was measured by an instrument developed by Eisenberger et al., (1990). All instruments were five-point Likert type scales. The study found that perceived organisational support was positively correlated to HR practices ($R = .19$, $p < .01$). This relationship is small but statistically significant. Therefore, the study revealed that HR practices such as training programmes, developmental opportunities, performance management, pay for performance, internal promotional opportunities, autonomy, and participation in decision-making have a positive effect on employees' perceived organisational support. This means that organisations that improve these HR practices are more likely to be perceived as having supportive leadership styles.

On the other hand, organisational leadership can be seen as organisational support, transformational leadership, and leadership development. There is a positive correlation among the dimensions of HR practices and organisational leadership in the reviewed studies, reinforcing the proposition that HR practices positively influence organisational leadership. Furthermore, the relationships ranged from small to large. Therefore, in all the above-indicated studies between HR practices' and organisational leadership elements and typologies, it is evident that there are correlations to some degree between the two variables. This revelation puts things into perspective as managers and leaders in organisations are decision-makers, including making HR-related decisions.

2.5.2 Organisational leadership and work self-efficacy

The literature review in the previous section revealed two things. Firstly, the review has shown that, generally, HR practices influence organisational leadership positively. Secondly, the review has also shown that when looked at from a micro-level, organisational leadership is multidimensional. Studies on organisational leadership tend to focus on these dimensions of leadership rather than organisational leadership as a single construct. This section extends the discussion in the previous section by reviewing the literature on the relationship between organisational leadership and WSE.

In a study concerning self-efficacy and leadership effectiveness in Information Technology (IT) companies in India, Niyogi and John (2017) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy and leadership effectiveness in 10 IT companies, with a sample of N = 234. Although the authors did not disclose the instruments used to measure the variables, the study results revealed a positive but statistically insignificant relationship between leadership effectiveness and WSE ($R = .031$, $p = 0.42$). Despite this small correlation, the results indicate that high WSE is related to high leadership effectiveness and vice versa.

Furthermore, Chen, Shu and Shou (2014) studied the impact of servant leadership on employee performance and, in the process, also assessed the relationship between servant leadership and self-efficacy, focusing on employees from China's beauty industry. The study used a sample of N = 708 hairstylists their customers. The authors used the servant leadership scale (SLS) developed by Liden, Wayne, Shao and Henderson (2008) to measure servant leadership, while Jones' (1986) Work Self-Efficacy Scale (WSES) was used to measure WSE. The study revealed that servant leadership was positively related to a stylists' ratings of self-efficacy ($R = .51$, $p < .05$) (Chen, Shu & Shou, 2014:7). The correlation was large and statistically significant. The relationship shows that leaders whose philosophy is to serve their subordinates and the organisation improve the confidence of followers to perform their tasks.

In addition, in their study concerning the role of transformational leadership and employee creativity, Jaiswal and Dhar (2015) investigated the relationship between transformational leadership and creative self-efficacy (another dimension of WSE as revealed in section 2.3). The study was based on a sample of N = 372 employees and their immediate supervisors in 18 Indian tourist hotels. The authors used the multifactor-leadership questionnaire (MLQ) to measure transformational leadership, and a creative self-efficacy scale (CSES) to measure creative self-efficacy. The study revealed a strong positive correlation between creative self-efficacy and transformational leadership (R = .77, $p <$ 05). Thus, transformational leaders [leaders who identify needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executing the change in tandem with committed members of a group (Ljungholm, 2014:79)] improve their followers' creative efficacy.

In another study investigating how self-efficacy moderated the influence of transformational leadership on followers' work-related attitudes, Walumbwa, Lawler, Avolio, Wang, and Shi (2005) investigated the relationship between WSE and transformational leadership. The study used the MLQ Form 5X to measure transformational leadership, while self-efficacy was measured by items from the adapted version of the self-efficacy scale developed by Riggs, Warka, Babasa, Betancourt and Hooker (1994). The study revealed that there is a medium positive correlation between transformational leadership and WSE (R = .40, $p < 0.01$). This relationship is statistically significant.

In their study to investigate the relationship between the leader's self-efficacy, transformational leadership, and leader effectiveness, Mesterova, Prochaska, Vaculik and Smutny (2015) also investigated the relationship between WSE and transformational leadership. The study focused on a sample of N = 32 CEOs/leaders selected from full-time students of bachelor and master's programmes at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. The study used the General Self-Efficacy Scale and the MLQ to measure transformational leadership. The study showed a statistically significant and negative

correlation between WSE and transformational leadership (R = -.01 p < 01). The relationship was small.

At the micro-level, studies on organisational leadership tend to focus on leadership typologies and WSE. Of such studies, except for the study by Niyogi and John (2017), which related leadership effectiveness to WSE, all the other studies focused on the relationship between WSE and the different typologies of leadership such as transformational leadership and servant leadership. Thus, irrespective of how leadership is defined, it positively influences employees' belief in their ability to accomplish their tasks if such leadership is effective. Contrary to most studies reviewed in this section, Mesterova, Prochaska, Vaculik and Smutny (2015) revealed a negative correlation between transformational leadership typologies and self-efficacy. The review in this section has also revealed that most of the studies were conducted in Asia, India (Jaiswal & Dhar, 2015; Niyogi & John, 2017), and the People's Republic of China (Chen, Shu & Shou, 2014). The reported correlation between leadership typologies and self-efficacy was widely distributed, ranging from small correlation (R = -.01) to very strong correlation (R = .77). Lastly, the MLQ was the only measure used in studies focussing on WSE and transformational leadership.

At the macro-level, organisational leadership positively influence WSE. This means that employees' confidence in accomplishing tasks improves if they have leaders who support them and help them to work towards a defined objective. All in all, the above studies show a variety of results between WSE and organisational leadership typologies and elements. Some revealed positive correlations, while some revealed small, medium and negative correlations. However, most studies reveal more positive and large correlations than small or negative correlations between the two variables. Therefore, based on the above-mentioned studies, it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation to some extent between the two variables.

2.4.3 Human resource practices and work self-efficacy

Creative self-efficacy has already been identified as another dimension of WSE. Thus, the review in this section considers these variables at both macro- and micro-level. Studies at the macro-level are limited.

In their study to examine whether job crafting (a component of human resource practices) and work enjoyment could explain the well-established relationship between WSE and job performance, Tims, Bakker and Derks (2014) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy and one of the components of human resources, daily job crafting. The longitudinal study focused on a sample of N = 47, for 215 days. The sample was drawn from employees who worked as programmers in the Netherlands. The authors used an adapted version of Schwarser and Jerusalem's (1995) WSES to measure WSE and the adapted instrument by Bakker (2008) to measure daily job crafting. The study found a small, positive and statistically significant relationship between WSE and daily job crafting ($R = .23$, $p < 0.001$) (Tims, Bakker & Derks, 2014:497). This relationship shows that organisations that carefully design employees' jobs have better chances of building their employees' confidence to accomplish assigned tasks and set objectives.

Furthermore, Chaudhary, Rangnekar and Barua (2012) investigated the relationship between occupational self-efficacy and two human resource practices, namely human resource development climate and work engagement. The study focused on a sample of N = 150 business executives from Indian public and private sector manufacturing and service organisations. The study used three instruments to measure the variables, namely (1) the 19-item scale developed by Pethe (1999) to measure WSE, (2) the Human Resources Development Climate Survey (HRDCS) instrument developed by Rao and Abraham (1986) to measure human resource development climate and (3) the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonsales-Roma and, Bakker, (2002) to measure work engagement. The study revealed a strong positive correlation between WSE and both work engagement ($R = .68$, $p < 0.05$), and human resource development climate ($R = .61$, $p < 0.05$). These correlations are statistically

significant; this suggests that developing employees' skills and knowledge can positively influence employees' positive work-related state of mind.

In another study, Ma, Gong, Long and Shang (2021) investigated how team-level HPWS works together with individual-level factors to shape individual creativity and in the process, investigated the relationship between WSE and team-level HPWS. The study focused on a random sample of N = 97 Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) programme students from central China province. Jiang, Takeuchi and Lepak's (2013) HPWS instrument was used to measure HPWS and the adapted version of Chen, Gully and Eden's (2001) WSE to measure WSE. The study revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between WSE and HPWS ($R = .26$, $p < 0.05$). The results show that employees working within team-level high HPWS are more likely to be confident in completing their assigned objectives than working as individuals. Given that leadership support has already been found to positively influence WSE, it is logical to conclude that employees working within HPWS, where they get support from team members, can have confidence in achieving objectives set for them.

Furthermore, Chan, Kalliath, Brough, Siu, O'Driscoll and Timms (2016) investigated the relationship between work-family enrichment, WSE, and satisfaction. The study adopted a longitudinal approach, focusing on a heterogeneous sample of N = 234 Australian employees over 12 months. The authors used Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne and Grsywacs's (2006) 18-item work-family enrichment scale to measure work-family enrichment and the adapted version of Bandura's (2005) Guide for Constructing Self-Efficacy Scales to measure WSE. The study found that there is a strong positive correlation between WSE and work-family enrichment ($R = .67$, $p < .001$). This relationship is statistically significant.

The above review shows that WSE was studied with several variables such as work-life enrichment, team-level HPWS, and work engagement. Again, the studies reviewed were equally split between those conducted in the West (Australian and the Netherlands) and East Asia (China and India). WSE was found to be positively correlated with all the variables considered, with correlations concentrated at the small ($R < .30$) and Large (R

> .60) ends of the correlation spectrum. WSE and human resource practices can be studied using both cross-sectional and longitudinal methodologies, with studies equally split within the two. Finally, researchers are using standardised or partially adapted versions of standardised measures of WSE. Overall, human resource practices positively impact employees' belief in their ability to accomplish their set objectives. This is as a result of human resource practices such as human resource development improving employees' beliefs in the ability to accomplish their tasks.

2.5.4 Human resource practices, organisational leadership, and work self-efficacy

Limited studies link HR practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. The previous sections' review has provided some insights into this relationship. Firstly, the various typologies of organisational leadership are positively correlated with WSE (Niyogi & John, 2017; Chen, Shu & Shou, 2014; Jaiswal & Dhar, 2015; Walumbwa, Lawler, Avolio, Wang & Shi, 2005). Again, several studies pointed to the existence of the relationship between WSE and the perceptions of the various dimensions of HR practices such as daily job crafting (Tims, Bakker & Derks, 2014:497), work engagement and HR development climate (Chaudhary, Rangnekar & Barua, 2012), HPWS (Ma, Gong, Long & Shang, 2021), and work-family enrichment (Chan, Kalliath, Brough, Siu, O'Driscoll & Timms, 2016).

Furthermore, a study conducted by Naseer (2020) in the tourism sector sought to examine the effects of psychopathic leadership on employee career satisfaction and turnover intention via self-efficacy. It also examined the buffering impact of human resource practice on career satisfaction and turnover intentions, which may be affected by psychopathic leadership. A sample of 298 employees and their respective supervisors from tourism enterprises from southern China was used to collect research data at two different time intervals. The results of this study revealed that by increasing psychopathic leadership, career satisfaction declines. Moreover, the human resource practice buffering effect reduces employee turnover intentions through self-efficacy, especially under psychopathic leadership. In a nutshell, the study indicated a type of organisational leadership (psychopathic leadership) that negatively affects employee career satisfaction.

Moreover, human resource practices positively influence employee self-efficacy, which reduces employee turnover intentions. Although the study does not indicate the direct inter-relationships between the three variables, the correlation is somewhat indirectGiven that WSE is positively related to organisational leadership and human resource practices, individually, this study proposes that there is a positive relationship between WSE, organisational leadership, and human resource practices. The potential and extent of the existence of such relationships, how these variables influence each other, and their impact on employee perceptions during a time of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, is what the current study seeks to establish.

2.6 Chapter summary

In this chapter, literature on the need for management in crises, focusing on COVID-19, has been reviewed. It revealed that management is a critical component of the organisation's effort to deal with crises. The variables of this study, namely human resource practices, organisation leadership, and WSE, were specifically defined for this study, drawing from existing definitions from reviewed literature. In addition, the antecedents of WSE have been identified as mastery experience, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and emotional arousal from Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, organisational (leadership style), personal (achievement of goals) (Puente-Díaz, 2016), and employees' task type and task autonomy, LMX (Mathisen, 2011). Finally, the chapter has presented a review of empirical evidence on the relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. Limited literature has been found that related WSE, organisational leadership, and human resource practices. There is scant empirical evidence pointing to the potential relationship among these variables, as inferred from some relationships between WSE, organisational leadership, and human resource practices. The next chapter discusses the research methodology that was adopted for this study.

CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology that was designed to collect, analyse, and interpret the data for this study. The chapter starts with a discussion of the aims of the empirical investigation before discussing the adopted research design and methodology. The chapter also discusses the development of the research instruments used to collect data in detail. Finally, the chapter discusses the statistical techniques adopted to analyse and interpret the data collected in this study.

3.2 The aim of the empirical investigation

This study aims to describe the relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE during the COVID-19 pandemic in the private sector.

3.3 The sample

According to Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel and Page (2016), a sample can be defined as consisting of all the elements of the target population chosen for a study. In this study, the sample size consisted of 60 participants per organisation, while 29 organisations in the private sector participated in the study. This sample is part of a pooled private sector sample upon which the results of the study will be based. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) explain that a sample is drawn from a population they defined as an element of all the potential participants. For the purpose of this study, the population consisted of employees from 29 companies in the private sector. A sample frame is a physical list of those individuals from which a sample is drawn (Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel & Page, 2016). The sample was randomly selected from the population. According to Saunders, Lewi and Thornhill (2015), a random sample is one in which all the elements of the population have an equal chance of being included in the sample. Random sampling was

adopted because it is recommended by Keller (2015) for quantitative studies that use normal distribution measures such as mean and standard deviation (SD). Again, a sample size of 60 for each organisation was selected based on the central limit theorem (CLT), which holds that as the sample size increases, the sample means tend to be normally distributed around the population mean, and its SD shrinks as *N* (the number of items in the sample) increases, regardless of the population distribution model (Islam, 2018). A sample size of at least 60 is recommended by Islam (2018) as an adequate sample to meet the requirements of the CLT. Another precondition of the CLT is that the study sample should be independent, which was the case in this study, since the various samples included in the pooled data were independently selected.

Sampling can be done through probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Probability sampling refers to sampling under which all the elements of the population have an equal chance of being selected into the sample (Taherdoost, 2016). On the other hand, under non-probability sampling, the sample is collected based on the judgement of the researcher (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). In this study, probability sampling was used. More specifically, the simple random sampling technique was used, and the process was followed after receiving a list of employees from the organisation; each employee was assigned a unique number. The random numbers were then generated through Microsoft Excel's random function. Therefore, employees whose numbers came up in the random numbers were invited to take part in the survey.

3.4 Measuring instruments

Information was gathered using four measures. Each of these instruments is discussed in this section. The discussion covers aspects of the instruments such as the instrument's developers, the number of items, and the instrument's reliability in measuring the intended variables, among other aspects.

It is important to note that primary data was collected for the purpose of this study. Kothari (2015) defines primary data as data collected by the researcher directly from participants

for the specific purpose of answering research questions. In this study, data was collected through a survey. A survey consists of a predetermined set of questions given to a sample in which participants are required to rate the given statements along a predetermined scale (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). The following sub-sections discuss the specific survey questionnaires used to collect data.

3.4.1 Human resource practices

The human resource practices (IHRp) questionnaire was used to measure the Impact of COVID-19 on the perceptions of human resource practices. The instrument was developed by Cajee and Grobler (2021). The instrument measures participants' perceptions of human resource practices before and during COVID-19.

The measure is based on human resource practices' 'expectation disconfirmation theory' and consists of 13 items assessed before and during COVID-19 to give a total of 26 items. For example, the first item reads as follows: "The organisation generally, and specifically before COVID-19 offered an attractive compensation and benefits package." The instrument used a five-point Linkert point scale, ranging from (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Uncertain; (4) Agree; and (5) Strongly agree. The maximum score is 130 and the minimum 26. A lower score during COVID-19 compared to the period before COVID-19 shows a negative impact of COVID-19 on human resource practices. On the other hand, a higher score during COVID-19 compared to the period before COVID-19 shows a positive impact of COVID-19 on human resource practices.

According to Boris (2014), a measure is reliable to the degree that it supplies consistent results. Furthermore, reliable instruments can be used with confidence that transient and situational factors are not interfering. The perceived and experienced human resource practices scale, in accordance with the expectation disconfirmation theory, has been validated and can be used with confidence (Grobler 2021). The instrument was adopted in this study owing to its high reliability as being measured by the Cronbach's alpha which exceeded the threshold of .7, which was greater than .80 for all IHRp factors. The

generally acceptable rule is that an instrument is reliable if the Cronbach's alpha is at least .70 (Wadkar, Singh, Chakravarty & Argade, 2016).
The measure was selected because it consists of qualities that represent the human resource practices construct and should therefore form its core assessment.

3.4.2 Organisational leadership

The Organisational Leadership Questionnaire was used in this study to measure organisational leadership. The instrument is currently being developed by Enslin and Grobler (2021). It measures organisational leadership and its elements, namely Leader Awareness, Leadership Culture, Leader Vision, Leadership Style and Characteristics, Engaging Communication, Support, Team Dynamics, and Delivering Strategy. The instrument is based on the organisational leadership theory, but since the instrument is part of an unpublished report, the specific literature upon which the instrument is based is not yet available. The instrument consists of 32 items. For example, the first item read as follows: "In my organisation, leaders manage their own emotions effectively." The scale used in the measure is a five-point Linkert point scale, ranging from (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Uncertain; (4) Agree; and (5) Strongly agree. The maximum score is 160, and the minimum is 32.

A high score shows that the leader presents high levels of overall awareness, demonstrates high ethical standards whilst planning and imagining an ideal future (Enslin & Grobler, 2021). Conversely, a low score shows that the leader presents low levels of awareness, demonstrates low ethical standards, and lacks planning and the ability to imagine an ideal future.
Again, since the instrument is still under development, no reliability information is available. The instrument was selected by the research study leader and was used by all students for this study. The instrument measured the organisational leadership construct and should therefore form its core assessment.

The organisational leadership instrument consisted of eight constructs, namely Leader Awareness (items 1, 2, 3, 4), Leadership Culture (items 5, 6, 7, 8), Leader Vision (items

9, 10, 11, 12), Leadership Style and Characteristics (items 13, 14, 15, 16), Engaging Communication (items 17, 18, 19, 20), Support (items 21, 22, 23, 24), Team Dynamics (items 25, 26, 27, 28), and Delivering Strategy (items 29, 30, 31, 32). Leadership awareness covered aspects such as the leader's ability to manage own emotions and awareness of own feelings. The leadership culture construct, which is defined as the way things are done within the organisation (Handy, 2002), assessed aspects such as the level of trust between the leader and the employee. Leadership vision assessed the leader's ability to create a clear picture of the ideal future for the organisation. The Leadership Style and Characteristics construct assessed *how* leaders influenced their followers to work towards a defined vision. Engaging Communication related to the ability of the leader to articulate the organisation's vision in a compelling and inspirational way. The leadership support construct assessed participants' perceptions on aspects such as the extent to which the leader created a safe emotional space to work and understood the subordinate's developmental needs. Team dynamics constructs assessed the leader's ability to manage and embrace diversity and harness the collective energy of team members to achieve goals. Finally, the Delivering Strategy construct measured the leader's ability to implement strategies and recognise employees' performance.

3.4.3 Work self-efficacy

WSES was used to measure the WSE variable. Pepe, Farnese, Avalone and Vecchione (2010) developed WSE to measure the perceived work capability within two dimensions related to the capability to behave in an efficacious way in the work context. These dimensions are the employee's ability to manage interpersonal relationships and achieve goals assigned to him/her (Pepe, Farnese, Avalone & Vecchione, 2010). WSE is based on the self-efficacy theory, which can be traced to Bandura's (1977 & 1997) work. Bandura's (1997) measure focused on people's beliefs about their capabilities to deal with the difficulties they faced in their work activities. However, since then, the work environment has changed significantly in its nature and complexity; hence, the new instrument was developed by Pepe, Farnese, Avalone and Vecchione (2010) to capture these developments. The instrument consists of 10 items, one of which reads: "Thinking

about your current working realities, how well can you achieve goals that will be assigned?"

The instrument used a five-point Linkert scale, with participants being asked to rate the given questions by selecting five options, namely (1) Not well at all; (2) Not well; (3) Uncertain; (4) Well; and (5) Very well. The maximum score is 50, with a high score indicating that participants have a high ability to achieve the goals set for them, while a low score shows a low ability to achieve assigned goals. The instrument was adopted in this study due to its high reliability as measured by the Cronbach's alpha, which was greater than .80 for all of the WSE factors. The generally accepted rule is that an instrument is reliable if the Cronbach's alpha is at least .70 (Wadkar, Singh, Chakravarty & Argade, 2016). The WSES was also included as an instrument per the joint research project within the research focus area of organisational behaviour and leadership in which the author is involved (see Textbox 1). The measure is selected because it consists of qualities that represent the WSE construct and should thus form its core assessment.

3.4.4 Demographic items

The following seven items were included to indicate the representation of the sample within the South African workforce:

- Gender: Male; Female
- Race: Asian; Black; Coloured; White
- Age: Years
- Years of formal schooling: Less than 12 years; 12 years (matric); first Degree/Diploma; Higher degree/Higher diploma
- Number of years with present employer: from 1 to 10 years
- Type of work: Support/admin; core business/operations
- Post level: Top/Senior management, Middle management/Professional, Junior management/Supervisors/Semi-skilled workers

A total of 68 items were included in this study for human resource practices (26 items), organisational leadership (32 items), and WSE (10 items). The measures as they appeared in the questionnaire are presented in Annexure E.

3.5 Design of the study

In the context of research, research philosophy refers to the belief about the nature and development of knowledge (Mkansi & Acheampong, 2012). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2015) identify four research philosophies, namely positivism, interpretivism, realism, and pragmatism. Positivism refers to an epistemological position in which researchers work with observable social realities with the view of forming law-like generalisations similar to those produced in natural sciences (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). Positivists believe that knowledge is objective and can be quantified; hence, they advocate for quantitative research methodologies (Mkansi & Acheampong, 2012). On the other side of the spectrum is the interpretivism philosophy, an epistemological position that advocates the need to acknowledge differences between humans in their role as social actors (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). Advocates of this philosophy believe that knowledge is subjective and its development cannot be separated from human actors who create it, in contrast to positivism which believes that knowledge can be developed independently from human actors.

Another philosophy is realism, defined as an epistemological position that objects exist independently of our knowledge of their existence (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2014). The philosophy holds that knowledge can be developed through its conception by personal human senses (Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel & Page, 2016).

In addition, pragmatism research philosophy is an epistemological position that holds that the best determinant of the best research philosophy is the research question (Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel & Page, 2016). This philosophy holds that it is possible to work with both positivist and interpretive positions in the same research to collect and interpret data to answer a research question (Mkansi & Acheampong, 2012).

This study adopted a positivist research philosophy owing to its ability to base conclusions on objective data collected through quantitative research methodology. It should be noted that this option was not chosen based on the superiority of the positivism philosophy, but rather its convenience in the researcher's circumstances. Moreover, this is in line with Leedy and Ormrod (2015), who explain that no-one research philosophy is superior to the other. The authors advised that the choice of the appropriate philosophy should be based on the researcher's beliefs and the circumstances within which the research is conducted.

After choosing research philosophy, the next step is the selection of the research approach. The inductive research approach involves the search of patterns within data to formulate a theory about the phenomenon under investigation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). Therefore, inductive starts with data collection, which is then subjected to rigorous analysis and interpretation to formulate a theory. On the other hand, the deductive research approach starts by analysing literature and formulating hypotheses or questions, informing data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). The analysis and interpretation of data aim to test the hypothesis or answer research questions.

This study adopted the deductive research approach for two reasons. Firstly, the variables being investigated in this study were not new and had been investigated to some extent previously. Therefore, there was already literature available to conduct analysis. Secondly, this study was part of broader research by the research study leader, Professor Grobler, and the researcher was one of the many students conducting the study. As a result, the choice of the deductive approach was informed by the choice made by the research objectives.

In addition, this study adopted the quantitative research strategy. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) define the quantitative strategy as involving a systematic and empirical investigation of an observable phenomenon using statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. This strategy is relevant where constructs have already been defined but have not been tested rigorously. According to Keller (2015), the quantitative

study is generally more rigorous than the qualitative study since the quantitative study is based on objective and quantitative data.

This study adopted a cross-sectional design. A cross-section study is one in which a study is carried out at a particular point in time instead of a study carried over time (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). According to Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel and Page (2016), a cross-sectional study is usually chosen due to its time and cost-effectiveness. In this study, the design was selected because it was time-effective since it would mean administering the instrument once rather than several times as would be required by the longitudinal design. Again, just like the choice of research approach, the decision of time horizon was also influenced the research problem. The text box below explains the research context in detail.

Text box 1:

The study aims to determine the nature and the extent of the relationship between human resource management, task-directed management, and employee and organisational wellness (as possibly mediated by relational leadership construct, namely organisational leadership) within the private sector, respectively, and the investigation of construct validity (and related requirements) of instruments and constructs within the South African and African context. The limitations are associated with the cross-sectional design, which has some shortcomings and the self-report measures that may skew responses (response bias), especially with answering delicate items (such as perceptions of leadership behaviour). A further limitation is related to common source bias, which will be addressed through more advanced methodologies by the primary researcher (this does not form part of the students' studies).

This study forms part of a research project within the research focus area of organisational leadership. The overarching project

comprised of 12 constructs. The instruments measuring these constructs were identified and, in some instances, adapted by the project leaders. Each participant in the project administered all organisational leadership instruments. The analysis and 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 the 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 A).

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

An administrator merged all data files of all the participants and prepared them to be imported into SPSS. Students were trained in the relevant and appropriate statistical techniques applicable to their study and 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. In this study, the same strategy was followed by all involved in the

study. The next section discusses the research method that was followed.

3.6 Method

The first step of the process was to identify an appropriate organisation from which to collect the data. For the researcher, the appropriate organisation was the researcher's employer, AM Consulting Engineers. This was followed by getting permission to conduct the study. A letter was written to the organisation's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), requesting permission to conduct the study within the organisation. The letter written to the CEO is attached in Annexure B. The permission was then granted by the CEO (Annexure B).

Some ethical issues arose from conducting this study. For example, the study raised privacy and confidentiality issues, given that employees were asked about what happened in their organisations regarding human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. Confidentiality was maintained by reporting on pooled results rather than data for individual employees. Again, no part of the questionnaire used in this study asked participants about their identification information. That way, participants remained anonymous. In addition, data collection only commenced after ethical clearance had been received from the university and the company's CEO's permission letter had been obtained. That way, the study's compliance with relevant ethical issues was independently assessed prior to the study.

The choice of the leadership research project met the researcher's needs in the private sector. Students in the leadership group received important information on research ethics, including a copy of the Unisa research ethics policy, as part of the induction to the project. Sections of the ethics policies such as the researcher's responsibility to strive towards achieving the highest possible level of excellence and integrity in their research, and Unisa's four moral principles for research, namely Autonomy, Beneficence, Nonmaleficence and Justice helped to guide conduct in the research. Furthermore, a total

of three sessions were held with students by the lead researcher for training, providing guidance, and resolving any challenges faced by students in the course of conducting the research.

Next, the researcher, together with other students in the group, received training in drawing a random sample and how to administer the battery of tests. The following steps were used to draw a random sample:

The researcher received access to a database of employees at AM Consulting Engineers. Each employee from the targeted population was assigned a unique number from 1 to 158, which formed the sample frame. The sample frame consisted of 46 management employees and 112 non-managerial employees.

Sixty random numbers were generated using Microsoft Excel based on the number of employees within the sample frame (1 to 158). A random number is “a number chosen from a pool of limited or unlimited numbers that have no discernible pattern for prediction” (Keller, 2015:252).

Invitations to participate in the study were sent through emails to employees whose numbers came up in the random number generation step above. The invitations included all the information the participants needed to complete the questionnaire, consent form, and instructions on how to complete the questionnaire.

A major problem encountered in data collection was the non-response of some of the selected participants. The researcher followed up with participants to whom invitations were sent twice. After that, if the participants failed to respond, the next possible random number was selected following the process above, and a new invitation was sent to the potential replacement participant. The same process was followed until the required number of participants (60) was attained. Completed questionnaires were returned through email or manually, and the data was captured in an Excel spreadsheet.

The other step in the study was data analysis. The researcher was part of a session where the data were analysed, and students were guided in interpreting the data. Details of how data was analysed are discussed under heading 3.6 of this chapter. The actual results of the study are reported in Chapter 4. The final step of the research was to interpret the results and write down the study's conclusions. This is reported in Chapter 5. The next section discusses data analysis techniques used in this study.

3.7 Data analysis

Data in the Excel spreadsheet was combined with data from other students and analysed using the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 27. The first data analysis step was to generate the data that helped describe the sample's characteristics. This was done using means for continuous variables (such as age) and frequencies for categorical data (such as qualifications). Describing sample characteristics was necessary to get to know the group the researcher was dealing with and assess the sample's representativeness to the South African private sector workforce.

Once the population was defined and characterised, data analysis moved on to the calculation of descriptive statistics (means and SDs) for each item in the human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE instruments. Keller (2015:120) defines mean as the “central tendency of a data set,” which shows the average of a collection of numbers. It is calculated by dividing the sum of all observations in a set of numbers by the number of items (N) in that set (Keller, 2015). SD measures the degree of how far or near the observation is from the mean (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). Furthermore, descriptive statistics were calculated to know the standing of the groups on the various variables. The following formulae were used to calculate mean and SD, respectively (Keller, 2015):

$$Mean\ (\bar{x}) = \frac{\sum x_i}{n}$$

$$Standard\ deviation\ = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x_i - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$$

Where:

- $\sum x_i = \text{sum of all observations}$
- n = number of observations

Once the population had been described, and the relative standing of the groups in the various variables had been established, the next step of data analysis was to calculate the reliability of the information. Reliability was assessed by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which measures an instrument's internal consistency (the extent to which items participants' scores are related) (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Although the general rule is that an instrument is judged to be reliable when it has a Cronbach's alpha value of at least .70, Ursachi, Horodnic and Zait (2015) explained that an instrument can still be reliable even if the Cronbach's alpha value is less that than .70 but provided that it is .60 or above. Assessing the reliability of instruments was done to determine the effectiveness of the measures in measuring the study's constructs, namely human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE.

The other step in data analysis was calculating a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). ANOVA refers to the "technique used to test the null hypothesis such that the mean of various populations is equal" (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2014:564). It tests for differences between means from two or more groups. ANOVA calculation was done to assess the homogeneity of mean scores between organisations. The p-value was used to decide whether differences existed among organisations in the private sector. According to Illowsky and Dean (2015), a statistical observation is judged to be significant if the p-value is less than .05 ($p < .05$). A p-value higher than this threshold is judged to be statistically insignificant. Testing for statistical significance of ANOVA was done to assess whether results from the various organisations could be pooled or if organisations differ fundamentally on the different levels of the phenomena.

Moreover, T-tests were also calculated. A T-test is a type of inferential statistic used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups (Sekaran, 2016). In this study, T-tests were performed to determine whether the differences in mean scores of managerial and non-managerial participants, and those between support and core staff were statistically significant. Such differences were also tested for statistical significance using the p-value. As indicated above, differences were judged to be statistically significant if the p-value was less than .05.

This study also calculated and analysed Levene's Test. According to Keller (2015), Levene's Test can be defined as an inferential statistic that is used to assess the equality of variances of means for a variable calculated for two or more groups. In addition, t-tests were also calculated and analysed. Essentially, t-tests are conducted to compare the means of two or more independent groups to find out if the means of the associated population are statistically different (Keller, 2015). In this study, the tests were conducted to assess the homogeneity of the sample regarding mean scores for managerial and non-managerial employees, and the differences in mean scores between those involved in core and support activities.

According to Keller (2015), differences can be statistically significant but less so from a practical point of view. Practical significance, also known as the effect size, measures the extent to which a difference is judged to be large enough to be meaningful in the real world or the practical sense (McLeod, 2019). The Cohen's d-value is used to measure practical significance. It is calculated as follows:

$$Cohen's\ d = \frac{(M_1 - M_2)}{Pooled\ SD}$$

$$Pooled\ SD = \sqrt{\frac{SD_1^2 + SD_2^2}{2}}$$

Where:

- $M_1 = The\ mean\ of\ group\ 1\ (for\ example\ managerial\ employees)$
- $M_2 = The\ mean\ of\ group\ 2\ (for\ example\ non-managerial\ employees$
- $SD_1^2 = The\ standard\ deviation\ of\ group\ 1$
- $SD_2^2 = The\ standard\ deviation\ of\ group\ 2$

In this study, the d-value was used to assess the practical significance of the differences in scores for the two groups. Firstly, the d-value was used to assess the differences between employees in core and support functions. Secondly, the d-value was used to assess the practical significance of the differences in scores between managerial and non-managerial employees in the private sector. Differences can be judged to have a small (d ≤ .20), medium (.21≤ d ≤ .49), or large (d ≥ .50) practical significance or effect size (McLeod, 2019). This was done to determine the level of homogeneity of the private sector.

After testing the homogeneity of the organisations and differences between managerial and non-managerial participants, the next step was to assess the correlation among human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE using Pearson's correlation coefficient (R). Pearson's correlation coefficient measures the extent to which variables change together or in opposite directions (Keller, 2015). Variables can change in the same direction (positive correlation) or in the opposite direction (negative correlation). According to Schober, Boer and Schwarte (2018:1765), the absolute value of the correlation coefficient can be described as small (.00 ≤ R ≤ .29), medium (.30 ≤ R ≤ .50), or large (R ≥ 0.50). The correlation was also tested for statistical significance in the manner described above. This was done to ascertain if the variables relate in a meaningful manner.

The final step of data analysis was to perform a linear regression analysis to assess how a combination of variables (human resource practices, organisational leadership, and

WSE) relate. Regression analysis is a statistical process of developing a model that can predict a dependent variable from the independent variable(s) (Gogtay, Deshpande & Thatte, 2017). In this study, multiple regression analyses were performed to determine how human resource practices and organisational leadership, as explanatory variables, could be used to predict WSE, the dependent variable or scalar response. The model's predictive value was measured by the coefficient of determination (R Square). The R Square measures the extent to which variations in the dependent variable can be explained by variations in the independent variable(s) (Keller, 2015). Again, the R Square can be judged as being small (R Square ≤ 0.39), medium (0.40 ≤ R Square ≤ 0.49), or large (R Square ≥ 0.50) (Gogtay, Deshpande, & Thatte, 2017)

3.8 Summary

This chapter discussed the research methodology that was designed to collect, analyse, and interpret data for this study. The chapter started by discussing the aims of the empirical investigation before discussing the research design and methodology adopted. The chapter has also discussed the development of the research instruments used to collect data in detail. Finally, the chapter discussed the research design, method, and statistical techniques adopted to analyse and interpret the data collected in this study. In Chapter 4, the results of the study are presented and analysed.

CHAPTER 4:

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study. It is divided into six sections; the chapter commences by presenting sample demographic data to understand the sample's composition and representativeness. In the second section, descriptive statistical data are analysed. This section aims to understand the current situation in the private sector regarding each of the variables and their respective items. Thereafter, the statistics are used to assess the homogeneity of the private sector in general and with respective mean scores of managerial versus non-managerial employees and support versus core employees. Section five presents statistics on the impact of human resource practices and organisational leadership on WSE. This is achieved using Pearson's correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis. The sixth and final section provides a summary of the chapter.

The variables used in this study are multidimensional; in other words, human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE consist of several factors. For the purpose of this study, the descriptive, correlational, and reliability analysis will include the respective factors of the variables. However, the inferential statistics and multiple regression will only be performed on the total scores of the three main variables included in the purpose of this study.

4.2 Sample

As indicated in Chapter 3, the sample of this study consisted of individual samples, upon which the researcher administered the instruments. Moreover, the sample also included the pooled sample, which consisted of the samples for the organisational leadership group. The individual sample size was 60, and the group sample size was 1,733,

respectively, drawn from 29 organisations in the private sector. The analysis in this study will be based on pooled data. This section presents and discusses the results of age analysis regarding age average, SD, and range. It should be noted that the unique numbers for organisations presented in this section are not necessarily in sequence, as each participating organisation has its unique number. The numbers are merely sorted in ascending order. Table 4.1 below presents age statistics for the pooled sample as well as per company.

Table 4.1: Age Statistics - Pooled Sample as well as per company

Organisation	Average 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
Total	38.59	8.77

The results in Table 4.1 above show that the mean age for the pooled data was 38.59 years with an SD of 8.77 years. According to Stats SA (2021), a majority of the South African workforce is aged between 25 and 40 years. Therefore, the identified mean age was within the mean age for the South African workforce. According to Keller (2015), it is generally true that if the calculated SD is less than 25% of the pooled mean, then the dispersion is low. Therefore, at 8.77 years, the SD was 23% of the reported mean of 38.59 years; hence, it shows low dispersion of reported mean ages at 8.77 years, the SD was relatively low compared to reported mean ages. Therefore, there was low variability in ages across the organisations in the pooled sample. Therefore, in terms of age, the sample of this study was representative of the South African workforce. Table 4.2 below presents the tenure of participants in terms of mean and SD.

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

Company	Average Tenure	Standard Deviation
4	11.40	6.600
5	10.05	8.466
6	9.47	5.890
7	3.23	2.324
8	4.22	3.140

9	4.85	2.699
10	11.85	9.054
14	4.17	2.212
15	16.70	8.204
16	6.67	4.740
18	2.83	1.060
19	11.15	7.748
21	11.80	7.538
22	6.12	4.812
24	4.73	2.921
26	7.42	4.533
27	10.28	6.857
29	5.78	3.966
31	7.87	6.508
32	9.45	7.710
33	9.62	7.100
35	9.70	6.718
36	7.48	4.803
37	8.02	6.283
40	5.35	3.808
41	10.34	8.426
42	12.00	5.191
44	9.69	7.975
45	5.68	4.405
Total	8.18	6.709

The mean tenure in this study was 8.18 years, with an SD of 6.71 years. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), the mean tenure for a study should be at least two years for participants' views to be valid. Therefore, the tenure of this study was well above the recommended mean tenure. Therefore, the participants were experienced enough to

raise an opinion of their workplaces. Table 4.3 below presents gender statistics for the sample.

Table 4.3: Gender Statistics - Pooled sample as well as per company

Company	Male	Female
4	24(40%)	36(60%)
5	41(68%)	19(32%)
6	19(32%)	41(68%)
7	21(35%)	39(65%)
8	18(30%)	43(70%)
9	40(67%)	20(33%)
10	31(57%)	23(43%)
14	24(40%)	36(60%)
15	22(37%)	38(63%)
16	34(57%)	26(43%)
18	30(50%)	30(50%)
19	32(54%)	27(46%)
21	26(43%)	35(57%)
22	23(38%)	37(62%)
24	36(60%)	24(40%)
26	22(37%)	38(63%)
27	27(45%)	33(55%)
29	9(15%)	51(85%)
31	35(58%)	25(42%)
32	40(67%)	20(33%)
33	33(55%)	27(45%)
35	35(58%)	25(42%)
36	43(72%)	17(28%)
37	5(8%)	55(92%)
40	20(33%)	40(67%)

41	29(50%)	29(50%)
42	17(28%)	43(72%)
44	21(35%)	39(65%)
45	32(53%)	28(47%)
Pooled	789(45%)	944(55%)

The pooled data show that there were more females (55%) compared to males (45%). These findings were generally in line with the gender statistics reported by Stats SA (2021) that the South African workforce comprises 51% females and 49% males. Therefore, in terms of gender, the sample was representative of the South African workforce. Table 4.4 below presents race statistics.

Table 4.4 Racial Statistics - Pooled sample as well as per company

Company	Asian	Black	Coloured	White
4	3(5.0%)	14 (23.3%)	28 (46.7%)	15 (25.0%)
5	1 (1.7%)	12 (20.0%)	30 (50.0%)	17 (28.3%)
6	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	60 (100.0%)
7	3 (5.0%)	10 (16.7%)	0 (0.0%)	47 (78.3%)
8	4 (6.6%)	38 (62.3%)	6 (9.8%)	13 (21.3%)
9	0 (0.0%)	4 (6.7%)	1 (1.7%)	55 (91.7%)
10	1 (1.9%)	29 (53.7%)	9 (16.7%)	15 (27.8%)
14	0 (0.0%)	56 (93.3%)	3 (5.0%)	1 (1.7%)
15	1 (1.7%)	51 (85.0%)	2 (3.3%)	6 (10.0%)
16	12 (20.0%)	20 (33.3%)	5 (8.3%)	23 (38.3%)
18	16 (26.7%)	26 (43.3%)	13 (21.7%)	5 (8.3%)
19	14 (23.7%)	40 (67.8%)	2 (3.4%)	3 (5.1%)

21	6 (9.8%)	40 (65.6%)	5 (8.2%)	10 (16.4%)
22	0 (0.0%)	24 (40.0%)	31 (51.7%)	5 (8.3%)
24	8 (13.3%)	46 (76.7%)	2 (3.3%)	4 (6.7%)
26	2 (3.3%)	25 (41.7%)	21 (35.0%)	12 (20.0%)
27	3 (5.0%)	46 (76.7%)	3 (5.0%)	8 (13.3%)
29	2 (3.3%)	13 (21.7%)	12 (20.0%)	33 (55.0%)
31	10 (16.7%)	43 (71.7%)	3 (5.0%)	4 (6.7%)
32	2 (3.3%)	47 (78.3%)	2 (3.3%)	9 (15.0%)
33	10 (16.7%)	34 (56.7%)	9 (15.0%)	7 (11.7%)
35	11 (18.3%)	21 (35.0%)	5 (8.3%)	23 (38.3%)
36	1 (1.7%)	43 (71.7%)	6 (10.0%)	10 (16.7%)
37	15 (25.0%)	28 (46.7%)	9 (15.0%)	8 (13.3%)
40	1 (1.7%)	35 (58.3%)	5 (8.3%)	19 (31.7%)
41	13 (22.4%)	21 (36.2%)	3 (5.2%)	21 (36.2%)
42	3 (5.0%)	7 (11.7%)	1 (1.7%)	49 (81.7%)
44	2 (3.3%)	39 (65.0%)	2 (3.3%)	17 (28.3%)
45	8 (13.3%)	28 (46.7%)	11 (18.3%)	13 (21.7%)
Pooled	152 (8.8%)	840 (48.5%)	229 (13.2%)	512 (29.5%)

According to Stats SA (2021), the South African workforce respondents comprise 3% Asian, 81% Black, 9% Coloured, and 8% White. The results in Table 4.4 above shows that the sample was relatively less representative, particularly Black and White representation. While Black respondents constituted 81% of the labour force, they only consisted of 48.5% in the sample. On the other hand, while White respondents constituted

only 8% of the workforce, they constituted 29.5% in the sample. The representation of Asian and Coloured respondents was in line with the labour statistics, albeit with higher proportions. The next section discusses the descriptive statistic per variable.

4.3 Descriptive statistics of variables

This section discusses the descriptive statistics for human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. Table 4.5 below presents statistics per item.

Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics per Item

Item	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Human Resource Practices			
IHRp_comp_b	1733	3.45	1.088
IHRp_bonus_b	1732	3.12	1.262
IHRp_perks_b	1733	2.14	1.222
IHRp_train_b	1732	3.53	1.051
IHRp_aut_b	1731	3.42	.955
IHRp_recog_b	1733	3.29	1.047
IHRp_flex_b	1731	3.39	1.147
IHRp_image_b	1733	3.84	.965
IHRp_supp_b	1733	3.37	1.053
IHRp_jsc_b	1732	3.71	1.028
IHRp_teams_b	1733	3.89	.869
IHRp_ind_b	1732	3.92	.85
IHRp_jfit_b	1733	3.67	.872
IHRp_total_b	1733	3.4412	.66982
IHRp_comp_C19	1733	2.99	1.149
IHRp_bonus_C19	1733	2.6	1.199
IHRp_perks_C19	1733	1.94	1.014

IHRp_train_C19	1732	3.15	1.103
IHRp_aut_C19	1732	3.25	.996
IHRp_recog_C19	1733	3.04	1.082
IHRp_flex_C19	1733	3.48	1.129
IHRp_image_C19	1733	3.58	1.013
IHRp_supp_C19	1732	3.22	1.087
IHRp_jsc_C19	1732	3.29	1.175
IHRp_teams_C19	1733	3.53	1.023
IHRp_ind_C19	1731	3.8	.931
IHRp_jfit_C19	1733	3.42	.951
IHRp_total_C19		3.18	.71
IHRp_BvsC19		.27	.53
Organisational Leadership			
OL1	1733	3.46	1.007
OL2	1733	3.37	0.997
OL3	1732	3.58	1.037
OL4	1732	3.54	0.999
OL5	1733	3.97	0.838
OL6	1733	3.79	0.972
OL7	1733	3.92	0.905
OL8	1733	3.73	0.958
OL9	1733	3.5	1.062
OL10	1731	3.65	0.996
OL11	1733	3.54	1.074
OL12	1733	3.65	0.974
OL13	1733	3.68	1.015
OL14	1732	3.54	1.047
OL15	1733	3.59	1.041
OL16	1733	3.64	0.971
OL17	1733	3.54	1.087

OL18	1733	3.68	0.994
OL19	1732	3.43	1.112
OL20	1726	3.47	1.031
OL21	1733	3.56	1.077
OL22	1733	3.36	1.099
OL23	1732	3.65	1.028
OL24	1733	3.3	1.089
OL25	1733	3.65	0.985
OL26	1732	3.64	1.008
OL27	1733	3.6	1.058
OL28	1732	3.55	1.043
OL29	1731	3.57	0.973
OL30	1732	3.73	0.948
OL31	1733	3.94	0.854
OL32	1733	3.63	1.056
OLTotal	1733	3.61	.79
Work Self-Efficacy			
WSE1	1733	3.95	1.055
WSE2	1733	4.03	1.04
WSE3	1732	4.06	0.843
WSE4	1733	3.98	0.838
WSE5	1732	4.17	0.769
WSE6	1733	4.18	0.762
WSE7	1733	4.29	0.721
WSE8	1733	4.16	0.797
WSE9	1733	4.21	0.739
WSE10	1731	4.29	0.737
WSETOT			

As indicated in Chapter 3, the IHRp questionnaire was used to measure the impact of COVID-19 on employees' perceptions with regards to the effectiveness of human resource practices. The instrument used a five-point Linkert point scale, ranging from (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Uncertain; (4) Agree; and (5) Strongly agree. The results reflect the lowest mean score of 2.4 and the highest mean score of 3.92. Therefore, this implies that the average pooled sample in the private sector believe that the organisation they work for did not have innovative perks before COVID-19. While an average of the pooled sample believe that the organisations they work for offered them opportunities to work as individuals before COVID-19. Meanwhile, after COVID-19, the human resource practice construct reflects the lowest mean of 1.94 and the highest mean of 3.8. This implies that the average pooled sample believes that the organisation they work for did not offer innovative packages after COVID-19 than before the COVID-19 pandemic. They also believe that the organisation they work for offered them almost the same or slightly fewer opportunities to work as individuals after COVID-19

As indicated in Chapter 3, the Organisational Leadership Questionnaire was used in this study to measure organisational leadership. The scale used in the measure is a five-point Linkert scale ranging from (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Uncertain; (4) Agree; and (5) Strongly agree. The results reflect the lowest mean score of 3.3 and the highest mean score of 3.97. The highest mean score denotes that the average of the pooled sample in the private sector believe (to an extent) that their leaders trust them to get the job done. While the lowest score denotes that the average of the sample feels indifferent or uncertain about their leaders encouraging them to take risks as employees.

Lastly, the WSES was used to measure the WSE variable. The instrument used a five-point Linkert scale, with participants being requested to rate the provided questions by selecting five options, namely (1) Not well at all; (2) Not well; (3) Uncertain; (4) Well; and (5) Very well. The results reflect the lowest mean score of 3.95 and the highest score of 4.29. The lowest mean score infers that the average number of the pooled sample significantly believe that looking at their working realities, they can still achieve goals that are assigned to them. The highest mean score infers that the average number of the

pooled sample strongly believes that they can work with people of diverse experiences, ages, and in 'teams' (this is supported by a high pooled mean of 3.61 and a low pooled SD of .79).

The following section presents the descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha coefficient per instrument. These statistics are reflected in the table below.

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

	Mean	**SD**	**Range**	**Cronbach Alpha**
	Human Resource Practices			
Before COVID-19	3.44	.67	1-5	.88
During COVID-19	3.18	.71	1-5	.89
	Organisational Leadership			
Organisational Leadership	3.61	.79	1-5	.98
	Work Self-Efficacy			
Work Self-Efficacy	3.61	.79	1-5	.89

It was noted in Chapter 3 that an instrument is deemed a reliable measure of a construct if its Cronbach alpha is at least .70. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach alpha) for human resources was measured before and during COVID-19 and was .88 and .89, respectively. The Cronbach alphas for organisational leadership and WSE were .98 and .89. The Cronbach alphas in Table 4.6 (above) were above the .70 threshold already noted; therefore, all the instruments were reliable.

4.4 Correlation analysis

This section discusses the relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. The relationship is measured using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The relationship between the constructs of this study are expressed through Pearson correlation coefficient and are reported in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 below displays a correlation matrix of human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE.

Table 4.7: Correlation matrix in the private sector

	IHRp_b	IHRp_C19	IHRp_BvsC19	OL	WSE
IHRp_b	1				
IHRp_C19	.71**	1			
IHRp_BvsC19	.32**	-.44**	1		
OL	.54**	.51**	0.01	1	
WSE	.27**	.26**	.00	.46**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

- IHRp_b = Human Resource Practices before COVID-19
- IHRp_C19 = Human Resource Practices during COVID-19
- IHRp_BvsC19 = Human Resource Practices before compared to during COVID-19
- OL = Organisational Leadership
- WSE = Work Self-Efficacy

In Chapter 3 it was noted that correlation could be small (.00 ≤ R ≤ .29), medium (.30 ≤ R ≤ .50) or large (R ≥ 0.50). Large correlations were recorded between IHRp_b and IHRp_C19 (R = .71, p < .01), and between OL and IHRp (R = .54, p < .01). Both correlations were positive and statistically significant. The correlation betweenIHRp_b was found to be positively correlated to IHRp_BvsC19 (R = .32, p < .01). This was a medium correlation.

Small, statistically significant and positive correlations were recorded between WSE and IHRp_b (R = .27, p < .01) and between WSE and IHRp_C19 (R = .26, p < .01). No

correlation was found between WSE and IHRp_BvsC19 (R = 0, p > .05). A negative and statistically significant correlation was recorded between IHRp_BvsC19 compared to IHRp_C19 (R = .-44, p < .01). This means that, in general, human resource practices deteriorated within the private sector during COVID-19. Finally, a considerably small correlation that was not statically significant, was recorded between OL and IHRp_BvsC19 (R = .01, p < .01).

To sum up the findings, the correlations above show that human resource practices had a significant positive effect on WSE, both before and during COVID-19. Thus, the results tally with studies by Chaudhary, Rangnekar and Barua (2012).

4.4 Inferential statistics

To determine the homogeneity of the private sector, ANOVA was conducted on all the constructs measured within the company (in this case 29) as a grouping variable. The results are reported in Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8: Test of homogeniety (Anova) of the private sector

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
IHRp_total_b	Between Groups	211.08	28	7.54	22.70	<.01
	Within Groups	566	1704	.33		
	Total	777.07	1732			
IHRp_total_C19	Between Groups	258.38	28	9.23	25.96	<.01
	Within Groups	605.64	1704	0.36		
	Total	864.02	1732			

IHRp_BvsC19	Between Groups	121.50	28	4.34	20.345	<.01
	Within Groups	363.43	1704	.21		
	Total	484.93	1732			
OLTOT	Between Groups	257.51	28	9.20	18.875	<.01
	Within Groups	830.27	1704	.49		
	Total	1 087.79	1732			
WSE	Between Groups	101.22	28	3.62	12.357	<.01
	Within Groups	498.52	1704	.29		
	Total	599.74	1732			

If significant differences are found across and within companies, that will mean that the sector is not homogeneous and that the generalisability of the pooled results must be treated with caution. Table 4.8 above shows that the mean scores were significant both within private sectors companies (within groups) and across private sectors companies since p-values were < .01 for all the constructs. Therefore, it can be concluded that the private sector sample was not homogeneous with respect to all the constructs in this study, namely human resource practices before and during COVID-19, organisational leadership, and WSE. Therefore, the generalisability of the pooled results must be treated with caution for all the constructs. Table 4.9(i) below compares the mean scores of those involved in core functions to those in support positions.

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

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means				
	Equal variances …	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
A	… assumed	.14	.71	1.54	1 725	.12	.05	.03
	… not assumed			1.54	1 706	.12	.05	.03
B	… assumed	.03	.87	-.67	1 725	.50	-.02	.03
	… not assumed			-.67	1 689	.50	-.02	.03
C	… assumed	4.0 7	.04	2.84	1 725	.01	.07	.03
	… not assumed			2.83	1 635	.01	.07	.03
D	… assumed	.79	.37	1.72	1 725	.09	.07	.04
	… not assumed			1.72	1 713	.09	.07	.04
E	… assumed	.00	.97	-.99	1 725	.32	-.03	.03
	… not assumed			-.99	1 686	.33	-.03	.03

A = Human Resource Practices before COVID-19; B = Human Resource Practices during COVID-19; C = Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19; D = Organisational Leadership; and E = Work Self-Efficacy.

Levene's Test shows that except for the Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19 constructs, variances in mean scores between those involved in core functions compared to those involved in support functions could be assumed to be equal, with

respect to all the other constructs since p-values were greater than .05. Therefore, while pooled results could be generalised with certainty for all the other constructs, such generalisations should be treated with caution in respect to the Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19 construct since the p-value for this construct was less than .05 (p = .04).

Again, regarding Human Resource Practices before COVID-19, Human Resource Practices during COVID-19 and Work Self-Efficacy constructs, the t-tests show that equality of mean could be assumed since the reported significance levels for these constructs were less than .05. Therefore, generalisations of results from pooled data could be done meaningfully. However, the equality of means in mean scores of those involved in core functions to those in support positions could not be assumed regarding (t (1 725) = 2.84, p =.01). This means that the results from pooled data should be treated with caution.

It has been indicated in Chapter 3 that statistically significant differences may be insignificant in the real world. To assess whether this was the case, the d-value was calculated as indicated in Chapter 3 for the Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19 construct. The d-value was determined to be small, .14. This is less than .20, as indicated in Chapter 3, meaning that the observed differences were practically significant. As a result, the sample was different with respect to Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19. Generalisations of pooled results made from pooled data should therefore be treated with caution.

Table 4.9(ii) below compares the results of the mean scores of those involved in managerial positions and those who were not in managerial positions.

Table 4.9 (ii): Comparing the mean scores of those in managerial positions to those in non-managerial positions

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference

A	… assumed	.29	.591	3.27	1726			
	… not assumed			3.36	885.03	.001	.12	.04
B	… assumed	.04	.840	4.55	1726	.001	.12	.04
	… not assumed			4.63	868.59	.000	.17	.04
C	… assumed	9.03	.030	-1.92	1726	.001	.14	.04
	… not assumed			-2.12	1043.82	.001	.14	.04
D	… assumed	6.57	.010	3.27	1726	.03	-.02	.03
	… not assumed			3.43	926.51	.01	.07	.04
E	… assumed	2.91	.088	2.43	1726	.02	.08	.03
	… not assumed			2.50	894.00	.01	.08	.03

A = Human Resource Practices before COVID-19; B = Human Resource Practices during COVID-19; C = Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19; D = Organisational Leadership; E = Work Self-Efficacy.

Levene's Test was also used to assess whether equality of variances in mean scores could be assumed between managerial and non-managerial employees. The test shows that equality of variances of mean scores between managerial and non-managerial employees could not be assumed with respect to Organisational Leadership ($p = .01$) and Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19 ($p = .03$), meaning that the results from pooled data should be treated with caution. Equality of variances in mean scores could be assumed between managerial and non-managerial employees with respect to all the other constructs.

The t-tests showed that there were statistically significant differences in mean scores between managerial and non-managerial employees with respect to all the constructs of the study, meaning that results for pooled data should be treated with caution. Again, these differences were tested for practical significance using Cohen's d-value, as discussed in Chapter 3. The differences were tested on Human Resource Practices before COVID-19, Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19 and Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19. Cohen's d value was large for the Human Resource Practices before COVID-19 construct (d = .24), showing that no practically significant differences were found with respect to this variable. However, the d-values were small for Human Resource Practices during COVID-19 (d = .18), Human Resource Practices before versus during COVID-19 (d = -.10), Organisational Leadership (d = .18), and Work Self-Efficacy (d = .13), meaning that the observed differences were practically different. Therefore, results generalised from pooled data should be treated with caution.

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

This section will discuss the relationship between Pearson's correlation and linear regression. Pearson's correlation has already been discussed in Table 4.7. Large correlations were recorded between human resource practices before COVID-19 and human resource practices during COVID-19 and between organisational leadership and human resource practices during COVID-19. Both correlations were positive and statistically significant. Human resource practices before COVID-19 was found to be positively correlated to human resource practices before and during COVID-19, suggesting a medium correlation. Small, statistically significant and positive correlations were recorded between WSE and human resource practices before COVID-19 and human resource practices during COVID-19. Again, there was no correlation between WSE and human resource practices before and during COVID-19. A negative and statistically significant correlation was recorded between human resource practices before and during COVID-19 compared to human resource practices during COVID-19. Finally, a very small, statistically significant correlation was recorded between organisational leadership and human resource practices before compared to during

COVID-19. All these correlations were found to be practically significant. Table 4.10 below presents the results of multiple regression analyses.

Table 4:10: Regression Analysis (contribution of different human resource practices, organisational leadership and work self-efficacy)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate	R square change	F change	Sig. F change
1	.30[a]	.09	.09	.86	-	-	-
2	.54[a]	.29	.29	.78	.20	21.09	>.001

[a] Model with Human Resource Practices predicting Work Self-Efficacy.

[b] Model with Human Resource Practices and Organisational Leadership predicting Work Self-Efficacy.

Multiple regressions were performed to analyse human resource practices and organisational leadership's contribution to WSE. In the first model, Model 1, human resource practices were used to predict WSE. The results show that human resource practices could be used to predict 9% of variations in WSE (R Square = .09, $p < .01$). Although the model's predictive value was small based on the discussion in Chapter 3, it was statistically and practically significant. These findings were in line with studies by Chaudhary, Rangnekar and Barua (2012), Chan, Kalliath, Brough, Siu, O'Driscoll and Timms (2016), Ma, Gong, Long and Shang (2021), and Tims, Bakker and Derks (2014), who found that human resource practices have a positive influence on WSE.

In the second model, Model 2, organisational leadership was added to Model 1 variables to predict the WSE. The model's predictive value increased to 29% (R Square = .29, $p < .01$). Thus, organisational leadership added 20% to the model's predictive value, and that increase was statistically significant.

Overall, the model developed in this study, which uses organisational leadership and human resource practices to predict WSE, had a statistically significant but small predictive value. However, despite the model's medium predictive value, it was practically significant, as shown by the large effect size ($R = .54$, $p < .001$). In other words, the model's predictive value is significant in the real world. This implies that managers who want to improve WSE in their organisations should focus on improving organisational leadership and human resource practices.

4.6 Summary

This chapter covered six sections in relation to the study conducted in Chapter 3. The first section discussed the characteristics of the sample, focusing on how representative the sample is to the target population, the private sector workforce. The analysis shows that the sample was representative of the private sector workforce in terms of gender, age, tenure, and level of education. The discussion in the second section focused on the descriptive statistical analyses that described the pooled sample's lowest and highest mean scores.The third section then discussed the descriptive statistics in terms of data collected. It presented the analysis of the data collected in respect of the 3 variables. Finally, in the fourth section, inferential statistics were used to assess the homogeneity of the private sector in general and with respect to mean scores of managerial versus non-managerial employees and support versus core employees.

The ANOVA results showed that the private sector was heterogeneous in general. However, the private sector sample was not homogeneous; therefore, the generalisability of the results from pooled results must be treated with caution. The results from Levene's Test for equality of variances and t-test for equality of means showed that the observed differences in mean scores between support and core staff were a result of chance rather than due to differences in organisational leadership, WSE, and human resource practices before and after COVID-19 between the two staff groups.

Again, practically insignificant differences were observed between those involved in core activities and those involved in support activities with respect to human resource practices before COVID-19 versus human resource practices during COVID-19. Thus, readers were cautioned to treat the pooled data with caution regarding results with those variables in which significant differences were observed. Section five presented statistics on the impact of human resource practices and organisational leadership on WSE. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed that human resource practices significantly affected WSE, both before and during COVID-19.

However, the effect of human resource practices on WSE was marginally lower during COVID-19 than before COVID-19. This means that COVID-19 negatively affected human resource practices in general; thus, reducing the effect of human resource practices on WSE. In addition, organisational leadership was found to impact WSE significantly. Finally, in regression analyses, the developed model that used organisational leadership and human resource practices to predict WSE had statistically significant but small predictive value. However, despite the model's small predictive value, it was practically significant. In other words, the model's predictive value was found to be significant in the real world. The next chapter, Chapter 5, will discuss the results.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of the study. The discussion is organised according to the research objectives presented in Chapter 1. Once the results have been discussed, the following section focuses on proving recommendations based on the discussed results. Finally, the limitations of the study are discussed together with suggestions for further research.

5.2 Discussions

In this first sub-section, the results of the study are discussed. The discussion starts by discussing the definitions of human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. Thereafter, the empirical research report that links human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE is also discussed. This sub-section also discusses the empirical relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE within the context of the private sector. Finally, this sub-section concludes by discussing the recommendations based on the discussed results.

5.2.1 Comprehensive definition of variables

The first objective of this study was to comprehensively define Human Resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. For the purpose of this study, human resource practices are defined as the integrated and strategic processes, systems, and procedures of managing employees (Armstrong, 2018) to ensure that they are highly motivated (O'Riordan, 2017), committed, developed, and are capable of delivering the

organisation's goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve a competitive advantage (Mathis & Jackson, 2018). On the other hand, organisational leadership in this study is defined as the process through which one person (the leader) influences and motivates other people (followers) to work together (Malik & Azmat, 2019) towards the achievement of the organisation's shared goals and objectives developed or adjusted in alignment with organisational needs (Grobler & Singh, 2018). This ultimately leads to achieving the organisation's cohesive strategy (Ejimabo, 2017). Finally, WSE was defined in this study as employees' self in their abilities to perform and accomplish work assigned to them (Bandura, 1986; Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017; Pepe, et al., 2010; Tweed et al., 2020). The next section discussed results relating to the study's second objective.

5.2.2 Empirical research on the relationship among the variables

The second objective was to report on empirical research, linking human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. Several articles were reviewed to achieve this objective. The review found that organisational leadership is positively correlated to human resource practices at the macro-level. This means that organisations that adopt effective human resource practices have high chances of having effective leaders. This should be expected given that human resource practices aim to influence employees' behaviour (Saifalislam, Osman & AlQudah, 2014), who in turn become leaders. Therefore, effective HR practices should be expected to influence organisational leadership positively. At the micro-level, organisational leadership and HR practices are all multidimensional. At such a level, HR practices may refer to training programmes, developmental opportunities, performance management, pay for performance, internal promotional opportunities, autonomy, and participation in decision-making.

On the other hand, organisational leadership can be seen as organisational support, transformational leadership, and leadership development. In the reviewed studies, a positive correlation among HR practices and organisational leadership was found, reinforcing the proposition that HR practices positively influence organisational leadership. The relationships ranged from small to large. The studies that linked

organisational leadership and human resource practices provided some insight into the ongoing research on the relationship between the variables. The current approach measures existing human resources outcomes such as job motivation and turnover intention within the context of COVID-19 (Bajrami, Dunja Demirovi´c, Terzi´c, Aleksandra, Petrovi´c, Radovanovi´c, Tretiakova & Hadoud, 2021). Secondly, the studies were conducted in Western countries, Serbia and the USA, and used large samples of greater than 200. Both studies focused on industries heavily affected by the restrictions instituted to control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, namely hospitality, food and beverage, and lodging industries.

At the macro-level, organisational leadership was found to influence WSE positively. This means that employees' confidence in accomplishing tasks improves if they have leaders who support them and help them work towards a defined objective. At the micro-level, studies on organisational leadership tend to link leadership typologies and WSE. Niyogi and John's (2017) study related leadership effectiveness to WSE; all the other studies focused on the relationship between WSE and the different typologies of leadership, such as transformational leadership and servant leadership. Thus, irrespective of how leadership is defined, it positively influences employees' belief of their ability to accomplish their tasks if such leadership is effective.

Contrary to most of the reviewed studies that linked organisational leadership and WSE, Mesterova, Prochaska, Vaculik and Smutny (2015) revealed a negative correlation between transformational leadership typologies and WSE. The Chapter 2 review also revealed that most of the studies were conducted in Asia and India (Jaiswal & Dhar, 2015; Niyogi & John, 2017), and the People's Republic of China (Chen, Shu & Shou, 2014). Furthermore, the reported correlations between leadership typologies and self-efficacy were widely distributed, ranging from small (R = -.01) to very strong (R = .77). Lastly, the MLQ was the only measure focused on WSE and transformational leadership studies.

The reviewed literature linked WSE and Human Resource practices, and revealed that WSE could be studied with several variables such as work-life enrichment, team-level HPWS, and work engagement. Again, the studies reviewed were equally split between those conducted in Western countries (Australia and Netherlands) and East Asia (China and India). WSE was found to be positively correlated with all the variables considered, with correlations concentrated at the small ($R < .30$) and large ($R > .60$) ends of the correlation spectrum. In addition, WSE and human resource practices could be studied using both cross-sectional and longitudinal methodologies, with studies equally split within the two. Finally, researchers are using standardised or partially adapted versions of standardised measures of WSE. Overall, human resource practices positively impact employees' belief in accomplishing their set objectives. This is because HR practices such as human resources development improve employees' beliefs in the ability to accomplish their tasks.

No articles were found during the course of this study that directly linked the three variables of the study. However, the discussion above has provided some insights. Firstly, the various typologies of organisational leadership are positively correlated to WSE (Niyogi & John, 2017; Chen, Zhu & Zhou, 2014; Jaiswal & Dhar, 2015; Walumbwa, Lawler, Avolio, Wang & Shi, 2005). Again, some studies pointed to the existence of the relationship between WSE and the perceptions of the various human resource practices such as daily job crafting (Tims, Bakker & Derks, 2014:497), work engagement and human resource development climate (Chaudhary, Rangnekar & Barua, 2012), HPWS (Ma, Gong, Long, & Zhang, 2021), and work-family enrichment (Chan, Kalliath, Brough, Siu, O'Driscoll & Timms, 2016). Therefore, there is a positive correlation between human resource practices and WSE. Given that WSE is also related to organisational leadership, as already discussed, there is likely to be a relationship between WSE, organisational leadership, and human resource practices. The current study sought to investigate the potential existence and the nature of such relationships. The next section discusses the results of the empirical investigation.

5.2.3 Empirical relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and work self-efficacy in the private sector

The third research objective was to empirically investigate the relationship between Human Resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE within the private sector. To achieve this objective, quantitative data was collected from 1733 respondents in the private sector. With respect to age, the sample mean for age was well within the 25 and 40-year range reported by Stats SA (2021). Again, sample analysis showed that participants were experienced and mature enough to raise an opinion of their workplaces. In addition, the age distribution of the sample generally mirrored the gender statistics of the South African workforce. Finally, despite having Black and White participants disproportionately represented, the rest of the races were well within the statistics reported by Stats SA (2021). Overall, the study sample can be said to be representative of the South African workforce. However, the sample was relatively small; thus, conclusions drawn in this study are conservative.

Three instruments were used to measure each of the three variables and were all found to be reliable. The reliability coefficients were .88 and .89 for human resource practices before and during COVID-19, respectively. In addition, the organisational leadership Instrument and the WSES were both reliable with reliability coefficients of .98 and .89, respectively. All these reliability coefficients were above the .70 threshold reported in previous studies, as discussed in Chapter 3. Hence, all instruments were reliable measures of their respective variables.

The ANOVA analysis shows that the private sector sample was generally heterogeneous, with significant differences reported both within and across private sector companies. There were no significant differences between the mean scores of participants involved in managerial positions and those who were not in managerial positions. However, with respect to mean scores of those involved in managerial positions and those who are not in managerial positions, statistically and practically significant differences were found regarding Human Resource practices before and after COVID-19, and organisational

leadership. Therefore, the sample was significantly different in both the statistical and practical sense regarding these variables, implying that the results of pooled data needed to be interpreted with caution.

The remainder of this section will present the most important part of the results, namely the relationship between human resource practices, organisational leadership, and WSE. Large correlations were recorded between human resource practices before COVID-19 and human resource practices during COVID-19, and between organisational and human resource practices during COVID-19. Both correlations were positive and statistically/practically significant. The correlation between human resource practices before COVID-19 was found to be positive with human resource practices before and during COVID-19. That was a medium correlation. In addition, small, statistically and practically significant and positive correlations were recorded between WSE and human resource practices before COVID-19 and human resource practices during COVID-19. No correlation was found between WSE and human resource practices before and during COVID-19. A negative, large and statistically significant correlation was recorded between human resource practices before and during COVID-19, compared to human resource practices during COVID-19. Finally, a very small correlation was not statistically significant between organisational leadership and human resource practices before and during COVID-19.

In summary, the correlations reported in this study show that human resource practices had a significant, positive effect on WSE, both before and during COVID-19. Thus, the findings confirm studies by Chaudhary, Rangnekar and Barua (2012), Chan, Kalliath, Brough, Siu, O'Driscoll and Timms (2016), Ma, Gong, Long and Shang (2021), and Tims, Bakker and Derks (2014). They indicated that Human Resource Practices have a positive effect on WSE. However, the impact of human resource practices on WSE was marginally lower during COVID-19 than before COVID-19. This indicates that COVID-19 negatively affected human resource practices in general; thus, reducing the effect of human resource practices on WSE. In addition, organisational leadership was found to have a significant positive effect on WSE. Again, these findings are in line with Chen, Shu and

Shou (2014), Jaiswal and Dhar (2015), Niyogi and John (2017), and Walumbwa, Lawler, Avolio, Wang and Shi (2005), who concluded that organisational leadership has a positive effect on WSE.

Multiple regressions were performed to analyse the contribution of human Resource Practices and organisational leadership on WSE. In the first model, Model 1, human resource practices were used to predict WSE. The results show that human resource practices could be used to predict WSE. Although the model's predictive value was medium based on the discussion in Chapter 3, it was statistically and practically significant. These findings were in line with studies by Chaudhary, Rangnekar and Barua (2012), Chan, Kalliath, Brough, Siu, O'Driscoll and Timms (2016), Ma, Gong, Long and Shang (2021), and Tims, Bakker and Derks (2014), who found that Human Resource Practices have a positive influence on WSE.

In the second model, Model 2, organisational leadership was added to Model 1 variables to predict the WSE. The model's predictive value increased significantly. The ultimate model created in this study, which used organisational leadership and human resource practices to predict WSE, had a statistically significant but small predictive value. However, despite the model's small predictive value, it was practically significant. In other words, the model's predictive value was deemed significant in the real world.

5.2.4 Recommendations based on the empirical study

The fourth objective of the study was to make recommendations for managers in the private sector based on the empirical findings. Overall, the medium and large correlations were found between WSE and organisational leadership (large correlation), Human resource practices before and during COVID-19 (medium correlations). This implies that managers who want to improve WSE in their organisations must focus on improving organisational leadership and human resource practices.

Human resource practices and organisational leadership can be improved through training and development. In addition, human resource practices can be enhanced by

focusing on enhancing HR functions such as taking such practices that are strategic in nature, designing and implementing integrated systems and procedures of managing employees (Armstrong, 2018), and instituting ways of motivating employees (O'Riordan, 2017) so that they are committed, developed, and are capable of delivering the organisation's goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve a competitive advantage (Mathis & Jackson, 2018). On the other hand, organisational leadership can be improved by setting strategic goals and developing a compelling vision to be followed by employees (Malik & Azmat, 2019) and aligning organisational needs to those of followers (Grobler & Singh, 2018).

5.3 Recommendations

As discussed above, human resource practices and organisational leadership on WSE are practically significant. Therefore, managers who wish to enhance WSE must focus on improving Human Resource practices and organisational leadership since these variables can predict WSE. More specifically, the item relating to working in teams had the highest mean score, both before and during COVID-19. Therefore, there is a need for managers in the private sector to ensure that they encourage employees to work in teams. This can be done by training and developing employees' teamwork skills such as team formation, team communication, and team leadership.

In addition, private sector employees showed that they experienced workplace flexibility during COVID-19. Therefore, management in the private sector should expend resources and time to improve workplace flexibility. This requires, for instance, investment in remote-working technologies. Furthermore, given that employees have also expressed the need to work in teams, managers can ensure that employees continue working in teams flexibly by investing in collaborative technologies.

In order to improve organisational leadership, managers need to focus on a number of areas, including trusting employees to get the job done and keeping them accountable for their results.

5.4 Limitations

Effort has been put to ensure that this study is comprehensive and rigorous. However, such an effort could not eliminate limitations in the study. Firstly, obtaining survey responses from some employees was a challenge at first. Several follow-ups had to be done to obtain the required responses from the respective employees. Secondly, at 1733 participants from 29 organisations, the sample of this study was relatively low compared to the private sector workforce. In future, it is recommended that the researcher increase the sample size to include more participants and companies to improve the results of this study. Again, WSE has been found to be influenced by several other factors than organisational leadership and human resource practices. These other factors include participative leadership (Govino, 2005), performance management (Allen et al., 2003), and leadership effectiveness (Niyogi & John, 2017). None of these have been included in this study. In the future, researchers may want to consider these variables and investigate how they can influence WSE in the South African private sector. The study's cross-sectional nature meant that the results of this study represented only a snapshot of employees' perceptions about the variables in this study. A longitudinal study would have provided better results with more time and resources.

5.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the set objectives listed in Chapter 1 were achieved. Human resource Practices – both before and during COVID-19 – had a significant, positive effect on WSE in the private sector. Organisational leadership was also found to have a significant positive effect on WSE. Again, these findings are in line with Chen, Shu and Shou (2014), Jaiswal and Dhar (2015), Niyogi and John (2017), and Walumbwa, Lawler, Avolio, Wang, and Shi (2005), who concluded that organisational leadership has a positive effect on WSE.

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ANNEXURES

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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,

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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/ mswelp@unisa.ac.za

Prof P Msweli
Executive Dean: Graduate School of Business Leadership
011- 652 0256/mswelp@unisa.ac.za

B

Lineo Lebata
11 Summerfields Estates
1 Samrand Road
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0157

01 June 2021

Mr Linda Cele
20 Bavaria Avenue
AM Consulting Engineers (AMCE)
011 312 2699
Lcele@amce.co.za

Dear Mr Cele

Request for permission to conduct research at AM Consulting Engineers (AMCE):

I, Lineo Lebata am doing research with Prof Anton Grobler at the Graduate School of Business Leadership towards a Master's Degree in Business Administration. We are seeking your permission to allow AMCE employees to participate in a study entitled: 'The impact of Covid-19 on the perceptions of Human Resources practices, organizational leadership and work self-efficacy'.

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 as well.

The study will entail that 60 employees complete a questionnaire on the constructs mentioned above. As stated earlier the aim is to identify those management practices which facilitate desirable employee behaviours. Administering the questionnaire should not take more than 60 minutes.

Data from several organisations including AMCE will be collated by Professor Anton Grobler and will be used for academic purposes, including but not limited to this dissertation. Anonymous data will also be used to contribute to the body of knowledge, through the publication of scholarly articles in scientific academic accredited journals.

LB

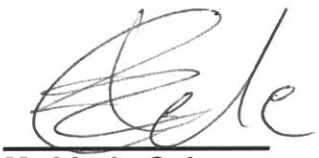
Potential risks to the organisation or potential participants are minimal. The anonymity of the organisation and potential participants are guaranteed, and no company or individual identifiers will be made available. The content of the research material is also of such a nature that it is almost impossible to harm the organisation or potential participants. Ethical clearance for this project was granted by the UNISA SBL Research Ethics Committee, and the reference number for this clearance is 2021_SBL_AC_005_CA.

The findings of the study will be shared with the organization for the purposes of continuous improvement and efficiency especially during times of crisis. The Feedback procedure will entail that I will provide feedback on the findings directly back to you as the Chief Executive Officer.

Yours sincerely

Lineo F. Lebata
Senior Manager: Human Capital (AMCE)

Approval:



Mr Linda Cele
Chief Executive Officer
AM Consulting Engineers

L.2

C

PERMISSION TO SUBMIT RESEARCH REPORT

Permission is hereby given to:

Student name Lineo Faith Lebata

Student number 33977941 to submit his/her research report in its final form.

Supervisor: Dr Oliver Pwaka Date: 12/12/2021

Supervisor signature: 

The student acknowledges that sufficient feedback was provided by the study leader and that s/he took the responsibility to attend to the feedback in a way that satisfies the requirements for a research dissertation on the MBL / MBA level

Student signature  Date: 12/12/2021

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.

Final MBA Report 1 - 33977941

by LINEO FAITH LEBATA

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THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES, ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND WORK SELF-EFFICACY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

Research report presented to the

Graduate School of Business Leadership
University of South Africa

by

LINEO FAITH LEBATA
33977941

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)

Supervisor:

MR OLIVER PWAKA

15 December 2021

Final MBA Report 1 - 33977941

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Editorial Certificate

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter certifies that the research report entitled; **THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES, ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND WORK SELF-EFFICACY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR** by Lineo Faith Lebata, was proofread for language, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and overall style by NIM Editorial.

Signed on behalf of NIM Editorial by:

……

Dr N.I Mabidi

Founder & Chief Editor

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

07 June 2021

Dear Prospective Participant

I, Lineo Lebata 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 AMCE. The CEO of AMCE has granted permission for the study to be conducted. Your name was randomly drawn from a list of all employees. In total 60 employees will be approached to participate in the study, which minimise 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 Lineo Lebata on 079 094 8665 or Llebata@amce.co.za. The findings will be accessible early in 2022. 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 #	(your student number)			A1
Sector				A2(i) Pub/Pr
Company:				A3(ii)
Industry:				A4
Gender:	Male			A5 0/1
	Female			
Your role:	Core Business			A6 0/1
	Support services			
Your role:	Management			A7 0/1
	Non-management			
Age:				A8
Number of years with company:				A9
Highest education:	Less than 12 years			A10 1/2/3/4
	12 years (matric)			
	1st Degree / Diploma			
	Higher degree / Higher diploma			
Race:	Asian			A11 1/2/3/4
	Black			
	Coloured			
	White			
Post level	Unskilled and defined decision making			A12 1/2/3/4/5
	Semi-skilled and discretionary decision making			
	Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior Management, supervisors, foremen and superintendents			
	Professionally qualified, experienced specialists and Middle Management			
	Top Management, Senior Management			
Contact with direct manager **before Covid 19**	Daily (5); Weekly (4); Monthly (3); Very few contact (2) or No contact at all (2)	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			A17 0/1/2
	Changed somewhat			
	Changed dramatically			

I am currently working	From home	**N**	**Y**	A18 0/1
	Frome home and my work place (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	

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	

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.	

G

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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.

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- 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