

Leadership and strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane

by

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ABSTRACT

When companies are formed, they have visions and missions, which require the right leadership to achieve them. Leaders are those people in the driving seat of the missions toward the vision through the implementation of the organisational strategy. It can thus be said that strategy implementation success is a function of the leadership, how well people are motivated to deliver the objectives and the creation of a favorable environment to implement the strategy.

This research was undertaken to assess the leadership and strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane. The research was conducted through the qualitative method, using virtual interviews that made use of thematic analysis. The results have revealed that there are numerous challenges in the implementation of strategic implementation.

As the motivation of the employee in achieving their task, leadership was rooted in the nature of communications among employees at different levels. It was found the company, in order to achieve its strategy, should empower its people with skills development, and ensure that the level of commitment and accountability from all the human resources is acceptable. Covid-19 pandemic was found to be a serious disruption and has weakened the leadership; however, resilience, commitments and accountability were retained as the leadership enhancers in the organisation.

KEY WORDS: Strategy, Strategy Implementation, Leadership, Leadership challenges Innovation, Employee motivation.

DECLARATION

I, Lehlohonolo Letsoara, declare that this research report is my original work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration in the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.



Lehlohonolo Letsoara

Signed at.....Pretoria

On the30th day of...April.....2022

DEDICATION

This report is dedicated to Almighty God, my creator. His mercy and grace empowered completion of this study.

- My late mother, Rebecca Mojabeng Letsoara and my late Uncle, Johannes Motlatsi Letsoara for always believing in me and constantly reminded me that life has no limitations, only those we place on ourselves.
- My amazing wife Nkahiseng Vicsonia Letsoara for her unwavering support and for giving me the peace and time to complete this report
- My children Phemelo and Motlatsi Letsoara for their understanding and support

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Supplementary files: Appendix A – Participant Information Sheet
Appendix B – Interview Guide

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	8
1.1 Introduction	8
1.1.1 Leadership	8
1.1.2 Strategy Implementation	9
1.1.3 Global best practice of strategic leadership.....	9
1.1.4 African continent best practice of strategic leadership	10
1.1.5 Gauteng regional best practice of strategic leadership	10
1.2 Background and context of the study	11
1.3 Purpose of the study	12
1.4 Context of the study	12
1.5 Problem statement	14
1.5.1 Main problem	14
1.6 Significance of the study	15
1.7 Limitations of the study	15
1.8 Research questions	15
1.8.1 Primary research question	15
1.8.2 Secondary research questions.....	15
1.9 Research objectives.....	16
1.10 Outline of the report	16
1.11 Summary.....	17
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	18
2.1 Introduction	18
2.2 Strategic Leadership	18
2.3 Effectiveness of strategic Implementation.....	19
2.4 Barriers to strategic implementation.....	20
2.5 Drivers of strategic implementation.....	22
2.6 Roles of strategic leaders in strategy implementation	23

2.6.1	Choosing strategic direction path	23
2.6.2	Creating a system of balanced organisational controls	23
2.6.3	Managing the organisation's resource portfolio successfully.....	24
2.6.4	Maintaining a positive corporate culture	24
2.6.5	Emphasis on ethical behavior	24
2.7	Conceptual framework	24
2.8	Theoretical framework.....	26
2.8.1	Leadership	26
2.8.2	Effective Leadership.....	27
2.8.3	Strategic Leadership	27
2.8.4	Transformational Leadership.....	27
2.8.5	Charismatic Leadership	27
2.8.6	Visionary Leadership.....	28
2.9	Business management theories	28
2.10	Rationale of the study	29
2.11	The Balance Scored Card (BSC)	29
2.11.1	Financial perspective	30
2.11.2	Customer perspective	30
2.11.3	Internal Business process	30
2.11.4	Learning and growth	31
2.12	Summary	31
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....		32
3.1	Introduction	32
3.2	Research Design.....	32
3.2.1	Exploratory research design.....	32
3.2.2	Explanatory research design.....	33
3.2.3	Descriptive research design	33
3.2.4	The rationale for choosing an exploratory research approach	33
3.3	Research Philosophy	34
3.3.1	Positivist philosophy	34
3.3.2	Interpretivist philosophy.....	35
3.3.3	Rationale for choosing interpretivism philosophy	35
3.4	Research approach.....	35
3.4.1	Quantitative research approach	36
3.4.2	Qualitative research approach	36
3.4.3	Mixed method.....	37

3.4.4 Rationale for choosing qualitative research approach.....	37
3.5 Research strategy	37
3.5.1 Case Study.....	38
3.5.2 Interviews	38
3.5.3 Questionnaires	38
3.5.4 Action-oriented research	39
3.5.5 Rationale for choosing interviews.....	39
3.6 Research methodology	39
3.7 Target Population and Sampling	40
3.7.1 Target Population.....	40
3.7.2 Population sample.....	40
3.7.3 Sampling	41
3.7.3.1 Probability sampling techniques.....	41
3.7.3.1.1 Systematic sampling	42
3.7.3.1.2 Stratified random sampling.....	42
3.7.3.1.3 Cluster sampling	42
3.7.3.2 Non-probability sampling techniques	42
3.7.3.2.1 Judgement sampling	43
3.7.3.2.2 Snowball sampling	43
3.7.3.2.3 Quota sampling.....	43
3.7.3.2.4 Convenience sampling	44
3.7.4 Sampling method and technique used in this study/judgmental sampling	44
3.7.5: Sample Size	44
3.7.6: Data Collection.....	44
3.7.7 Pilot study.....	45
3.7.8 Data analysis.....	45
3.7.9 Interviews	45
3.8 Trustworthiness.....	46
3.8.1 Dependability	46
3.8.2 Credibility	46
3.8.3 Confirmability	46
3.8.4 Transferability.....	47
3.9 Ethical Considerations	47
3.9.1 Ensuring that Respondents have given their informed consent	47
3.9.2 Ensuring avoidance of harm to respondents	47
3.9.3 Making sure participant's details are kept confidential and anonymous	48

3.9.4 Ensuring that permission is obtained	48
3.10 Summary.....	48
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION...49	
4.1 Introduction	49
4.2 Presentation of the Findings.....	49
4.2.1 Presentation of the demographic Results	49
4.2.2 Presentation of the primary Findings.....	50
4.2.2.1 THEME #1: LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION	50
4.2.2.1.1 Sub-Theme #1.1: Motivation for innovative strategy in the organisation	51
4.2.2.1.2 Sub-Theme #1.2: Leadership as strategy driver implementation	52
4.2.2.2 THEME #2: CONSTRAINTS OF LEADERSHIP STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION	53
4.2.2.2.1 Sub-Theme #2.1: Strategy communication (leadership) as strategic implementation constraint	54
4.2.2.2.2 Sub-Theme #2.2: Resources impacts on strategy implementation	56
4.2.2.2.3 Sub-Theme #2.3: Leadership challenges on strategy implementation	56
4.2.2.2.3.1 People as a Challenge to Strategy Implementation	57
4.2.2.2.3.2 Lack of Effective Communication as a Challenge to Strategy Implementation.....	58
4.2.2.3 THEME #3: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION FACTORS....	59
4.2.2.3.1 Sub-Theme #3.1: Layers of management within the organisation and strategy leadership implementation.....	59
4.2.2.3.2 Sub-Theme #3.2: Major challenges of strategy implementation.....	60
4.2.2.3.2.1 Lack of employee commitment and employee empowerment as a Challenge to Strategy Implementation	61
4.2.2.3.3 Sub-Theme #3.3: Training and development in leadership skills for strategic implementation.....	62
4.3 Summary.....	64
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS.....65	
5.1 Introduction	65
5.2 Findings from the Literature	65
5.2.1 Factors contributing to poor Strategy Implementation from the Literature perspective.....	65
5.2.2 Trends in the Implementation of Strategic Leadership from the Literature perspective.....	66
5.2.2.1 The project economy.....	66
5.2.2.2 Increase focus.....	66

5.2.2.3 Reduce complexity	67
5.2.2.4 Foster alignment	67
5.2.3 Strategies to implement Strategic Leadership from the Literature perspective	68
5.3. Findings from Primary Research	69
5.3.1 Factors contributing to poor Strategy Implementation from Primary Research	69
5.3.2 Trends in the implementation of Strategic Leaders from the Primary Research	70
5.3.3 Strategies to implement Strategic Leadership from Primary Research	71
5.4 Summary.....	72
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	73
6.1 Introduction	73
6.2 Conclusions of the Research	73
6.2.1 Purpose statement	73
6.2.2 Research questions	73
6.2.3 Literature review.....	74
6.2.4 Research methodology	74
6.2.5 Presentation of findings.....	75
6.2.6 Analysis and interpretation of findings.....	75
6.3 Recommendations from the Research Findings	75
6.3.1 Recommendation #1 - Factors contributing to poor strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane.....	75
6.3.2 Recommendation #2 - Trends in the implementation of strategic leaders at a commercial bank in Tshwane.....	76
6.3.3 Recommendation #3 - Strategies to implement strategic leadership at a commercial bank in Tshwane.....	76
6.4 Recommendation for further research.....	77
REFERENCES	78
ANNEXURES	86
Appendix A : Participant Information Sheet.....	86
Appendix B : Interview Guide.....	88

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: South African Banking Sector.....13

Figure 2.1: The role of selected strategic leadership actions in strategy implementation
.....25

Figure 2.2: The Balance Scored Card30

Figure 3.1: Linking population, sample, and elements in a study39

Figure 3.2: Sampling methods and techniques.....41

Figure 4.1: Demographic profile of the participants48

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Leadership and organisational strategy are intertwined; thus, an organisation cannot succeed in achieving its goals without good leadership. Therefore, the significant impact of leadership on the organisational strategic process is critical (Jabbar & Hussein, 2017). In this study, strategy implementation is defined as a “dynamic, iterative, and complex process” that is comprised of various “activities by managers and employees to turn strategic plans into reality to achieve strategic objectives” (Tawse & Tabesh, 2021).

1.1.1 Leadership

Leadership plays a vital role in persuading employees in the organisation, involving external stakeholders, customers and shareholders to direct and guide the achievement of the set organisational goals, leaders should create an environment that is conducive to the success of the business (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015).

In the commercial banking environment, business unit managers face undue pressure from executives to maximise revenue growth through profitability, expectations from stakeholders often put a strain on leaders to achieve targets even without strategic leadership and available sufficient resources (Davis, 2016).

Successful strategy implementation in the commercial bank requires agile and effective leadership to contemplate the uniqueness of each business unit's requirements, and adequately provide training and development to the subordinates to effectively reach the set target as determined by the organisation.

An organisation to succeed in strategy implementation requires dedication from a team effort led by a leadership team. This team of employees should clearly understand the role of leadership in strategic implementation to make delegating responsibility more effective. The organisation in this study was one of the

commercial banks in Tshwane, South Africa and the aim was to investigate leadership and strategy implementation within their environment.

1.1.2 Strategy Implementation

(Thompson et al., 2013) define strategy implementation as the process of actioning the proposed strategy, after the management and leadership have settled on the plan, the focus shifts on ensuring initiatives and projects are put together to achieve positive results, effective leadership and a variety of managerial abilities are required for the successful implementation of the strategy. (Lihalo, 2013) further states that strategy implementation is the process by which organisations achieve their intended objectives, by working towards where it desires to be in the future, most company's strategy execution is dealt with from within the organisation by all involved stakeholders, requiring teamwork, inspired and encouraged employees, this also requires converting strategic goals into doable initiatives that will ensure intended outcomes are accomplished. Leadership role in strategy implementation includes cross-departmental cooperation, examination of new prospects that will place the organisation in a better position to achieve a competitive advantage, leaders should be equipped with a diverse collection of talent and competencies to make smart strategic decisions (Radomska, 2014).

1.1.3 Global best practice of strategic leadership

Globalisation and technological advancement have set an unprecedented challenge to strategic leadership practices. These challenges are exacerbated by the fourth industrial revolution, which has revolutionised information technology communication (ITC) through connectivity over the net. The human capital at the global level has competed globally, meaning that the field of competition is widened. Those with the best skills are likely to compete internationally. That has led to more vibrant knowledge sharing, which has improved the quality of goods and services around the globe. From the ethical perspective, more and more international standards are designed and comply, which has universalised many benefits and created a set of international values. Many control tools are shared at the international level. The global best practices strategic leadership thus implies complying with the local and

the international standard, following the host country's human law regarding skill development and knowledge without disregarding the international standard. To that extent, the host country should observe the international labour organisation. From the budget control, their international accounting practices and control that are accepted by many countries and should be observed in businesses (Hitt, Haynes & Serpa, 2010).

1.1.4 African continent best practice of strategic leadership

The African continent faces many challenges as many blocks struggle to adopt their concerted policies. Many African governments are not stable enough, lack legitimacy, and some have acceded to power through a coup. This has an adverse impact on strategic leadership implementation. Africa has an untapped capital, his youth and his mineral resources, yet the political landscape is volatile and lacks quality governance and transparency (Ogbechie, 2018). That has led to much human capital leaving Africa for a greener pasture in the European countries. The best practices from the African perspective consist of prioritising the youth, implementing democracy where possible, and seeking the legitimacy of governance. The best practices for Africa can be inspired by the KING-CODE 4, which is a good guide for good governance for prosperity, ethical culture, control and organisational performance.

1.1.5 Gauteng regional best practice of strategic leadership

The best strategic leadership in South Africa should consider the various law of the country, the ethical standard while managing its human capital, the ethical standard and the control system. In the south, good governance should be strengthened, given the complexity of the environment. South Africa has a unique characteristics environment with many characteristics. Firstly emerged economy has many social ills such as corruption, vast inequality gap and low economic growth (Enwereji & Uwizeyimana, 2019).

From the human capital, South Africa, like many other African countries, lacks most of the skills required for its economic growth. It has thus turned to the international community to empower the local, yet governance challenges have emerged.

Nevertheless, the country has one of the best tools to enhance strategic leadership, the KING IV, which is on four pillars: ethical culture, good performance, effective control, and legitimacy. The best practice of the Gauteng region consist of following the prescript of the king code on good governance.

1.2 Background and context of the study

Commercial banks exist to provide financial services to society and other businesses at large. They are in constant competition by offering similar banking services to the financial industry to geographically scattered customers for a fee. The services provided by these commercial banks are offered via a variety of technological methods. To stay in business and constantly maintain the financial stability and growth of the business, the commercial bank needs strategic leadership to steer their business.

Kumar (2014) defines leadership as the process through which a person persuades others to achieve a goal and guides the organisation in a way that makes it more coherent and cohesive. The core leader's competencies like ethics, values, skills, and knowledge are essential traits that leaders should possess to enable and bring about change in the organisation and people they are leading. According to (Abashe, 2016) leaders create the corporate future vision, determine the company's goals and established the company's objectives. They are the heart of every business in ensuring that the organisational strategic goals are formulated, achieved and implemented. Strategy formulation is challenging for most organisations and requires more effort from employees and the management team. Without a network of relationships between employees and managers, it will be difficult for organisations to effectively implement their strategies and succeed Hrebiniak (2006). Effective strategic implementation is the process of putting plans into action by improving finances and other resources, the process is commonly known as operational planning as it entails resource allocation to daily decisions (Palladan et al., 2016). Therefore, it is in this notion that the study seeks to investigate leadership and corporate strategy implementation of one of the commercial banks in Tshwane, South Africa.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to investigate factors leading to poor strategic implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane.

“Effective implementation of an average strategy beats mediocre implementation of a great strategy every time. Companies nonetheless often operationalise their strategies in ways that improve their likelihood that they will be implemented effectively” (Sterling, 2003).

The research participants will be employees in a commercial bank in Tshwane, from Team Leaders, Managers and Business Unit Heads who ensures that the organisation’s strategy is implemented. (Zaidi et al., 2019) elaborate that the willingness of the employees to successfully implement the organisation’s strategy relies on job satisfaction they receive from their Leaders, a good strategic implementation will improve employee performance which will ultimately lead to improved organisations performance.

(Serfontein & Hough, 2011) points out that strategic leadership's major responsibility is to guide and lead the organisation's strategic direction, sections, different divisions, departments, and the team's ultimate implementation of the strategy. Leaders at the top of the company are generally entrusted and mandated to execute strategic processes by default, due to their leadership roles.

1.4 Context of the study

De Lange (2013) argues that the banking sector in South Africa is highly regulated and only naturally oligopolistic; South Africa’s financial sector is among the best in the world. South Africa's financial industry is of world-class quality, compared favorably to major economies such as the United Kingdom and the States of America, as well as developing economies such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries. The financial industry in South Africa has all the necessary components for long term profitability and expansion.

The research is focused on the implementation of strategic leadership at a commercial bank in Tshwane, entities supervised by the Prudential Authority of the South African Reserve Bank as at 31 March 2021 were as follows (SARB, 2021).

Figure 1.1: South African Banking sector

Entities per sector	No of entities
Banking sector	Total 31
Registered banks	18
Local branches of foreign banks	13

In the period of 10 years, the above figures presented in figure 1.1 point to an increase in the number of locally registered banks from four to eighteen. This highlights that there are new entrants in the market for about 14 banks, there has also been an increase of seven local branches of foreign banks. The commercial banking market has challenges and difficulties to entry, this is due to customers and clients switching banks from within the current ones and South Africa's banking business was no exception, for years as the four initially called the "big four" dominated the industry (ABSA, FNB, Nedbank and Standard bank).

A new paradigm shift was observed in the year 2000 when a new commercial bank joined the industry. Capitec bank, upon entry in the market, the bank rapidly established branches. In 2007 Capitec bank surpassed the 1 million active customer mark, 10 years later it had more than 10 million customers and 800 branches. That exponential growth ensured that Capitec bank became the largest bank in South Africa (Vermeulen, 2018). One can boldly state that the bank's strategic leadership is a successful one and went beyond expectation.

Strategic leadership focuses on methods that are formal, for establishing organisational direction, creating a plan that suits the internal and external circumstances surrounding the business sector, to achieve the set organisational goals (Wanyama & Nyaga, 2019).

According to (Johnson & Scholes, 1998), the first step in the implementation of strategy requires your full knowledge of what is strategic plan is all about, it entails

going over the strategic plan thoroughly and highlighting any parts of the plan that may be particularly difficult or challenging. Furthermore, (Johnson & Scholes, 1998) highlights that this phase will allow strategic leadership to be able to observe part of the plan that is not implementable and would rather cost the organisation more in terms of cost and budgeting, it will also allow leaders to have contingency plans should the original plan fail.

(Wanyama & Nyaga, 2019) points out that leaders in companies are key role players in providing lifeline today, needed strategy and actions during the implementation phase. Strategic leadership put more emphasis on the future to elicit passion for both the future and the present (Nthini, 2013). Leaders that are strategic thinkers, they are individuals from various departments and divisions within the organisation who utilises strategic management processes to choose and put in place activities that are strategic to enable organisations to accomplish their vision and mission (Hitt et al., 2016). The major focus is to develop a deeper grasp of the business environment and other factors that identify future issues.

1.5 Problem statement

1.5.1 Main problem

The majority of organisational strategies fail due to a lack of leadership guidance and therefore this creates a major barrier to the implementation of effective strategy (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). In this study, commercial banks are confronted with more challenges because of evolving business dynamics such as war on prices, poorly structured corporate governance and inefficient regulatory framework. Furthermore, environmental changes such as state regulations, high cost of sales, new entrants in the market and enhanced client awareness are some of the major factors that can enable or constrain the implementation of successful organisation strategic goals (Wanyama & Nyaga, 2019).

The purpose of this study is to investigate factors that influence the successful implementation of strategic leadership in one of the commercial banks in Tshwane, South Africa. The focus is on the challenging factors that constrain or hinder the successful implementation of strategic leadership.

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings and recommendations presented in this study will assist commercial banks, and other organisations, to improve their strategic leadership by highlighting both the factors that encourage a successful implementation and the challenges that may impede their efforts. While there have been several studies focused on various industries around the globe and with few authors examining the strategic implementation in commercial banks in African countries such as Kenya. There is a gap in the literature when it came to research focusing on commercial banks in Tshwane, South Africa. This study will also make an academic contribution by adding to the existing body of knowledge in leadership and strategic implementation across organisations.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The research will be limited to a commercial bank in Tshwane and thus cannot be generalised and the results cannot be referred to the entire banking population.

1.8 Research questions

1.8.1 Primary research question

- What role does strategic leadership play in driving and implementing strategy in support of organisations performance?

1.8.2 Secondary research questions

- What are factors contributing to poor strategy implementation?
- What are the trends in the implementation of strategic leaders at a commercial bank in Tshwane?
- What are the strategies for consideration in the implementation of strategic leadership?

1.9 Research objectives

The objectives of the research are to:

- a) Determine the impact of leadership on organisational strategic implementation
- b) Investigate factors that can enable or constrain the successful implementation of leadership strategy at a commercial bank
- c) To recommend strategies for consideration in the implementation of strategic leadership at a commercial bank

1.10 Outline of the report

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter one provides a general summary of the study, this chapter provides an overview of the following topics, the background of the study, problem statement, the purpose of the study, research questions and objectives, limitations of the study and the assumptions.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Strategic leadership and strategy implementation theory are explored by means of literature study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The chapter discusses methods and approaches adopted to collect, present and analyse data gathered in the research report.

1.11 Summary

Numerous studies on strategic leadership indicated that senior managers and executives are the drivers of strategic implementation. They lead from the front and should influence and get the buy-in of their followers. The investigation of strategy implementation and leadership at a commercial bank in Tshwane seeks to understand and explore the role that leaders play in implementing the strategy. The chapter provided the framework of the research, it highlighted the research objectives and research questions as well as the background of the research. It further provided the problem statement and the purpose of the statement, the limitations of the study and the outline of the research. The next chapter has explored the literature on leadership and strategy implementation in the organisation.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapters gave an overview of the entire research. This chapter has explored the literature in line with the research objective. (Knopf, 2006) defines Literature review as a comprehensive summary and evaluates the body of writing about a specific topic, (Wagner et al., 2012) conducting a literature review is by far the most significant phase in research, and it is the most effective method of examining and being aware of the prior finding and study methodology utilised by researchers regarding the research topic.

Literature review section includes extensive background of the study, which will allow understanding of the subject topic that this study is focusing on, this chapter gives summary of theoretical views on implementation of strategic leadership with the objectives of gaining more insights on the area of study including what has been included by other research about the same. The theory in this section of the document investigates the effectiveness of strategy implementation, barriers to strategy implementation, roles of strategic leaders in the implementation of strategy and drivers of strategic implementation.

2.2 Strategic Leadership

According to (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000) Strategic leadership put more focus on people in the organisation who have been given the overall accountability and responsibility for the organisation, it encompasses not just the position of the organisational leader but also members of the executive management. Transformational leadership motivates organisational leaders to enforce the values, principles and desires of their followers and it is essentially a broader notion in reforming an organisations strategies.

(Khalejl, 2019) further points out that transformational leaders are active, passionate, and eager, they are as well highly involved and put more focus on helping their team members to achieve their goals. According to (Farahnak et al., 2020) Transformational leadership has the ability to inspire worker's in different ways, they

are able to transform employees who are willing to accept change in the organisation. Leaders build capability from within the workforce and instill a positive vision in the organisation and how employees can be effective in accepting and embracing change.

It is evident from the literature that strategic leadership in organisations plays a vital role to encourage, motivate and guide the employees to the strategic direction. Leaders are capable to direct the organisation to the required change and assist the organisation to achieve its strategic goals through its workforce.

(Mubarak & Yusoff, 2019) explains that strategic leadership stimulates creativity within followers while questioning the current status quo, a leader who clearly articulates his vision is role model to his followers.

2.3 Effectiveness of strategic Implementation

(Mišanková & Kočíšová, 2014) explains that strategic implementation is a component of strategic management, the achievement is determined by executive managers, middle managers and employees, the organisation and organisational culture. The primary goal of strategy implementation is to integrate strategy as part of day-to-day operational decision-making procedures and processes.

(Wachira, 2014) argues that the most critical aspect in ensuring that strategy is implemented is through the commitment of executive management, their willingness and direction to strategic implementation is key. Executive management should spare time and effort during the implementation phase. Leading from the front will encourage the employees to have dedication and commitment to this strategy.

According to (Li et al., 2008) regardless of their worth, most strategy plans blunder during the implementation stage, according to senior operations executives, a depressing 57 percent of corporations failed to successfully reach their strategic goals in 2002, (Li et al., 2008) concludes that as a result, it should not be seen as a surprise that implementing strategy is a key encounter for today's businesses. The achievement of strategy execution is influenced by a variety of soft, hard, and mixed variables, varying from all the people within the organisation who are tasked with collaborating the strategy implementation.

Studies identified elements that contribute to the organisation's successful plan, executives can be informed on existing evidence approaches to address strategy implementation, challenges on their understanding of the current problem. Leaders and managers will be able to create appropriate steps to solve the specific challenges, enhance the organisation's functioning by getting a better grasp of the challenges, the recommendations can be used to assess the organisation's strategy implementation by managers and executives.

(Li et al., 2008) explains that there are “two types of strategy implementation studies: those highlighting the importance of individual factors for strategy implementation and those that emphasize the big picture of how such factors interrelate and form a strategic implementation environment”

The 09 factors identified are as follows:

- a) Formulation of strategy phase
- b) Relationship within different units and departments
- c) “Executors” - line managers and non-managers
- d) Executive management
- e) Organisational structure
- f) Effective Communication
- g) Implementation strategy
- h) Agreement between the role players
- i) Commitment from the role layers
- j) Organisational culture
- k) Administrative process and systems

2.4 Barriers to strategic implementation

(Mbaka & Mugambi, 2014) suggest that a company's lack of competent leadership might be a further impediment towards successful strategy implementation. A leader who lacks the ability to build a strategic vision which motivates and encourages his or her employees to attain the intended goals, risks having a poorly and badly implemented plan, likewise communication gap among the organisation's various levels of management has a negative impact implementation. The failure of a manager to grasp the organisation's current situation and forecasting on future

properly and providing the required support to employees and colleagues in strategies implementation.

Bureaucratic culture also contributes to the failure of the strategic plan, (Muthoni, 2012) further elaborates that ineffective communication and non-acceptance to change will also be a barrier to strategic implementation if not addressed by strategic leadership.

(Al-Kandi et al., 2013) agrees that should a strategy fail due to unfitting or ineffective implementation then it should be realised that the efforts placed during formulation phases are wasted and become fruitless, brainstorming about strategy and putting very colorful plans in place does not have an impact on the organisation's performance, unless all plans are consolidated and put in place using all the company's available resources, systems instructions then the organisation would be able to implement strategy.

(O'Regan & Ghobadian, 2002) Explains that "exploratory interviews with managing directors of engineering and electronics firms confirm 8 main barriers which can be categorized as internal and external barriers within the organisation"

Internal barriers

- Inadequate communication
- Implementation took a bit longer
- Employee competencies were inadequate
- The overall aims of the strategy were not fully understood by employees
- Implementation collaboration was insufficient

External barriers

- A crisis diverted attention away from implementation
- Unforeseen issues developed
- External forces influenced implementation

2.5 Drivers of strategic implementation

(Sorooshian et al., 2010) notes that Leadership, not just in the design of strategy, but most in its execution that senior leaders play a vital role, the primary responsibility of the company management is to ensure the seamless operation of the entire executive hierarchy, as well as to effectively interact with structure. The researcher proposes for more studies to examine executive management willingness to work together with middle management during the strategy formulation phase.

(Sorooshian et al., 2010) further allude that human resources and materials are indeed a collection of real and invisible systems and technologies that when comparatively superior, scarce, and appropriate can generate value through diversification. The phrase resources sometimes referred to that as key competences, refers to abroad broader range of assets that can help firms gain competitive advantage, furthermore, resources sometimes described to as, the criteria building pieces of strategy that indicate both how a company needs to be doing and what it can do.

(Venkatraman & Grant, 1986) notes that organisational structure is widely known as a critical component of successful plan implementation, “strategy and structure” written in 1962, is regarded as a seminal work in the discipline of strategic management.

(Venkatraman & Grant, 1986) further suggests that perhaps the revenue growth component is among the most critical factors within strategies and business studies, because practically each modeling seeks to link performance variables of interest. Indeed, if a course of action has no effect on performance it is questionable if it is worthwhile.

(Maree & McKenzie, 2015) mentions three drivers for strategy implementation, the term “strategy process” mostly refers towards an organisation’s strategy formulation as well as “control processes”, in keeping with the history of strategy as business activity, assessing this driver necessitates a critique of the generic strategy formulation process, the second component is the concept of strategic frontiers which refers to locations that have the chance of succeeding, a strategic focus that addresses the future as well as strategising for the driving factors that are in existence in the market and sustaining strategy procedures that combine alignment and agility,

at the case to a company's strategic horizons. The final component, the strategy formulation process, must be an open and honest process for the entire organisation. Organisations should indeed be recommended to strengthen execution with an experience and selection method.

2.6 Roles of strategic leaders in strategy implementation

(Jooste & Fourie, 2009) explain that strategic leadership requires the ability to consider and incorporate the organisation's inner and outer environments, as well as ways to sustain and participate in complex data processing. What set out strategic leaders is most action plans that identify characteristics of such leaders to effectively executive strategy:

2.6.1 Choosing strategic direction path

(Kitonga, 2016) argues that choosing strategic direction for a business means concentrating on a long-term vision that spends at least five years. As a result, the strategic direction chosen is critical to the company's growth.

2.6.2 Creating a system of balanced organisational controls

(Oluoch et al.) argues that unfortunately, most companies are faced with challenges to implement "balanced organisational controls" that can offer a model for monitoring economic viability of the organisation (Hitt et al., 2016) further allude to this point that strategic controls and monetary controls are found to be part of whole organisational controls, strategic leaders are advised to develop appropriate and adequate controls, control system provide a framework for firms to engage in flexible and inventive activities that keep them competing and being successful in their respective industries.

2.6.3 Managing the organisation's resource portfolio successfully

(Sirmon et al., 2007) defines resource management as the process of establishing a company's resource inventory, bundling resources to generate capabilities, and exploiting those functionalities with the goal of creating and retaining customer and shareholders values.

2.6.4 Maintaining a positive corporate culture

(Ahmadi et al., 2012) argues that organisational culture is beliefs, perceptions and principles that group members hold concerning standards of conduct, management styles, standard operating procedures and administration of process and procedures, routine and norms is how business culture is defined. Organisational culture seems to have significant impact on the organisational objective and strategy, it should be considered as a powerful part when strategic leadership plan the strategy execution.

2.6.5 Emphasis on ethical behavior

“Companies that are best performing and have a winning mentality underscores values, beliefs and attitudes that the owners of the business should possess, about staff members, clients and customers, innovation, social responsibility, company growth, stability, and flexibility. Strategic leadership should manage by value and not profits”, (Joyner & Payne, 2002) explains that numerous studies back up the idea that discussing and implementing ethics, integrity, values and accountability in the workplace is not only becoming more acceptable, but it is also essential and required practically.

2.7 Conceptual framework

(Guillot, 2003) points out that strategic leadership is all about decision making between cultures, organisations, objectives, personalities, and ambitions is part of the process of becoming a leader. It necessitates the creation of strategies that are practical, desired, and acceptable to the organisation as well as participants in joint

inter agency or global situations, strategic leadership necessitates the capability to make well thought decisions.

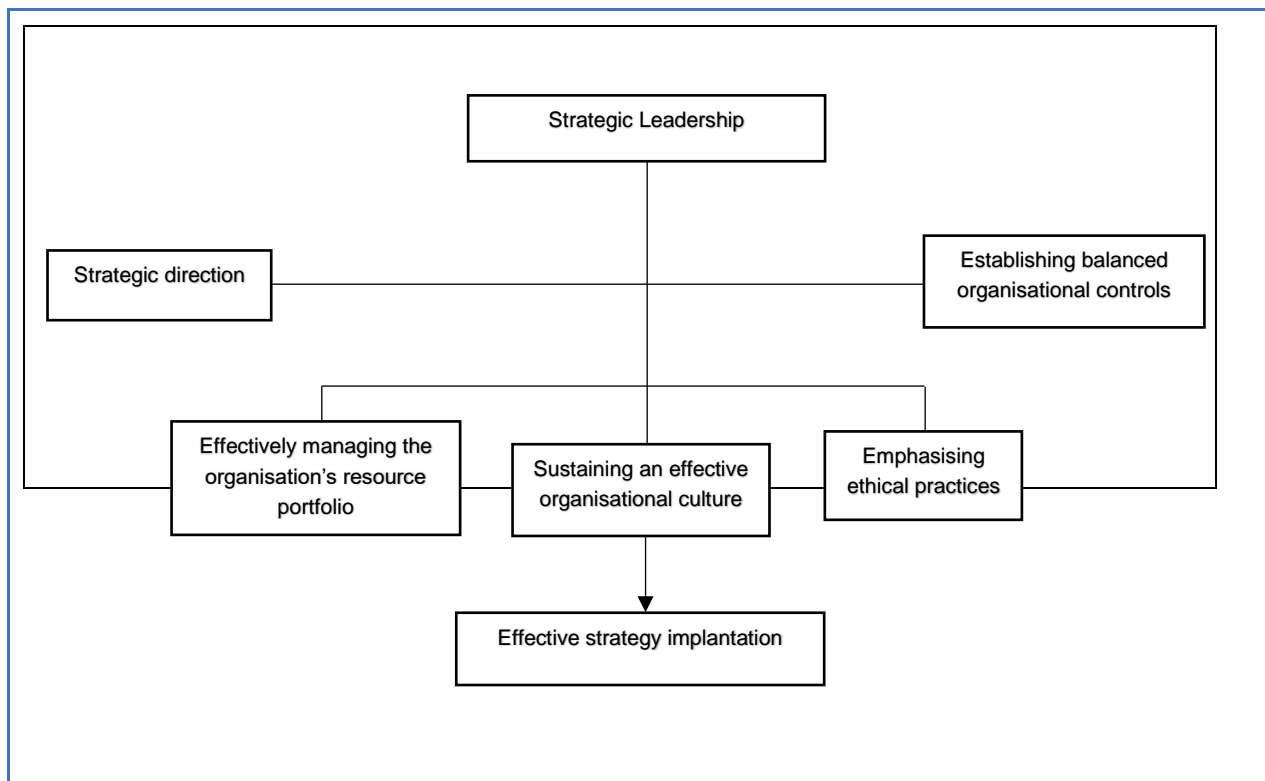
(Thompson et al., 2013) supports Guillot, further elaborates that this practice of implementing the proposed strategies into operational is termed as strategic execution, upon management settlement on a plan, the focus shifts to putting this into practice and achieving positive results. Having the framework in place and enabling the organisation to implement it well necessitates a variety of leadership abilities.

“Leadership appears as a common variable for the effective implementation of strategy in all these frameworks that have been developed for strategic implementation. Strategic leadership has been identified as a key driver to strategy implementation and their lack of it has similarly been identified as a barrier to strategic implementation”(Olaka et al., 2017).

(Lear, 2012) explains that many organisations are faced with the difficulty of strategic leadership. The importance of strategic leadership in organisations has received a lot of attention in recent years, different authors and scholars have previously studied leadership by concentrating on daily actions by the strategic leader during their normal operational daily tasks, therefore paying attention on the leader’s effectiveness, however during the last 20 years, strategic management and leadership focused more on executive managers and their output on formulating strategy and the performance of the organisation.

(O'Reilly et al., 2010) supports Lear’s, by further articulating that this category of organisational strategy is gaining popularity. Strategic leadership seems to be the study of great executives who oversee an organisation. Strategic decisions are about the tactics that their condition seeks to implement to improve its market edge.

Figure 2:1: The role of selected strategic leadership actions in strategy implementation



Source: Adapted from Hitt et al [2007:385]

2.8 Theoretical framework

2.8.1 Leadership

According to (Belias & Koustelios, 2014) in the context of organisations, leadership describes the methods that leaders adopt in their everyday interactions with their colleagues, taking into account a wide range of cultural elements such as values, norms and difficulties that affects staff behavior, dedication and performance. (Bass et al., 2008) further elaborates that the most often accepted and utilised definition of leadership is one that includes “A Leader as an individual, their conduct, their impact, the rapport between them and their followers, and the context in which they operate.

(Booyesen & Beaty, 1997) supports this view and further elaborates that “The implication of an Ubuntu-orientated leadership style includes not only teamwork down to grassroot level, but also the encouragement of team members or followers to sacrifice their personal gain or goals for those of the group. The authors indicate that

these includes creative cooperation, open communication teamwork and reciprocal moral obligations”

2.8.2 Effective Leadership

(Goleman, 2018) argues that Leadership attributes intelligence like tenacity, perseverance and foresight are necessary to be successful, however they are inadequate. Emotional intelligence consisting of self-awareness, determination, self-regulation, compassion and social competence is a key characteristic of effective leaders.

2.8.3 Strategic Leadership

According to (O'Reilly et al., 2010) amount of company employees for the strategic plan is a key indicator of the organisation's performance, in a survey of more than 200 top leaders the other researchers found that the level of support for the strategy among the senior leadership team can help or hinder its execution, this means that for an organisation to achieve excellent productivity from strategic effort, senior and junior leaders must effectively communicate the plan and take the necessary steps to ensure its implementation. If junior leaders are not committed to the strategy, it will fail.

2.8.4 Transformational Leadership

According to (Koehler, 1996) Transformational leadership is viewed as a means of supporting change and encouraging to achieve goals that could not have been achieved before, to improve employees, develop and encourage organisation's business processes and procedures.

2.8.5 Charismatic Leadership

(Gomes, 2014) suggests that Leaders that convey high expectations while also expressing trust in their followers are much more inclined to get their aims accepted; they can also instill in their followers the convention that they can achieve their

objectives and meet high performance expectations. Charismatic leaders are much more prone to participate in behaviors that elicit mission related motives, to be charismatic leader, it is important that followers tasks must be well articulated and appeals to them ideologically.

2.8.6 Visionary Leadership

(Bottomley et al., 2014) argues that leaders need the competency and critical behaviour skill associated to leadership, which are hypothesised and identified. “These are our vision-setters, standard-setters, integrators, and end-developers. A vision-builder is a leader who can cast the vision, define it, integrate personal and organisational principles, and most importantly, build trust. By properly utilizing these attributes, these leaders are positioned at the forefront of the organisation as the standard-bearer. Leaders must theoretically match their ideology with the company’s principles and culture while making sound judgments that result in long-term success.”

2.9 Business management theories

(Aaltonen & Ikävalko, 2002) suggests that although people still believe that everyone can implement strategy, they know exactly what strategy entails and where it starts and end, strategy implementation becomes less glamorous than strategy formulation. There are limited models of strategy implementation, (Hitt & Duane, 2002) supports that strategic leadership is a complicated, multifaceted skill with numerous nuances and subtleties, as a result it is challenging to codify strategic leadership.

(Lihalo, 2013) defines strategic implementation as the process by which an organisation achieves its set goals and targets, and by having a plan on where it needs to be in future. Most of the company’s strategy is dealt with within the organisation, the leaders work together as team, organising, motivating staff members with critical operations and systems are all part of the plan, it also requires converting strategic goals into practical initiatives in support to accomplish the desired outcomes.

(Thompson et al., 2013) describes strategic management as a forward-looking process that helps an organisation to make critical decisions now, to position itself for future success, scanning of the organisation's environment both from the inside and the outside is undertaken, strategy is developed, executed and the organisation's achievements towards that strategy is then evaluated according to the viewpoint or strategic management. The rapid speed of change in recent years has necessitated a closer integration of planning and execution phase, to guarantee that strategy is revisited on a constant schedule as changes takes place and implementation issues develop.

It is quite certain that management and leadership at the commercial bank in Tshwane should drive strategy and steer the bank into the future, the process requires inclusivity of all personnel involved in strategy implementation.

2.10 Rationale of the study

The study seeks to explore strategic leader's role in executing strategy, investigate challenges faced by the leaders in successfully implementing the strategy at the commercial bank in Tshwane. Recommend the leadership style and strategic management that will be benefiting the organisation and its leaders.

2.11 The Balance Scored Card (BSC)

The most recommended tool is the balance scored card (BSC) when linking leadership and strategy implementation. The BSC outline the strategy implementation taking into account organisation resources coupled with the environment to add value to organisation. The BSC thus focuses on joining and supporting strategic goals by conceptualising the strategic intent (Tjader et al., 2014). The BSC is the scale that ensures that the organisational vision and mission are correctly communicated and well comprehended. The BSC outlines the Critical Success Factors (CSFs) and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) identified before the strategy implementation to ensure efficiency and effectiveness are achieved. As the compass used by the organisational leadership in their respective level and position to drive their mission towards the corporate goal, the BSC has fours direction, namely the financial, the

customer, the internal business process and the learning and growth. Those directions or perspectives are explored in the next section.

2.11.1 Financial perspective

In his impressive survey, Sheldrake (2011:80) reported the financial perspective because money is generally accepted as the currency of all businesses as the universal metric of success. The financial perspective or direction should thus deal with concepts and objectives such as profitability, turnover, new products, new customers, or value-added, to name a few (Betianu & Bricu, 2011). The financial direction of the BSC is thus assimilated to the tangible outcome and aligns with the traditional financial concepts such as revenue growth, economic value-added, cash flow, net operating income, profit margins or costs.

2.11.2 Customer perspective

From the customer perspective, those making the business must be the customer. If decision-makers fail to understand their clients, the wrong decisions are more likely to be made. Those bad decisions stand to repel the client, then reduce customer's retention or organisation growth, frustrate the customers and result in a loss of business (Kumar 2010). The contemporary management philosophy has turned its focus on customer satisfaction, which is achieved through decentralisation so that the service and those serving are closer to the customer (Stefanescu & Silivestru, 2012).

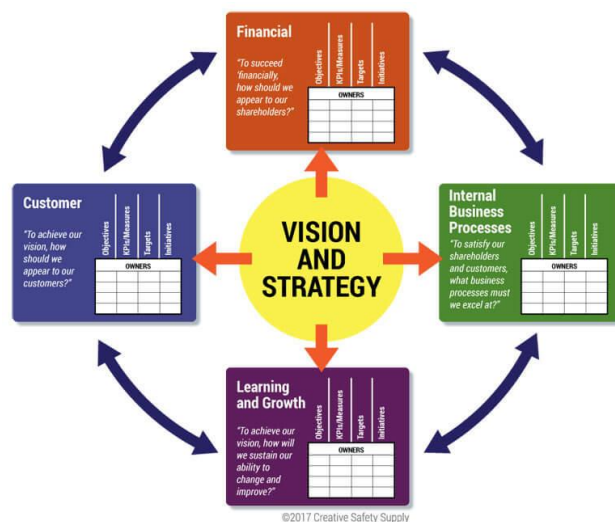
2.11.3 Internal Business process

The internal business process perspective is one of the most critical leadership compass or directions. This perspective has three pillars: the value that drives the business, the support process that is tasked to deliver the value, and good citizenship, which aims to improve the relationship with all the business stakeholders (Pilbeam & Corbridge, 2010).

2.11.4 Learning and growth

The learning and growth perspective links to the competitive organisational edge in the knowledge economy and the information age. Many organisations are racing to be learning organisations because they believe that the most critical resources in the organisation are human resources. Total quality management or leadership relies on the learning and growth perspective, which is the new trend in organisational success factors. The learning and growth perspective is the cornerstone of employee skills and information systems that drive improvements and successes in the other perspectives” (Bible et al., 2006).

Figure 2.2: The Balance Scored Card



Sources: Creative safety supply (2017).

2.12 Summary

This chapter has offered a view of prior research on the study, it provided a view of many scholars and author regarding strategy and leadership, and highlighted the importance of conducting research, the definition and concepts of the following topic were explored, strategy implementation, leadership styles, conceptual and theoretical frameworks. The next chapter has outlined the method and the methodology that was used in conducting this research.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has focused on the literature review, which is the basis of this research. This chapter has outlined the methodology and the method used to conduct this research has started with the research strategy, followed by the research approach, then the research philosophy and the research methodology.

3.2 Research Design

As postulated by (Cronje, 2020) the research design describes the strategy that incorporates the component of the study coherently and analytically to address the research problem. Therefore, the research design is the blueprint that guides the data collection, measurement, and analysis. There are various designs in educational research, among which the explanatory, the exploratory and the descriptive, to name a few. According to Kumar (2018), a research design is a framework that aids the researcher in obtaining answers to research questions and accurately analysing the data collected; from hypothesis to data analysis, the study design sketches out what the researcher will undertake. The researcher conveys their judgment on how data is structured, how the research is structured, how responses from the participants are collected, how the data is coded and how data is analysed, and how to explain the conclusion through research design. The researcher must ensure the path that they took and presentation of findings would yield actual and dependable results. The following section has explored the available design and has chosen the appropriate design for this research.

3.2.1 Exploratory research design

The explanatory research design is the one that is formulated for a specific study, tasked with a particular goal, often established to test a hypothesis from an operational outlook. According to Kumar (2014), exploratory research is appropriate for a study with limited or no previous data, thus uncovering new insights as a primary

initiative. Exploratory research designs are often casual and unstructured. It is often initial research with tools that pose hypothetical or theoretical notions of the study topic (Creswell, 2016).

3.2.2 Explanatory research design

Another robust design in educational research is the explanatory research design. Unlike the exploratory design, explanatory is used for the topic that has been previously researched still requires some priorities to provide a better model through new operational definitions. To that extent, the explanatory research mainly focused on discussing the investigative components or concepts (Cronje, 2020). It thus, therefore, attempts to explain the various elements of a subject. The research starts with a broad idea that leads to the next topic, often using statistical analysis to establish the relationship among variables (Bloomfield, 2019).

3.2.3 Descriptive research design

The descriptive research design is a scientific research undertaking that consists of observing and relating a subject's activity without affecting whatsoever (Cronje, 2020). The objective of descriptive research design consists of methodically illustrating the research population, their situation or a phenomenon. The descriptive research design answers the question of What? Where? When? How? But not Why? By analysing one or more variables. The descriptive research design is conducted via numerous methodologies (Bloomfield, 2019).

3.2.4 The rationale for choosing an exploratory research approach

This study has followed an exploratory research approach due to the scarcity of scientific research and information on strategy implementation coupled with leadership. It has been hypothesised that the successful implementation of the strategy is leadership specific, which has the nature of communication at its core. This design was cheap yet has assisted in establishing a foundation that will lead to more research as per the recommendation for further study in the last chapter.

3.3 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is described as beliefs about how evidence on phenomena should be acquired, analysed and utilised (Creswell, 2014). Philosophical views are essential because, when made explicit, they show the assumptions that researchers make on their research project, leading to choices that are applied to the research's goal, design, methodology, and techniques, as well as data analysis and interpretation (Cronje, 2020). Bhattacharjee (2012) explains that there are two schools of research philosophy, positivist and interpretive methods; positivist research method takes a logical approach to research, starting with a hypothesis and evaluating it using facts; interpretive approaches take an inductive approach, starting with evidence and attempting to establish a concept about research problem from it. On the other hand, Hansen (2004) supports that interpretivism believes that existence is created in the imagination of the individuals rather than by a singular independent event. First, deep introspection, which can be done through discussions between both the interviewee and interviewer, is required to bring significance to the forefront. There has been a merge of both positivism and interpretivism to yield the pragmatism school of thought in the recent trend. The following section elaborates on the various philosophies and outlines the one applied to this research project.

3.3.1 Positivist philosophy

Positivism is a philosophy that advocates factual information acquired via observation with measurement that is reliable. The educational researcher in positivist research is constrained to data gathering and objective interpretation (D'Alimonte, 2020). Positivists believe that they can completely understand the phenomenon through experiments and observation. According to that school of thought, concepts and knowledge result from direct experience, interpreted by rational deduction.

3.3.2 Interpretivist philosophy

According to Flick (2016), the interpretivism philosophy probes what people experience and emphasise their insight into things. Interpretivism is the immediate investigation and explanation of events as they are deliberately experienced, without hypotheses about their causative explanation and as lacking unexamined biases and presuppositions as possible. The phenomenological technique seeks to describe, comprehend, and interpret the significance of human life experiences. It is concerned with studying topics such as what it is like to be in a specific scenario. This research philosophy is often associated with the qualitative research approach.

3.3.3 Rationale for choosing interpretivism philosophy

The interpretative research philosophy was used in this study; hence it is the appropriate method to understand the subjective experience and gain insights into the sample behaviours and drives, probing long-held beliefs and challenging conventional wisdom (D'Alimonte, 2020). Interpretivism philosophy contributes to the establishment of innovative ideas, giving policymakers little credibility. This is accomplished by collecting data that is perceived as natural rather than manufactured. The leadership and strategy implementation investigation at a commercial bank in Tshwane was thus conducted using the interpretivism philosophy.

3.4 Research approach

Conducting education research requires a scientific approach. There are two approaches, namely the qualitative and the quantitative approach. Given that the deficiency found in each of them formed a new trend, the mixed method addressed those limitations of the single approach. A research approach is a step-by-step process that guides research ideas and efforts; sanctioning research methodically provides tremendous results. Therefore, a research strategy (or methodology) is the methodical procedure through which a study is undertaken to answer an inquiry problem (Creswell, 2014). The following section explains the quantitative approach.

3.4.1 Quantitative research approach

According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), quantitative research focused on numerical is a method of inquiry in which the researcher uses an experimental procedure to investigate variables and hypotheses. It collects data about the set objects through techniques including experiments and experiments and produces statistical data (Panter & Sterba, 2011) to support the view. In most cases, findings and evaluation are the measurements of variables that exist to contrast with some appropriate degree that may be performed. Kumar (2018) has also pointed out that quantitative research designs are precisely well and consistent, validated for reliability and validity, and easily characterised and recognised in quantitative research. Quantitative research characteristics are absent or present in only a few research designs. Furthermore, the measurement and classification of the data acquired in quantitative research necessitate that the study designs be well structured, fixed and pre-set to assure accuracy in measure.

3.4.2 Qualitative research approach

Many researchers do not use numbers or computations that can be statistically analysed for research questions answers. For a more in-depth understanding of a situation, it is often essential to grasp the fundamental standpoints and to think. It affords insights into the research topic and supports the attainment of research objectives through different methodologies such as interviews, observations, textual material, open-ended surveys, oral history, and focus groups (Creswell, 2014). Wagner et al. (2012) argue that qualitative research understands the mechanism and cultural and social settings that form various behavioural responses. It aspires to tell a complete version of the story of individuals involved to comprehend and reflect on their expenses and appearance as they meet, interact with and experience through circumstances. Wagner et al. (2012) elaborate that contextual interpretation of qualitative data is used to describe and interpret qualities, emotions, views, and intentions. To better grasp individuals' points of view, findings obtained from the data collected are converted into informative assertions about the significance and perspective of certain groups of affected populations.

3.4.3 Mixed method

Borrego et al. (2009) explain mixed research as a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. There are three reasons why quantitative and qualitative research should be combined:

1. Triangulation combinations are employed to enable confirmation or verification of each other.
2. The combinations are used to facilitate or develop analysis to provide data.
3. By paying attention to the contradictions that result from the two data sites, pairings are used to generate new modes of thinking.

The underlying concept of this technique is that such integration allows for more comprehensive and synergistic use of data than separate quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis (Creswell, 2014).

3.4.4 Rationale for choosing qualitative research approach

The researcher has used the qualitative research method to interview the participants in this study. The quality of the interviews in virtual meetings will enable the participants to answer the questions that the researcher will be asking freely. The respondents would be motivated to participate in the study and provide accurate and authentic information based on their experiences at a commercial bank in Tshwane. The research questions have enabled the respondents to clarify strategy and leadership in the organisation, which is an aspect that they are going through daily.

3.5 Research strategy

Kothari (2004) argues that the research procedure is a strategy for systematically addressing a research problem. The strategy may be thought of as a science that analyses how scientific research is conducted, examining various stages that the researcher takes to investigate the research topic and its rationale; not only must the researcher be aware of the study methodologies and procedures but of the strategy. The research strategy describes the major components of the research project,

among which are the research topic, the research design, and the research technique. The research strategy is concerned with how the research questions will be answered and how the strategy will be implemented. Many research strategies include but are not limited to case studies, qualitative interviews, quantitative surveys, and action-oriented research (Cronje, 2020).

3.5.1 Case Study

A case study refers to an in-depth analysis of a particular case, such as an organisation. The used data are gathered from various sources and via several mechanisms: observations, surveys, interviews, and document analysis. The data collected in the case study might be qualitative, quantitative, or both. Case studies often yield detailed and comprehensive examinations of problems or situations (Cronje, 2020).

3.5.2 Interviews

There are three types of interviews: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured, commonly used for data collection. The interview gives the researcher access to information. Participants are from diverse talents, such as good social skills, listening skills, and communication abilities. Interviews take time and are prone to mistakes and biases, which must be avoided throughout the design process (Cronje, 2020).

3.5.3 Questionnaires

The questionnaire strategy is designed for a large number of individuals; the questionnaire should be engaging to the respondent, should be prompt, not annoying and comprehensive. The questionnaire should accurately measure the issue under investigation. The representativeness should be addressed in the questionnaire strategy; thus, the size of the sample and whether or not it represents the whole research population must be assessed correctly. The survey can be conducted for the entire population, for example, all workers of a particular organisation, in which case the research turn into a census (Cronje, 2020).

3.5.4 Action-oriented research

The action-oriented research is the business study that generates ideas for change. Action research is a collaborative strategy that associates theory, practice, action, and reflection. Usually, the job is accomplished by internal personnel because it is grounded on the need for participants to participate and be part of the project actively. When the research project is finalised, participants must implement the changes recommended (Flick, 2016).

3.5.5 Rationale for choosing interviews

The Interviews strategy was chosen to collect the data used in this study. According to D'Alimonte et al. (2020), the interviews strategy compels interaction between researchers and respondents. The researcher investigates and grasps the interviewee's perceptions on the study issue. Structured interviews, unstructured interviews, and semi-structured interviews are the three types of interviews as stipulated earlier. The interview guide with a structured interview, which consists of a sequence of questions asked by the interviewer, was used to collect that data in this research project (D'Alimonte et al., 2020).

3.6 Research methodology

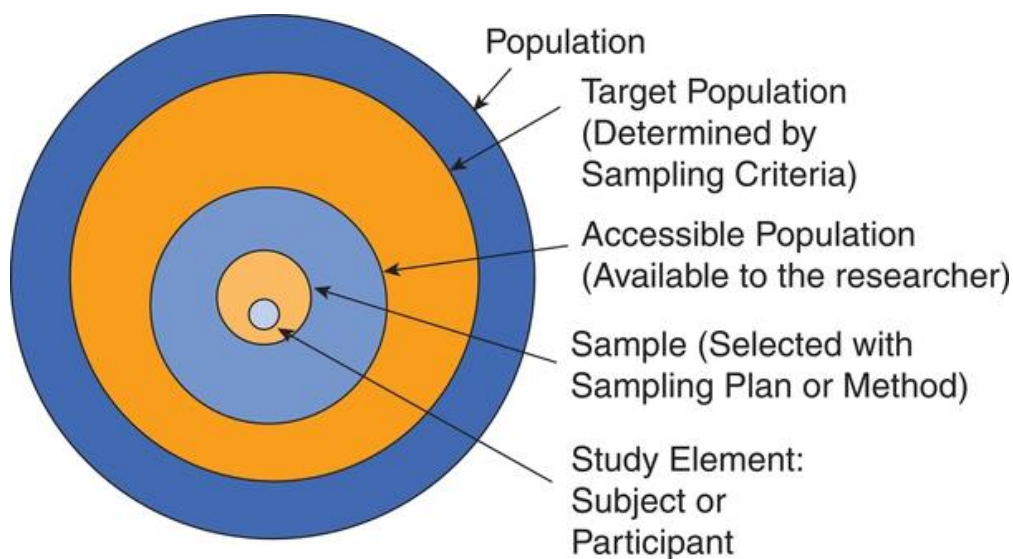
Research methodology is a technique for a systematic inquiry that brings together concepts about knowledge, theory and practice of research and examination. It examines how the study is being conducted and the measures by which scholars and researchers analyse, explain, and forecast existences as a technique for obtaining knowledge. This type of research technique equips the researcher with the tools required to gather and organise data, participate in research work, and collect data through statistics survey questionnaires; the researcher's understanding of methodology allows them to establish disciplined thinking to view the field objectively.

3.7 Target Population and Sampling

3.7.1 Target Population

Creswell (2016) has defined the target population as a set of elements used as the unit of analysis for the research project. In the same vein, Flick (2018) postulated that the target population is the group from which the sample is drawn, investigated and analysed to answer research questions. The target population are all employee of the chosen commercial bank in Tshwane.

Figure 3.1: Linking population, sample, and elements in a study



Sources: Casteel, and Bridier (2021).

3.7.2 Population sample

The study will cover leaders at a commercial bank who are driving and executing the strategy implementation and the bank's performance; from junior leaders to executive leadership, a maximum number of 10 participants will be sufficient for the research.

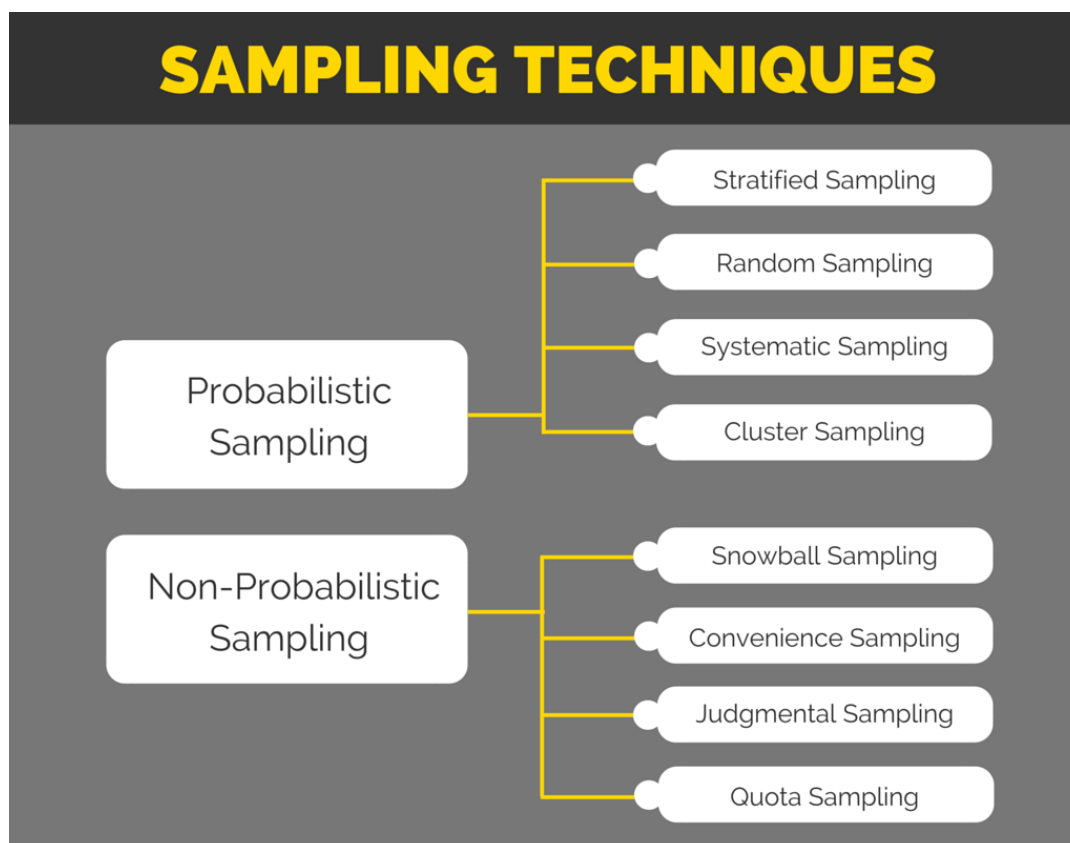
3.7.3 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting among the population those who have to participate in the research by providing the data required. Flick (2016) has defined sampling as a collection of people, objects, or stuff drawn from a larger population for investigation purposes. The guarantee of the validity of the findings from the study and their generalisation to the population as a whole relies on representativeness. Two sampling methods are used frequently described as probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Cera, 2020).

3.7.3.1 Probability sampling techniques

Probability sampling is a simple random sampling in which every case in the population has an equal chance of being part of the sample, which probability is different from zero (Flick, 2016).

Figure 3.2: Sampling methods and techniques.



3.7.3.1.1 Systematic sampling

One of the prominent probability sampling techniques is systematic sampling which selects every “nth” person to be part of the sample (Stokes, 2017). For example, every fifth individual in the population might participate in the research. This technique is an expanded application of a similar old probability approach in which each member of the group is randomly picked to create a sample at regular intervals. Using this sampling approach, every member of a population has an equal chance of being chosen.

3.7.3.1.2 Stratified random sampling

Stratified random sampling is the probability sampling technique process in which a larger population is clustered into smaller groups that generally do not overlap yet reflect the total population. The researcher thus organises these clusters during sampling and then draws a sample from each set independently (Stokes, 2017).

3.7.3.1.3 Cluster sampling

Cluster sampling is a probability sampling technique that randomly selects those who are geographically dispersed. The researcher chooses regions such as cities or counties randomly and then chooses from inside those clusters at random (Flick, 2016).

3.7.3.2 Non-probability sampling techniques

When the Non-probability sampling method is used, various techniques can be embraced. The methods used in the non-probability sampling method are judgement sampling, snowball sampling, quota sampling and convenience sampling, to name a few. Those techniques are explained in the following sections.

3.7.3.2.1 Judgement sampling

Judgement or purposive sampling is the non-probability sampling technique where the participants or respondents are selected based on their expertise and credibility (Flick, 2016). That implies that only those who believe they are qualified to engage in the research project are chosen. It is argued that Judgmental or purposive sampling is not a scientific form of sampling, leading to preconceived beliefs which impact the results and the findings thereof. That disadvantage leads to significant uncertainty in this study approach.

3.7.3.2.2 Snowball sampling

The snowball sampling technique is a non-probability sampling technique that assists the researcher in locating samples that is difficult to discover. If the sample size is small and not readily available, the researcher has to use this approach. This sampling mechanism is similar to the referral program because an identified eligible participant is requested to assist in locating comparable subjects in order to build a sufficiently large sample (Stokes, 2017).

3.7.3.2.3 Quota sampling

Another technique of non-probability sampling technique is quota sampling, in which participants are chosen based on predetermined criteria, such that the whole sample has the same distribution of characteristics as the general population. To gain a deeper understanding of a population, the researcher only needs a sample, not the complete population. Furthermore, the researcher is interested in certain strata of the population. This is where quota sampling comes in to assist the population into strata or groups (Stokes, 2017).

3.7.3.2.4 Convenience sampling

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which those within reach of the researcher are chosen for the project, which implies that the main criteria to be part of the study is accessibility to the researcher (Flick, 2016). The chosen participants are because they are easy to recruit, and they did not consider picking a sample that reflects the whole population.

3.7.4 Sampling method and technique used in this study/judgmental sampling

Judgmental sampling is the non-probability sampling technique in which the researcher chooses volunteers to participate in the research based on their knowledge of the research topic. This technique has the advantage of allowing volunteers who are familiar with the research topic to be chosen (Flick, 2016). This qualitative research was conducted using the non-probability sampling methods and the judgemental technique.

3.7.5: Sample Size

According to Stokes (2017), the sample size refers to the actual number of elements selected to participate in the study. As the research is qualitative, a judgmental sampling method was used to select nine people as the sample, all from the management or executive.

3.7.6: Data Collection

The research will use an interpretive paradigm for the qualitative research approach; this is to enable virtual meeting interaction with the research participants; this will allow for a distinctive perspective of the strategic leader's role in strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane. According to (Thanh & Thanh, 2015), the interpretative paradigm helps investigators to see things through the lens of the respondent's lives and opinions, and interpretative studies utilise such experiences to develop and evaluate other perspectives of the data obtained when

looking for answers. The data was collected using an interview guide which was designed in congruence with the research objectives. The collected data was further transcribed to facilitate the thematic analysis.

3.7.7 Pilot study

In line with Kiger (2020), a pilot study is small-scale research to check studies procedures, data collection tools, sample techniques, and different studies methodologies in designing a more research tool. A pilot study is a crucial part of the studies process. A pilot study aims to evaluate the viability of a method to be applied in the principal studies (Cronje, 2020). The pilot study thus establishes the legitimacy of studies primarily based on the expert knowledge of different researchers within the discipline. In this research, participating in a pilot study did not participate in the final research. The interview guide was refined, and the interview changed from 30 minutes as scheduled to 40 minutes because the pilot time was insufficient.

3.7.8 Data analysis

Patton (2002) Data analysis is a crucial method in qualitative research because it allows the researcher to turn the information gathered into conclusions; for the purposes of this study, a thematic analysis will be used to gain an understanding of the large amount of raw data created from the information recorded. By discovering this significant design and patterns in the data, the researcher can minimise the volume of data.

3.7.9 Interviews

A semi-structured interview was used in this research. According to Creswell (2016), semi-structured interviews are useful because they can effectively study the unknown. It helps to gain insight into the interviewee's views on the research question. Interviews were chosen as the data collection techniques, thus necessitating face-to-face encounters or virtual between researchers and participants to acquire data about the phenomena through mutual understanding (D'Alimonte, 2020). The interviewer manages the progress of the exchange and asks questions during the interview while

an interviewee answers those questions. When the in-depth information about people's ideas, beliefs, experiences, and feelings was gathered, the data collection was concluded.

3.8 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the rigour of qualitative study which establishes dependability, credibility, conformability, and transferability:

3.8.1 Dependability

Dependability is the degree to which other experiences can be can repeat and yield consistent results (Walliman, 2017). This means that any other researcher who repeats this research should find all relevant information so that they can conduct this research. Dependability in this study was ensured through the data collection and analysis process. The researcher attempted to remain outside of the data collection and data analysis examines the processes of data collection, data analysis and the results of the research study.

3.8.2 Credibility

The credibility is the level of confidence readers attribute to the research results (Cohen et al., 2017). To achieve this research credibility, the membership checks was implemented which involved sharing data, interpretations and conclusions with research participants so that they could clarify that their intentions were presented according to their expectations.

3.8.3 Confirmability

The confirmability is the level of neutrality under study, the results of the study are based the responses of the participants and not on any potential biases or personal motivations of the researchers (Walliman, 2017). This research has ensured that the data used came from the research participants and not the researcher.

3.8.4 Transferability

The transferability which measures the extent to which the findings can be applied to other similar situations was implemented. By using a rough description, this research showed that the results could be applied to other situations. However, one of the weaknesses of qualitative research is that researchers cannot generalise the research results to a wider population.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

According to D'Alimonte (2020), ethical considerations in research are critical to investigate since they aid in the pursuit of knowledge. This also improves the overall correctness of the research. Saunders et al. (2001) point out those ethical considerations outline the integrity of your behaviour regarding the principles of people who are now the topic of your research or are impacted by it. In the research investigation, fundamental ethics shall be observed.

3.9.1 Ensuring that Respondents have given their informed consent

Informed consent is the process of telling potential research participants about the key elements of a research study and what their participation will involve (Stokes, 2017). The researcher ensured that all participants were notified about the nature of the study using the participant form and a follow-up call when scheduling the interviews. The participants were also informed that they were free to withdraw from the study anytime.

3.9.2 Ensuring avoidance of harm to respondents

According to Strydom (2011:115), basic ethical considerations should cause no physiological or emotional harm to respondents. The goal of the study was carefully explained to each participant in their vernacular language to ensure total understanding. The participants were advised that they may withdraw from the study at any moment.

3.9.3 Making sure participant's details are kept confidential and anonymous

Confidentiality is essential in any research. The researcher-maintained secrecy by only sharing the research findings with those who needed to know. The participants were assured that the study was completely private and that no personal information was gathered. The researcher has conformed to the university ethical protocols, dealing with ethical issues in his work from the beginning until the end of the research.

3.9.4 Ensuring that permission is obtained

Before conducting this research, permission was requested and obtained from the participant before the research took place. The permission obtained is attached as an appendix.

3.10 Summary

The previous chapter has explored the literature on leadership and strategy implementation. This chapter has outlined the research method and the methodology used in conducting this research. The research has focused on interpretivism philosophy and qualitative research methods, emphasising the importance of collecting information directly from the interviewee. This chapter also discusses the key ethical issues found throughout the investigation. The next chapter has focussed on the presentation of results and their interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

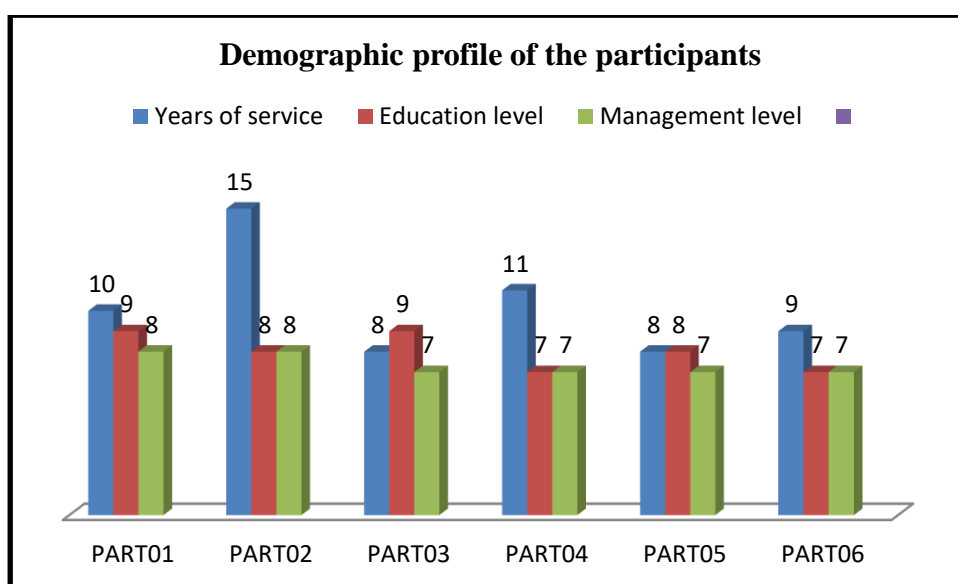
The previous chapter has presented the methodology and the method use in this scientific research. This chapter has presented the findings from the interviews in line with the research objective. The findings are presented in two categories, first the demographic results of the respondents followed by their opinions and observations pertaining to the research questions and objectives.

4.2 Presentation of the Findings

The results presentation and interpretations were divided into two sections: first, the presentation of the demographic findings and the figure format followed by the interpretation and the presentation of the primary findings followed by the interpretation in a thematic form.

4.2.1 Presentation of the demographic Results

Figure 4.1: Demographic profile of the participants



Sources: Field research (2022)

Figure 4.1 has revealed that all the interviewees have spent a maximum of 15 years and eight years for the minimum. The educational level was coded in line with the national qualification framework recommended by the South African Qualification Authority. In line with the coding, two participants reported having or pursuing a master's degree, which was the highest against one with the degree code as seven and three the honours or equivalent. In terms of the management level, again, the seniors coded as eight and the middle management coded as 7, the majority of four middle management against two senior management level eight. In line with the above, all the people interviewed in this project are at the managerial level, are university graduates, and have been with the organisation for a minimum of eight years. The following section presents the primary results aligned with the research objective.

4.2.2 Presentation of the primary Findings

These primary findings and interpretation are presented in the form of three main themes analysis which congruent to the research objectives.

4.2.2.1 THEME #1: LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

To formulate and implement a strategy, good leadership is required. It thus appears that the style of leadership is a factor of successful strategy implementation within the organisation. There is, therefore, a direct link between the strategy's success or failure and the leadership style. This assertion thus suggests that failure of strategies as often encounter results from poor leadership and the success of good leadership. In line with Kemp (2018) and Salkic (2014), strategic planning assists decision-makers in these organisations to deal with the challenges and significant issues. The leadership and the organisation are thus tied to two subthemes in this research, namely the motivation for innovative strategy in the organisation and the leadership as strategy implementation driver.

4.2.2.1.1 Sub-Theme #1.1: Motivation for innovative strategy in the organisation

Innovation is defined as an efficient approach to enhance the productivity of organisations exploit new opportunities (Bakar & Ahmad, 2010) while attaining competitive advantage (Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2016). Organisations benefits through strategic planning. Al-Shaikh (2001) and Posch and Garaus (2019) mentioned that strategic planning encompasses a role in enhancing innovation, motivation, increasing internal communication, stimulating new ideas, generating information, evaluating the environment of the organisation and ensuring careful consideration of all suitable options. This view has been shared by various participants in this research who have demonstrated their motivations for innovative strategy in the organisation in their response below:

“PART03: Because we know what is important, the long-term success of the organisation is to get people to align to long term strategy, and to understand the direction. When the people understand exactly where they fit and what is the purpose of what they are doing, so they don't just pitch just to deliver something while they don't understand the bigger picture, what motivates me to use innovative ways is to ensure that you build understanding and once people understand the strategic direction, you find a lot of ownership, people saying I want to deliver on my contribution because I understand the work that I do has impact on the strategic direction of the bank, which I believe is the right strategic for the bank, because if people do not believe in the strategy, then it becomes difficult for them to even wake up and want to fulfill that strategy. That is why it is very important to innovate and show people understand and they can improve”

The above has clearly show the sense of innovativeness in the organisation strategy by the participant, and this view is share with almost all the other participants. In the same vein the Part02, was innovative enough to use the bottom-up approach in strategy implementation, which tend to seek profitable opportunities through its analysis.

“PART02: Strategy is at a high level, the most important thing is about operationalizing and executing the strategy, therefore if you take your people along, in our environment we don't plan the strategy with leaders up, we do a bottom up approach which allows the employees to partake in the strategy, remember I spoke about strategic conversation and then reconnecting with people, that allows you to allow people to be part and support the strategy from the bottom up approach, therefore they will know their importance and they will know where they fit in the entire value chain, it is quite important that you empower the people you bring them along you connect with them, you have the strategic conversation with the people because at the end of the day, the strategy itself has to be operationalized on a day to day basis in order to achieve goals that have been set up”.

This approach has sufficiently demonstrated how the motivation for innovative strategy in the organisation is a duty for the internal stakeholders that have to be executive. This section has explored the leadership as strategy driver in the organisation.

4.2.2.1.2 Sub-Theme #1.2: Leadership as strategy driver implementation

Leadership and specifically strategic leadership are the key drivers of effective strategy implementation. Strategic leadership is defined as the ability to influence towards the achievement of goals and successful strategy implementation is dependent on the leadership skills, organizing, motivating, culture building, establishing strategic controls and creating strong fits between strategy and the organisation operates to achieve organisational goals. According to the one of the respondents, not only leadership is a driver strategy but also is a competitive strategy enhancer.

“PART05: Leadership plays a vital role of keeping the strategy alive, once you develop a strategy as you understand strategy is a long term road map of how we are going to execute, for the organisation either to

become more competitive or to add more value to its people, the role of leadership is to inspire confidence, inspiration and keep this strategy alive, that for me is the crux of leadership when it comes to strategy and implementation”.

Many organisations are moving from total quality management to total quality leadership. Indeed, there are excellent explanations of the leadership skill training offered by the organisation as advocated by participant number 4, flagging leadership development as one of the organisation's sought-after skills.

“PART03: very good training, very influential training, very developmental training, at the top of that training is more about from a leadership perspective self-awareness, emotional intelligence, people management and from an employee perspective, because sometimes we forget as leaders is that we are also employees, I also received training to up skill myself in terms of area of specialization, whether I want to go into a data space or do I want to continue in strategy, that technical training because you need to sharpen the saw, so if you do not improve your technical training then it might go away, I have also gained a lot of training in terms of strategic implementation, training helps us as leaders to manage our people, but also help us to lead others and also grow as a leader”.

Leadership, which is assimilated to the steering wheel guiding the strategy toward the organisation, play a critical role in the success of the organisational strategy implementation. The following section explores the second theme, highlighting the constraints of the leadership strategy implementation.

4.2.2.2 THEME #2: CONSTRAINTS OF LEADERSHIP STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Leadership implementation, like any other project, has few constraints. Communication is the lifeblood of any organisation (StudyMoose, 2016), which implies that leadership implementation through communication is constrained by the

latter. The following section has explored the importance of communication in leadership implementation and how its poor aspect constraints the strategy's success. This view is expressed by the majority of the participants in this research project.

4.2.2.2.1 Sub-Theme #2.1: Strategy communication (leadership) as strategic implementation constraint

Strategic communication is a term used to encompass a variety of communication-related professions, such as public relations, brand communication, internal communication and corporate communication. The competitive advantage is the catalyst for organisational growth, and sustainability has shifted to the nature of talent and their engagement with the organisation, the leadership and strategic communication. Men and Stacks (2013) found that lack of coordination and support from various levels, lack or poor communication planning are the main hurdles to execution planning. Thus, there are several strategy implementation entanglements, among which division, absence of partner duty, initiative fatigue, intolerance, vital detachment, inability to comprehend advance, activity weakness, narrow mindedness, and not cheering achievement, to name a few. Strategic communication can be delivered through a range of sources, including press releases, social media, radio and television advertisements, internal messages, interviews, white papers, and more.

“PART05: Communication of the strategy is to ensure clear understanding for those who need to implement, number 2, resources from enabling technology that people needed in delivering the technology once that is in place, then if people have the tools, then they can manage. Number 3, people empowerment, those not understanding, those struggling to deliver on their mandate are being given additional coaching, additional training to ensure that they can deliver and then being reskilled, Number 4, Upskilling because of ways of work changing you need to be sure that the team has got the necessary skills to deliver on the mandate and Number 5, keeping accountability as priority, you need to have regular check-ins to ascertain progress, to find out whether there are challenges or any new

ways that are emerging, because one of the things about strategy much as we design it, as you implement there are things that emerge, it is important to take stock and look at the emerging strategy as well. Strategy needs to be monitored and evaluated to ensure people keep to the right direction. Those for me were the five critical things in strategy implementation”

Furthermore, communication is important within the execution of any new strategy. An efficient communication plan must be initiated from the very best down. Transparent, honest communication is not only the quality of an efficient organisation, but it is a necessary step for any new rollout. Lack of communication lands up in disjointed teams and widespread uncertainty. It is not uncommon for teams, especially people who are working together for an extended period of time, being proof against change. The effectiveness of a strategic implementation is the function of clear communication from Day 1 each person's new role, their importance to the highest result, and so the final word benefit to a change to their own current routine. Help everyone understand that slightly pain now will end in big progress down the road. This view is shared by the participant number two as per his testimony below.

“PART02: the strategic conversation or the process that I have indicated, I am using a bottom up approach, there is proper engagement and communication plan, engagement plan with the with a colleagues, to ensure they are part of the strategy, normally when we have strategic bosberad meetings or strategic planning session before the management goes into the bigger organisational strategic planning, we engage with the direct line first and have strategy discussions, we follow that process, we go to the people to indicate where is the new requirements or where are the gaps or how can we improve in the current strategy going into the new financial year, those type of engagement and planning sessions and engaging people from the bottom up approach assist you to understand whether the current strategic objective that you are driving is still relevant and then you still have enough resource and appetite to execute on that, there is more

engagement involvement in sessions in planning towards the bigger strategy planning sessions internal within the department”.

The above has thus demonstrated that with poor communication, the strategy implementation stands to fail. Communication is also a function of resources at the organisation's disposition. The next function has focused on the impact of the resources on strategy implementation.

4.2.2.2.2 Sub-Theme #2.2: Resources impacts on strategy implementation

Resource-Based View, the tactic of resource allocation, is intimately connected to strategy. This process could also become a very complex, simultaneous, dynamic, multilevel and multirole phenomenon. Making capital allocation decisions is not a simple process by managers who may have conflicting roles and sometimes are at the middle level of the organisational hierarchy, possessing less power. The RBV has become one of all the foremost powerful angles in strategic management with fast dissemination throughout the strategy literature (Lockett et al., 2009).

4.2.2.2.3 Sub-Theme #2.3: Leadership challenges on strategy implementation

COVID 19 pandemic has been for the past two years the precarious challenge for business around the globe. Many organisations have to revise their strategy, yet many could not make it depending on the sector. The banking sector was not immune from that challenge; hence many have increased their bad debts, toxic assets, and many people defaulted in their commitment. Resilience and commitment were the prescriptions for business survival. This view is shared one of the respondents from his analysis reported below.

”PART03: The biggest challenges that came with COVID was that, it took away the interaction that leaders had with their fellow colleagues, so as the role of the leader is to keep the strategy alive and be the oxygen, when you no longer able to be there in presence, when you no

longer able to give inspiration to those whom you are leading, then you have to enable or empower them to be able to keep that inspiration, so how do you ensure you still keep people energized while you are not interacting with them every day, while you don't see them anymore, some are locked in their homes and they can't access others, where do they get that motivation and where do they get that inspiration to drive the strategy and implement it, the biggest challenge was then coaching the necessary people in saying look this is the new ways of work and this is how we are going to make it work and you allow them allow them to fail, allow them to also come up with ways that they feel will keep them inspired in driving the organisation forth, so that became a huge ship so hence the focus when you talk about the resource is more about people, your people are your most important resources in any strategy implementation”.

Strategy implementation encompasses many challenges of various categories as the most important resources in the organisation; people working for the organisation are regarded as the success factor for the implementation, which can be challenging when they are properly led.

4.2.2.2.3.1 People as a Challenge to Strategy Implementation

According to Flood et al. (2012), people are the core asset for any organisation, especially so in labour-intensive organisations. Therefore, people are the vital factor of strategy implementation, which define failure or success. Despite the veracity of this view, people in many organisations are ignored when coming to strategy. Indeed, many do not involve lower management and ordinary employee in their strategy formulation, expecting them to only execute. That has often resulted in strategy implementation resistance leading to its failure Michlitsch (2010) has attributed the noticeable absence of the human factor as the major reason why strategy implementation efforts fail. This view is sustained by participant 03 through his interview response presented below.

“PART03: Some problems are good problems, COVID-19 unfortunately from a human life perspective was very bad, but from an organisational transformation perspective, it was a blessing in disguise, the 4th industrialization if we are really honest about it, it was first coined by the World Economic Forum about 3-4 years ago to say we are going into the fourth industrial revolution , where things are going to be digital and so forth, some organisations went ahead and they really put in the right technology, we saw a lot of cloud computing we saw a lot of big data and analytics, but what we did not see, was now people being empowered to work in that environment because they were thinking this is going to be a 10 year journey to transform from the current ways of working to the new ways of work which is digitization’.

4.2.2.2.3.2 Lack of Effective Communication as a Challenge to Strategy Implementation

The lack of effective communication, without doubt, is a challenge for the organisational strategy implementation. The main role of the management is to communicate what should be done to reach the organisational goal. When these are not well understood due to poor communication, the impact is negative on the strategy execution (Beer & Eisenstat, 2010). Inferring from that view, Beer and Eisenstat (2010) reported that a well-communicated strategy led to a well-executed strategy; hence the role players know what to do. That is explained by the lack of adequate leadership as expressed by participant 06.

“What COVID did, it accelerated because now we really needed to leverage data, leverage technology in order to execute strategy, it actually empowered or nudged leadership to take the plunge because we still have generational challenges of people who grew up in the era of I want to see you at the office, I want to see you do work then I know if you work from here from 8 – 4 then I know you are productive but if you I don't see you I don't believe that you're productive”.

Accountability is also part of good communication, and the lack of accountability sends the wrong message and strategy implementation failure due to poor leadership. That point was stressed by the respondent 03 who has the following to respond.

“PART03: Accountability is now in the hands of those who are delivering, everyone sitting in their individual homes or small workplaces they know their work delivery expectations and the timelines, you can ask somebody to do it on your behalf, but at least you still need to manage that person to deliver on time, that by the time the work is required you just submit but you still accountable.”

The following section has focused on the third theme of this qualitative analysis which is the strategic leadership implementation factors. The area is subdivided into three subthemes named layers of management within the organisation and strategy leadership implementation, significant challenges of strategy implementation with few underlining factors and the training and development in leadership skills for strategic implementation.

4.2.2.3 THEME #3: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION FACTORS

Leadership has significant impact on strategic management process, especially it helps to determine the vision and mission of the organisation. Further, it facilitates the organisation to execute effective strategies to achieve that vision.

4.2.2.3.1 Sub-Theme #3.1: Layers of management within the organisation and strategy leadership implementation

The layers of management within your organisation and strategy leadership implementation are strategic leadership implementation factors. In fact, the organisational structure is the vehicle that drives the mission to reach the organisational vision.

4.2.2.3.2 Sub-Theme #3.2: Major challenges of strategy implementation

Employee Competency

As the quality or standard of employee performance, the ability to perform the task at the expected, agreed level, and competency significantly impacts strategy implementation and organisational growth. Strategy implementation also implies cascading from top to bottom. The dissemination and implementation process success are a function of employee competency level. The manager often overlooks this narrative; hence managers are often too busy underpinning factors on how to increase earnings and improve company growth, dealing with environmental dynamics, just to name a few, at the expense of taking care of the internal clients who are their employees (Bossidy & Charan, 2012). Competency entails the ability of the employee to meet complex demands from work, it is more than just a skill. Competency also requires psychological resources and attitudes. The platinum rule is the organisation's success necessary right people at the right place, not just with the right skill but with the right attitude doing the right thing. Without competencies, either on the top or at the bottom of the organisational structure, even the best strategy with the best environmental factors will have limited chances of success. The lack of competency especially psychological competency generate frustration and can lead to employee burnout, confidence by participant 03.

“PART 03: it also then put challenge to those managers to look at productivity differently and what actually happened was we show increased levels of productivity, accountability was now put where the delivery happens, so it was no longer the manager making sure the work gets done, it was the employee ensuring they deliver on their piece, because they give all the resources, all the space, no one is interfering them, therefore they managing their output, so they were fully in control and that led to higher levels of productivity the negative side was that there was increased burn out, because now you know you need to do what you need to deliver on and you find that you are actually working over extended hours in delivering and that became a challenge, that still

on the negative side, but from organisational perspective it was propelled in the right direction, that is why I termed it a good problem”

The next section has elaborated on the employee commitment and employee empowerment as strategy implementation challenges.

4.2.2.3.2.1 Lack of employee commitment and employee empowerment as a Challenge to Strategy Implementation

One of the challenges to strategy implementation is the lack of employee commitment. If they were not involved in the strategy design and formulation, they might develop resistance that might lead to failure. That aligns with Stringer (2006), who confirms that employee commitment is beyond his personality trait. Employee commitment resolves on a quality that can strategically influence employees in their daily jobs while accomplishing their assigned tasks perfectly. From that assertion, the organisations need employee commitment to a successful strategy. That aspect narrates the strong relationship between employee buy-in into strategy and his motivation for implementation.

“PART03: We saw a lot of cloud computing we saw a lot of big data and analytics, but what we did not see, was now people being empowered to work in that environment because they were thinking this is going to be a 10 year journey to transform from the current ways of working to the new ways of work which is digitization, what COVID did it accelerated because now we really needed to leverage data, leverage technology in order to execute strategy, it also then put challenge to managers to look at productivity differently and what actually happened was we showed increased levels of productivity, accountability was now put where the delivery happens, so it was no longer the manager making sure the work gets done, it was the employee ensuring they deliver on their piece”.

Furthermore, employee empowerment is a strategy implementation enhancer. Indeed, Hellriegel and Slocum (2013) have reported that employee empowerment equips them with the authority, skills, and self-control to perform their tasks. That view is complementary to Lincoln, Travers, Ackers and Wilkinson (2012) view, who asserted that empowerment, entails techniques to transform powerless employees into an equitable position. It is thus clear that empowerment authorises the employee to make decisions that enhance the processes as perceived by him without referring to superiors. Mahoney and McMillan (2010) reported that employees directly involved in a process stand a chance to know how to improve it. The strategy through empowerment should thus be people driven strategy as reported by the below participant 06.

“PART06: the most treasure, the most important resource is people, for me people first, you can have money you can have technology but without the people who drive and implement, that technology is nothing and money is nothing, people are the gracious resources and they must be acknowledged they must be recognized and must be appreciated, people are most valuable treasure they must be made to feel different, if people are made to feel different and important they will show the willingness to act more and they will be readily and more directly or more directly involved to support the organisation to deliver its own strategic objectives”

4.2.2.3.3 Sub-Theme #3.3: Training and development in leadership skills for strategic implementation

Ferreira (2016) defines training and development as improving current or future employee performance by equipping him with the ability to perform through learning, change of attitude or skills and knowledge increment. Training and development is a catalyst for good leadership and strategy implementation within the organisation. Indeed, training contributes positively toward employee retention, empowerment and increased workplace engagement, just to name a few. It can thus be said that the training and development produce a domino effect, allowing leaders to unleash their competency while influencing their peers efficiently to perform. Training and

development thus stand to improve job satisfaction, the commitment of employees and retention thereof.

“Part 04: It is been doing away on manual forms, so adoption of technology client onboarding, adoption of technology in product offerings , one of the things that is being realized is that time has become of the essence so you don't want a client to fill in the same information for very different product offerings within the same organisation, so you want the personal loan, we want all your data, now you want a vehicle now you may start from scratch, the day you apply for your house we want you to fill in other forms. Now we created what we call a customer identity and whenever you apply for anything that is new you just use that customer identity, that identity remains constant for as long as we are within the branch, so we can give you a plethora of products without asking you to fill in this or fill in that.”

The view of PART04 was found to be congruent to the same idea of training and development enhancing the success of the strategy implementation within the organisation.

“PART03: very good training, very influential training, very developmental training, at the top of that training is more about from a leadership perspective self-awareness, emotional intelligence, people management and from an employee perspective, because sometimes we forget as leaders is that we are also employees, I also received training to up skill myself in terms of area of specialization, whether I want to go into a data space or do I want to continue in strategy, that technical training because you need to sharpen the saw, so if you do not improve your technical training then it might go away, I have also gained a lot of training in terms of strategic implementation, training helps us as leaders to manage our people, but also help us to lead others and also grow as a leader”

4.3 Summary

This chapter has qualitatively analysed the data collected through the interview in their main themes congruent to the research objectives and questions, providing clarity on the challenges raised in the problem statements. The next chapter has discussed those findings to give recommendations to the organisation in terms of managerial impact.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has presented the results from the interviews in a thematic structure and their interpretations. The findings of the research are presented in this chapter. It has been subdivided into two sections, the finding from the literature and the primary research findings in accordance with the research objectives. This research project which explored the Leadership and strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane was rooted in three main objectives, which attainments through enquiring, has yielded the results and interpretation above. Both the findings from the literature and the findings from primary research are discussed and presented in line with those objectives.

5.2 Findings from the Literature

5.2.1 Factors contributing to poor Strategy Implementation from the Literature perspective

According to Nayianoi (2015), the successful strategy depends on two main variables: leadership style and communication as the organisation's lifeblood. Inferring from the initial findings, poor leadership style and communication should automatically lead to poor strategy implementation. This view is shared by Thomson, Strickland, Gamble and Thompson (2012), who reported that the failure of strategy implementation is due to poor top management and leadership, which are the keys drivers of strategy implementation. Furthermore, Cater, and Pucko (2010) research has revealed that while poor leadership is the main obstacle to execution, managers are generally focused on planning and organising activities for strategy implementation, leading to a lack of appropriate leadership.

Therefore, assessing the success of the strategy implementation thus is an investigation of the nature of leadership, which entails creating an environment where people are motivated to deliver on the organisation's goal. The creation of that environment implies having the right leaders in place, implementing the right leadership style when required and motivating the workforce.

5.2.2 Trends in the Implementation of Strategic Leadership from the Literature perspective

The only certainty is change that there is consensus that things cannot remain the same, including climate, social, political, economic and many more. It is thus imperative for business resilience to embrace the changing trend, or else it will perish and become obsolete. That enlightens the view of Nieto-Rodriguez (2020), who points out that unprecedented changes in the business world over time have disrupted the business landscape, constraining leaders to adjust. According to Nieto-Rodriguez (2020), business leaders are required to master the following trends in strategy implementation.

5.2.2.1 The project economy

Businesses are run as conglomerated projects that should be considered time, scope, cost and customer satisfaction, of which none of them is static in the form or substance. We are currently in the digital and communication age, most economies becoming knowledge economies, which is supplemented by the four industrial revolutions, which entails Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Shared Economy, Blockchain, Big Data, just to name a few. It is predicted that by 2025, which is three years from now, executive and senior officials in business are set to spend up to 60% of their working time on selection, prioritisation and supervision of project execution, which outlines the far-reaching impact of the project economy.

5.2.2.2 Increase focus

The next trend in the implementation of strategic leadership is the increment of focus. In others, implementing the strategy requires focus. It is therefore important to realise that the more the leaders focus, the higher the chances of the success of the implementation. In fact, it is the view of many scholars and business managers that are aware of the importance of the increment of focus.

5.2.2.3 Reduce complexity

One of the reasons behind the failure of the strategy implementation is the complexity, which is one of the leading hindrances to the swiftness of response, resulting in the implementation paralysis. It is important to exemplify the impact complexity by using the financial crisis of 2007/8, after which many organisations simplify their structure in order to improve their responsiveness and agility speed to cope with the change business landscape. As a result, many concepts emerged, among which “leaner,” “fitter,” “nimble,” to enhance the resilience of the organisation through the rocky changes. It is noticeable that unnecessary complexity amounts to many committees. The reduction of the complexity will clearly elucidate the long-term goals, without which there will be a feeling that despite the continuous changing environment, the organisation is moving nowhere. The ultimate approach to reducing complexity is the increase in agility by assigning corporate teams to innovate and embark on strategy initiatives. The focus of leaders to improve the success of the strategy implementation (Nieto-Rodriguez, 2020).

5.2.2.4 Foster alignment

To successfully implement the strategy, the organisation must align its strategy from top to bottom, cascading the strategy from the top to the operational level. So, fostering alignment is imperative for the strategy implementation should require the whole organisational commitment. One of the vital alignment tools is total quality management which ensures that the entire human resources are aware of the whole process, the way the organisation conducts its business. Fostering the strategy implementation can thus be achieved through the balanced scorecard, which is the tool that measures the internal and external performance of the organisation. The balanced scorecard has multiple benefits that enhance the strategy implementation, among which are the facilitation and the consistency of the communication given the shared metric at various levels. The balanced scorecard also focuses on the essential requirements, facilitates the reviews regularly and ensures organisational alignment.

5.2.3 Strategies to implement Strategic Leadership from the Literature perspective

Strategic management is defined as identifying the organisational purpose, and the action plans to achieve the corporate objectives. From another perspective, strategy is narrowed down to the search for market opportunity and competitive advantage over time as that is the correct scale of business success (Kotzé & Venter;2010:413).

On the other hand, strategic leadership refers to the aptitude, the willingness and the undertaking to anticipate events, embrace a dream or shape organisational vision, maintain a fair prospect of flexibility while working with others to initiate changes that offer a better future. It thus implies that leaders are agents of change because forever they are challenging the truth to find the reality; they are vested with the ambition to change for the better (Grabovica & Pilav-Velić, 2012:218).

Thus, based on the following, strategic leadership influences almost all the facets of the strategy implementation; it is the catalyst of effective strategic implementation (Volberda et al., 2011:424). Of course, as the catalyst for strategy implementation, poor leadership impedes or adversely affects the strategy implementation. This view is espoused by many researchers who established that strategic implementation is a dependent variable of strategic implementation; hence poor leadership creates significant challenges to the strategy (Van der Merwe & Nienaber: 2015:53)

Kanya (2022) has outlined seven pillars for strategic leadership implementation is business, effective and efficient communication, the aptitude of the leaders to be a good listener, the leader's passion and commitment to the job, the positive mental attitude of the leaders which implies he think and act positively, the ability to empathise with his peers at the workplace, his sense of humility with the organisational culture and his competency to master the art of tact and diplomacy.

5.3. Findings from Primary Research

5.3.1 Factors contributing to poor Strategy Implementation from Primary Research

The first objective of this research was to determine the impact of leadership on organisational strategy implementation. To achieve those objectives, the theme termed leadership and organisational strategy implementation is subdivided into three subthemes.

It was found that at the executive level where the data were extracted, employees have high consideration for motivation, leadership enhancers as the core of innovative strategy in the organisation. Indeed, innovation is found to be the efficient approach to enhancing the productivity of organisations that exploits new opportunities. It was further found in terms of innovative motivation that employees stand to embrace the organisational strategy when it is well understood, and they were part of the strategy building. The involvement of the employee in the strategy building not only builds trust and confidence in them also stands to reduce the resistance level. It was found that many employees have shown a sense of innovativeness in the organisation through their participation in the strategy formulation and implementation.

Leadership was also found to be a strategy driver implementation. Indeed, as the influence of leaders on the achievement of goals and successful strategy implementation depends on the skills, organising, motivation, culture building, leadership was found to be creating strong fits between strategy and the organisation's operation to achieve organisational goals. In fact, some executive believes that their leadership plays a vital role in keeping the strategy alive because it assists the organisation to be competitive by adding more value to its talent, the main and sustainable competitive edge. Leadership inspire confidence to keep this strategy alive, the crux of leadership when it comes to strategy and implementation. The findings of Jooste and Fourie (2009) in outlining important barriers to effective strategy implementation are congruent to the finding of this research. Indeed Jooste and Fourie (2009) have found that poor understanding of the strategy by the employees results in a lack of poor communication, whereby communication is the

lifeblood of the organisation; poor communication thus impedes the smooth implementation of the strategy. In addition, it is their view that the non-perception of strategic leadership as the major barrier to effective strategy implementation is inappropriate.

5.3.2 Trends in the implementation of Strategic Leaders from the Primary Research

The second objective of this research was to investigate the factors that can enable or constrain the successful implementation of leadership strategy at a commercial bank. That was done through the theme constraints of leadership strategy implementation, which has two subthemes.

From the literature perspective, the trend in the implementation of strategic leadership was found that the project economy, the increment of focus, the reduction of the complexity, and fostering the alignment were the main trends in the strategy implementation.

The trend in the implementation of strategic leadership has first identified strategic communication because it ensures clear understanding for those in the organisation tasked to implement the strategy. It was also found that the executive believes that employees should enable the technology as the new tools for strategy implementation. For most executives, the work environment is changing swiftly; thus, employees should be up skilled to face the challenges.

It was also found that the resource-based view was outlined as a trend in the implementation of the strategy in the sense that the lack of resources translates into implementation failure. In fact, the Resource-Based View, the tactic of resource allocation, is intimately connected to strategy. This process could also become a complex, simultaneous, dynamic, multilevel and multi-role phenomenon. Making capital allocation decisions is not a simple process for managers who may have conflicting roles and sometimes are at the middle level of the organisational hierarchy, possessing less power. The RBV has become one of the foremost powerful angles in strategic management with fast dissemination throughout the strategy literature.

One of the main trends was the leadership challenges that appear to be worldwide due to the pandemic of COVID-19. From the organisational perspective, it was found

that the organisation has recorded *COVID* as the biggest challenge for their business implementation. In fact, for the banking sector, resilience is required, many businesses have scaled down their activity, and many people have lost their income or even their fixed property to the bank, which has become a toxic asset.

People were found to be a challenge to strategy implementation because people are the core asset for any organisation, especially so in labour-intensive organisations. *COVID-19* was found to have unfortunately impact on human life, although it has accelerated the implementation of the fourth industrial revolution. Furthermore, the lack of effective communication was found as a challenge to strategy. *COVID* has impacted communication because now the organisation really needs to leverage data leverage technology in order to execute strategy. Accountability is also part of good communication, and the lack of accountability sends the wrong message and strategy implementation failure due to poor leadership.

5.3.3 Strategies to implement Strategic Leadership from Primary Research

The third objective of this research was to recommend strategies for consideration in implementing strategic leadership at a commercial bank. In order to achieve that objective, the data collected through the interview with the participants was analysed under the strategic leadership implementation factor's theme. Before the recommendations, the applicable layers of management within the organisation and strategy leadership implementation were explored. Traditional it has to do with the top executive level cascading the information to the middle management, ensuring that the implementation takes place at the operational level.

It was found that there are a few challenges that should be addressed to implement the organisational strategy. Many have reported employee competency as the main factor influencing implementation success. From the employee perspective, employee competency refers to the standard of employee performance, the ability to perform the task at the expected, agreed level, and competency significantly impacts strategy implementation and organisational growth.

Because the strategy implementation should be cascaded from top to bottom, the employee must be aware of how it should be achieved. Two main concepts came up

to the realisation of this objective: the understanding of the organisation and functional balance scored card couple with the total quality management and leadership to that effect. It was also found that productivity and accountability were often signalled as some of the deficiencies that slow or disrupt the strategy implementation in the organisation. It was found that one of the challenges to strategy implementation is the lack of employee commitment. If they were not involved in the strategy design and formulation, they might develop resistance that might lead to failure.

Training and development deficiency were also found to be critical factors of strategy implementation. It was found that the training and development produce a domino effect, allowing leaders to unleash their competency while influencing their peers efficiently to perform. According to one of the participants who has substantiated this view, very good training, very influential training, very developmental training, at the top of that training is more about from a leadership perspective self-awareness, emotional intelligence, people management and from an employee perspective because sometimes we forget as leaders is that we are also employees. This assertion has summed up the importance of training in fostering the implementation of the strategy.

5.4 Summary

This chapter has discussed the findings from the study, both from the primary research and the literature perspective. The next chapter presents the recommendations that derive from the findings, regarded as the managerial impact on the organisation. In addition, the recombination for future research has also been outlined in that chapter to complement the current study and enhance the veracity of the current findings from the qualitative research.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has presented the finding from both the literature review and the primary research. This chapter has presented the conclusion of the research and the recommendations derived from the findings presented in the previous chapter.

6.2 Conclusions of the Research

The conclusion has been conducted on all the chapters on the key areas.

6.2.1 Purpose statement

This research was undertaken to investigate the factors that influence the successful implementation of strategic leadership in one of the commercial banks in Tshwane, South Africa. The focus is on the challenging factors that constrain or hinder the successful implementation of strategic leadership. In this study, commercial banks are confronted with more challenges because of evolving business dynamics such as war on prices, poorly structured corporate governance and inefficient regulatory framework. Furthermore, environmental changes such as state regulations, high cost of sales, new entrants in the market and enhanced client awareness are some of the major factors that can enable or constrain the implementation of successful organisation strategic goals (Wanyama & Nyaga, 2019)

6.2.2 Research questions

The central question of this research was: What role does strategic leadership play in driving and implementing strategy in support of organisational performance? To answer that central question, three auxiliary questions were posed to collect gather data for the answers to the main question;

- What are factors contributing to poor strategy implementation?

- What are the trends in implementing strategic leaders at a commercial bank in Tshwane?
- What are the strategies for consideration in the implementation of strategic leadership?

6.2.3 Literature review

A comprehensive literature review was conducted on leadership and strategy implementation, focusing on the research objectives. The literature review has emerged that leadership plays a critical role in implementing organisational strategy. Communication and empowerment to skills development and training positively impact the strategy implementation because the training and development ensure that employees are capacitated to cascade down the strategy that has been designed for the organisation. Furthermore, it has been found that leading shows the direction and knowing where to lead and how to lead. One of the prominent tools that equate the leadership compass is the balance scored card, which is the main strategy implementation tool. Although the organisation might have a balance scored card that guides its action or missions, every department should have its balance scored card, which is the primary balance scored card structure.

6.2.4 Research methodology

This research was conducted qualitatively. The qualitative data collected were analysed using thematic analysis through the themes created and congruent to the research objective. Therefore, three main themes were created to explore the solutions to the three research questions, and subthemes were also created as they are used to cluster the research questions they were posed in the interview. Also, the academic rigor, unlike in quantitative research that used validity and reliability, the trustworthiness, was outlined and followed in the study. Finally, the ethical considerations in social science were observed, among them the confidentiality of the data collected and the anonymity of the participants, the pledge not to cause harm, and the permission to conduct the study was obtained from participants before the research went ahead.

6.2.5 Presentation of findings

The findings of this research were from the literature and primary research. The findings of the literature review were summarised per the research objective, flowing from the thematic analysis. In the same vein, the conclusions of the primary study were in line with the research objectives and the thematic analysis. Good leadership through motivation and effective communications was the cornerstone of the strategy implementation. While still on the literature survey, the BSC, a contemporary leadership compass, was found to help implement the strategy; hence, it considers all the stakeholders resources and employee empowerment.

6.2.6 Analysis and interpretation of findings

The analysis and discussion of findings were systematically conducted in line with the themes and research objectives. The discussions aim to contrast the primary findings and the literature stance on each finding. It thus allows determining what should be proposed to the organisation as the management's impact or recommendations.

6.3 Recommendations from the Research Findings

This research project which explored the Leadership and strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane, was rooted on:

6.3.1 Recommendation #1 - Factors contributing to poor strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane

The organisation's leadership should encourage innovation and attract input in strategy design to ensure that they receive the buy-in of the employee so that the implementation can be cascade down smoothly. The executive should try as much as they can to have a consultative approval on strategy, although the final decision is taken at a high level to create a better working environment and reduce the resistance level during the implementation, thus implementing a consultative leadership, more democratic. Employees are already innovative; therefore, the leadership is

recommended to nurture and encourage innovativeness through motivational leadership.

It is recommended that the executive leadership should continue to empower their peers, motivate them and build a culture the leadership that is pro-strategy success and implementation. Through their leadership, the executive should continue to inspire their peers so that they can achieve competitive advantage through their talent or human resources.

6.3.2 Recommendation #2 - Trends in the implementation of strategic leaders at a commercial bank in Tshwane

Therefore, the executive is urged to increase focus, reduce the complexity, and foster alignment in the strategy implementation. The organisation is thus recommended to embrace new technology to enhance their communication as the trend in business management and strategic communication is changing rapidly.

The organisation should strive to deploy resources where they are needed the most; hence the resource base view appears to be a catalyst for successful strategy implementation. The resource base view is the trend that should be followed thus recommended to the organisation. It thus appears that one of the biggest trends in strategic leadership is compliance with COVID-19, which has caught the world by surprise and has created so many challenges for leadership. It is thus imperative and recommended for the organisation to be resilient as COVID-19 has emerged to be the new way of living. The executive should enforce more accountability; explore better ways in managing COVID-19 so that the adverse impact of the pandemic should be mitigated.

6.3.3 Recommendation #3 - Strategies to implement strategic leadership at a commercial bank in Tshwane

The organisation's leadership should enforce better accountability, commitment and infuse a high level of competency in the employee. That should be done through the training and development in those various aspects, provided that the incumbent to the positions is committed and willing to embark on the training. One of the challenges

to strategy implementation is the lack of employee commitment. If they were not involved in the strategy design and formulation, they might develop resistance that might lead to failure. The recommendation's centre is the training and development that results in the empowerment of those responsible for implementing the training.

6.4 Recommendation for further research

This research was conducted qualitatively, with a convenient sampling focussing on leadership. As such, the result cannot be generalised to the whole organisation as only one side of the story was told. It is therefore recommended that a quantitative approach be undertaken by the next research so that the veracity of the current findings is established, thus allowing for the generalisation of those finding and the confidence in the recommendation.

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ANNEXURES

Appendix A : Participant Information Sheet

Title of Study : Leadership and strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane

Dear Prospective Participant

Introduction:

My name is Lehlohonolo Letsoara, I am currently studying for a Master of Business Administration programme at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting research on “ Leadership and strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane”. The study is strictly for the purpose of the award of the MBA programme.

Invitation to Participate:

I would like to invite you to participate in my research project, your participation will involve participating in one, single interview (Zoom) with myself during which I will ask you the questions from a questionnaire. The interview is expected to last no longer than an hour and is a once-off event. Your participation in this study is voluntary, you may subsequently withdraw at any time, and you will not be required to give any reasons, if that happens, any data collected from you for the purpose of the study will be destroyed immediately unless you give consent for it to be retained. Kindly read and understand the purpose of the study and the study procedures.

It is hoped that the study will contribute towards addressing the knowledge gap, concerning leadership challenges in the implementation of strategy at a commercial bank, and offer a better understanding of these issues.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of the research is to investigate leadership challenges and the impact it has in the implementation of the strategy at a commercial bank in Tshwane, the research will also explore the importance of leadership by understanding the success factors in strategy implementation.

Risks and Benefits

There are no risks involved in participating in this study. The benefit of the study is that the study aims to identify leadership challenges that hinders implementation of strategy and then make recommendations to the bank. Moreover, you may find the study interesting and enjoy answering the questions.

Confidentiality

All information obtained during the study will be kept strictly confidential. No personal information of the participants and that of the organisation will be included in the research report. Your answers will be given a code number, or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data.

Researcher

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Appendix B : Interview Guide

Research Project : Leadership and strategy implementation at a commercial bank in Tshwane

Interviewer : Lehlohonolo Letsoara

Interviewee :

Date :

Interview start time :

Interview end time :

Section A : Interviewee background

Designation (Position):

Number of years in the position:

Number of years in the bank:

Section B : Organisational perspective

1. What are the major challenges that your bank experiences in the implementation of strategy?
2. What do you believe has to be modified or done for strategy to be successfully implemented?
3. What are the obstacles to implementing strategy?
4. Have you received any training to develop and strengthen your leadership skills in the last 24 months, please motivate your answer?
5. In the last 24 months, have you received training to develop your capacity to implement strategy?
6. What role does leadership play in driving and executing the bank strategy?
7. What are the leadership trends in strategy implementation?
8. What are the challenges at your bank in their last 12 months?
9. Is the current organisational culture supportive to strategy implementation?
Yes/NO please motivate
10. What factors influence effective strategy implementation in your organisation and what are those factors
11. Do employees have the necessary skills and abilities to carry out strategies?

12. Has organisation s overall performance including employee attitude, coordination of activities and overall performance improved?
13. What are the leadership challenges at various levels of management within the bank: senior management, middle management, and junior management?

