A mixed methods study of the role of middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment in strategy execution among medium sized enterprises in Johannesburg, South Africa

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by

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Declaration

I, Hardman Ncube, declare that this thesis is a product of my own research efforts and represents my original work, except as indicated in the acknowledgements, the text and the references. It is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Business Sciences (PhD) at the School of Economic & Business Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before, in whole or part, for any degree or examination at any university.

Hardman Ncube

Signed at…….....on …….....2019

Dedication

To my dear departed mom, Selinah Masili, your unencumbered love and grooming was a source of inspiration. Rest in peace in the knowledge that you made me a man.

To my dear departed dad, Lenton Tombola Mabhonga, your work ethic taught me resilience. Rest in peace and pride of your son.

To Bee Lemu (a wise old friend), you gave me the eyes of tomorrow, so I could see what I could not see yesterday.

To my lovely family, Alice, Lungi and Njabulo, you are a blessing to me. Your support and love is my source of inspiration to dream.

To my PhD mentor and critique, Dr Tabani Ndlovu, you guided me along the road less travelled.

Abstract

Arguably, the ineffective execution of strategy is considered the predominant cause of failure of strategies and consequently, poor organisational performance. Particularly, middle management's lack of commitment to strategy implementation is a significant contributor to the failure of strategies. While securing middle managers' commitment to the implementation of strategy is essential for the successful delivery of an organisation's strategy, few empirical studies shed light on the antecedent conditions for managerial commitment to the implementation of an organisation's business strategy. Especially, the impact of psychological foundations of middle management's behaviour is largely ignored. Drawing from self-determination theory, this study set out to test the general hypothesis that middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment will have a direct effect on their commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy.

Besides identifying the strategic roles that middle managers play in the implementation of business strategy, this study established a direct positive link between affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation, thus addressing a gap identified in the extant literature. The support for the hypothesised positive relationships, and the corroboration of such relationships at a qualitative level (via the dialectical synthesis), suggest that both affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment have a direct positive influence on the commitment to strategy implementation. In addition, the study uncovered the behavioural mechanisms underlying the direct positive influence of

managerial psychological states on the commitment to strategy implementation. The strategy implementation-supportive behaviours deriving from the genuine affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment suggest the motivational prospects of these managerial psychological states.

From a practical perspective, the outcome of this study enhances our understanding of the critical roles that middle managers play in the strategy implementation process, thus enabling senior organisational leaders to provide the required executive leadership support in influencing middle managers in the enactment of such roles. In addition, being aware of the motivational prospect of the affective attachment to the organisation and psychological empowerment, senior management should pay attention to influencing antecedent conditions that shape middle managers' affective commitment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment.

Key words

Strategy execution, strategy implementation, affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment, middle management.

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Chapter One: Introduction and Background to the Study

1.0 Introduction

The introductory chapter provides details on the background to the study and problem statement, clarifies the research purpose and research questions, and discusses the rationale for the study. In addition, the structure of the study is presented.

1.1 Background and problem statement

> *"Strategies that lack middle management's commitment to strategy implementation suffer serious implementation problems" (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994, p.49).*

All organisations have purposes for their existence, and the pursuit of such purposes is accomplished through their strategies (Thompson & Martin, 2005). In a changing business environment, the sustainability of organisations may be threatened, hence the need for the creation and implementation of appropriate strategies in pursuit of the evolving purposes of such organisations (Thompson & Martin, 2005).

While a predetermined and evolving business strategy is essential for an organisation to achieve business success, the implementation of such business strategy is even more vital for the organisation's survival. Widely acknowledged in management literature is the importance of strategy implementation as a source of competitive advantage (Lippitt, 2007; Olson, Slater, & Hult, 2005) and a driver of organisational performance outcomes (Jooste & Fourie, 2009; Kalali, Anvari, Pourezzat, & Dastjerdi, 2011; Markides, 2004; Pindelski & Mrowka, 2011). Arguably, the value of strategies lies in their implementation, and their failure is usually costly for organisations (Kalali et al., 2011). However, the problem of strategy implementation remains poorly understood (Candido & Santo, 2019; Smith, 2009).

The failure to implement an organisation's business strategy can have severe consequences. Such consequences include a drop in share prices and credit ratings, and even the possible exploitation of an organisation's apparent weaknesses by its competitors with detrimental effects (Eicher, 2006). The drop in share price erodes shareholder value. Likewise, the drop in credit ratings may increase the costs of borrowing for the affected organisation. Further, the exploitation of an organisation's apparent weaknesses by its competitors may result in its collapse or eventual takeover by such competitors, thus disenfranchising the constituency that is dependent on the organisation. Loss of shareholder value and loss of employment for employees are the likely outcomes of the organisation's collapse or eventual takeover by its competitors.

While strategies may fail due to other factors such as poor formulation (Markides, 1999; Rumelt, 2011) or unpredictable changes in the external business environment that renders a brilliant strategy irrelevant (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985), the ineffective implementation of strategies by organisations is arguably the most significant factor (Mankins & Steele, 2005; Neilson, Martin, & Powers, 2008; Speculand, 2009). The ranking of strategy implementation as the number one priority in the 2006 Global Monitor and 2007 Conference Board surveys (Kaplan & Norton, 2008) attests to its prominence and significance in the survival of organisations in a global, competitive market place. Despite the prominence and significance of strategy implementation, organisations still achieve abysmal levels of success in the implementation of their strategies (Decker, Durand, Mayfield, McComack, Skinner, & Perdue, 2012; Mankins & Steele, 2005; Speculand, 2009). For example, Mankins and Steele (2005) argued that up to forty percent of value anticipated in strategic plans is never realised due to ineffective implementation. Similarly, Speculand (2009) estimated that only ten percent of strategies get implemented.

Efforts by scholars have predominantly focused on exploring the barriers or obstacles to strategy implementation. Several barriers to strategy implementation highlighted in the extant literature are associated with middle managers' involvement in the implementation process (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a, 1992b, 1994; 1997; Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Salih & Doll, 2013). In particular, middle management's lack of commitment to strategy implementation

is a significant contributor to the failure of strategies (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994; Noble, 1999; Parnell, 2008; Parnell, Carraher, & Holt, 2002,). As opined by Floyd and Wooldridge (1994), “Strategies that lack middle management’s commitment to strategy implementation suffer serious implementation problems” (p.49). A lack of commitment to an organisation’s strategy may lead to counterproductive efforts such as redirecting the strategy, delaying its implementation; reducing the quality of implementation and even sabotaging the strategy (Guth & MacMillan, 1986). In addition, the lack of commitment to strategy may result in half-hearted actions and effort (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992b), and may trigger resistance to strategic change (Ayande, Sabourin & Sefa, 2012).

On the other hand, the commitment to strategy implementation serves to direct efforts towards the accomplishment of set strategic initiatives (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a) and the successful implementation of strategic decisions (Dooley, Fryxell, & Judge, 2000). Therefore, securing middle managers’ commitment to the implementation of the organisation’s business strategy is an essential step towards the successful delivery of an organisation’s business strategy.

While securing middle managers’ commitment to the implementation of strategy is essential for the successful delivery of an organisation’s business strategy, few empirical studies shed light on the antecedent conditions for managerial commitment to the implementation of strategy. These studies suggest that self-

interest (Guth & MacMillan, 1986), managerial perceptions such as perceived ability, perceived probability of success, perceived consistency between personal goals and strategic change (Judge & Stahl, 1995), participative strategic decision-making (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013; Brenes, Mena, & Molina, 2008; Dooley et al., 2000; Kohtamäki, Kraus, Mäkelä, & Rönkkö, 2012) and leadership style (Inyang, Agnihotri, & Munoz, 2018) are likely antecedent conditions for middle management's commitment to strategy implementation. Additionally, strategic consensus (Dooley et al., 2000; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a; Kellermanns, Walter, Floyd, Lechner, & Shaw, 2011); strategic knowledge, and perceived organisational trust (Gagnon, Jansen, & Michael, 2008); and middle managers' perception of senior management support for the strategy (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013) are also suggested as possible antecedent conditions for middle managers' commitment to strategy implementation. However, the impact of psychological foundations of middle management's behaviour is largely ignored.

Specifically, as noted by Wooldridge, Schmid and Floyd (2008), there is evidently a lack of empirical attention given to the impact of psychological foundations of middle management's behaviour in strategy implementation. Wooldridge et al. (2008) posited that future research should explore the psychological foundation of middle management's behaviour. Especially missing within the strategy implementation research is the link between the antecedent conditions for middle managers' involvement in strategy implementation, such as the psychological

foundation of middle management's behaviour, and the intermediate outcome such as the commitment to strategy implementation. Particularly, as a result of the lack of empirical attention given to the link between middle managers' psychological states, such as affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment, and their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy, this study set out to explore this link.

1.2 Research purpose and research questions

Considering the above, this study set out to test the general hypothesis that middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation (i.e. affective organisational commitment) and perceived psychological empowerment will have a direct effect on their commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy. Therefore, the primary research question for this study is as follows:

How do middle management's affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment influence their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy?

To achieve the purpose stated above, the study set out to answer to following research questions:

a) What strategic roles do middle managers play in the implementation of an organisation's business level strategy?

b) Do middle managers' psychological states (being affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) influence their commitment to the implementation of an organisation's business-level strategy?

1.3 The rationale for the study

While an appropriate predetermined business strategy is essential for an organisation to achieve business success, it is the successful implementation of such predetermined business strategy that can ensure business success (Brenes et al., 2008). However, poor or non-implementation of business strategy has been recognised as one of the significant challenges for many business organisations that often lead to failure of the business strategy (Pretorius, 2016).

Among other reasons, a significant number of studies have highlighted the lack of commitment to execution of strategy by middle managers (Ayande et al., 2012; Dooley et al., 2000; Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Kellermanns et al., 2011; Smith, 2010; Westley, 1990) as a possible cause for poor implementation. Smith (2010) even posited that the value created during implementation is dependent on the discretionary activity of self-motivated and committed individuals. While there is recognition in the extant literature that successful implementation of an organisation's strategy is dependent on middle management's commitment to its execution (Ayande et al., 2012; Parnell, 2008; Smith, 2010), fewer empirical studies shed light on the possible determinants of managerial commitment to

strategy implementation (Dooley et al., 2000; Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Kellermanns et al., 2011; Westley, 1990). The proposition by Wooldridge et al. (2008) that future research should consider the psychological foundations of middle managers' behaviour suggests that the commitment to strategy implementation may, among other factors, be influenced by middle managers' psychological states, especially their emotional attachment to their organisation and perceived psychological empowerment.

Despite the prominent arguments in the literature regarding the importance of organisational members' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment in driving organisational outcomes, there is a lack of empirical attention on the effect of middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment on their commitment to the execution of the organisation's business strategy. Various scholars suggested that employee empowerment and organisational commitment are essential ingredients in driving organisational effectiveness, efficiency and performance (Martin, 2008; Smith, 2010; Zeffane & Al Zaroomi, 2012*)*. Smith (2010) argued that a "genuine attachment to the organisation will drive strategy implementation much more than fear of punishment or losing the job" (p.264). Specifically, if strategy implementation is dependent on the discretionary activities of organisational members, variation in their motivation and commitment will result in how well the strategy is implemented (Smith, 2010). Further, scholars argued that committed employees prefer to stay and work for the good of the organisation (Copper-

Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) and would exert considerable effort towards goal achievement (Lee, Tan, & Javalgi, 2010). As further argued by Michlitsch (2000), employee loyalty to the organisation is essential for the implementation of the organisation's strategy. Considering these arguments, this study explored the role of middle management's affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment on their commitment to execution of business-level strategies in the South African context.

This study therefore contributes to the strategy implementation literature in several ways. First, the study contributes to the strategy implementation literature by developing and testing hypotheses regarding the direct effects of middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment on their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy. Not only are the relationships explored at a quantitative level, they are also examined at a qualitative level to understand the mechanisms that underpin the nature of relationships among the variables of interest in order to enhance and enrich our understanding of the relationships.

Second, from a methodological perspective, the use of a cross-sectional convergent parallel mixed-methods research design for this study brings methodological contribution to the strategy implementation research. The use of mixed methods, in response to a call for the application of such methods in management research (Cameron, 2011; Molina-Azorin, 2011), brings richness

and a deeper understanding of the phenomena under study. Thus, the mixed methods approach is used to examine the nature of relationships between variables of interest through testing defined hypotheses, as well as exploring the behavioural mechanisms underlying the hypothesised relationships.

Third, a better understanding of how middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment influence their commitment to strategy implementation has important practical implications. For practitioners, a better understanding of how managerial psychological states, such as affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment, may enhance or impede the execution of a business strategy is essential in designing and nurturing environments that optimise an individual's affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment and commitment to the execution of strategy.

1.4 The challenging roles of middle managers in strategy implementation

Because of the challenging and difficult roles that middle managers play in the execution of strategy, several studies have adopted the middle management research perspective. Studies that have taken a middle management perspective have made significant contributions to research in strategy by highlighting the strategic roles that middle managers play in the strategy process; managerial cognition and its influence in the strategy process; and the link between managerial activity and organisational outcomes (Wooldridge et al., 2008).

However, Wooldridge et al. (2008) proposed that further research within the middle management perspective should focus on the individual and organisational antecedents of managerial processes; deepen the understanding of such processes; and explore the outcomes of middle management processes, such as the intermediate and economic performance outcomes. It is within this proposition that this study focuses on individual antecedent conditions of middle management's involvement in strategy implementation (i.e. psychological states of middle managers) and the intermediate individual outcomes (i.e. the commitment to the implementation of an organisation's business strategy). The significance of focusing the study on the middle manager is that it has the potential to advance an understanding of intra-personal sources of middle managers' motivations underlying their contribution to strategic change within organisations.

Scholars argued that organisational members play a significant role in the execution of strategy. They are a "vital resource for strategy execution" (Lee & Miller, 1999, p.579) and "perhaps the only source of competitive advantage to organisations" (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005, p.241). While top management play more of a strategy formulation as opposed to an implementation role, the predominant view in literature is that implementation of strategy is mainly associated with middle management activities (Balogun, 2003; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a, 1994, 1997; Katoma & Ungerer, 2011; Noble, 1999; Smith, Plowman, & Duchon, 2010). Middle managers are defined in several ways

in the literature. The position of middle manager refers to an operational function or hierarchical placement (Jansen Van Rensburg, Davis, & Venter, 2014) or “a position in organisational hierarchies between the operating core and the apex whose occupants are responsible for a particular business unit at this intermediate level of corporate hierarchy that comprises all those below the top level strategic management and above first-level supervision” (Harding, Lee, & Ford, 2014, p.1214). Middle managers, defined in the context of this study as managers who operate one or two levels below top or executive management (Dutton & Ashford, 1993), play crucial but difficult roles in the implementation of the business-level strategies as detailed below.

By virtue of being located at the operational core of the firm, middle managers are involved in day-to-day implementation activities (Smith et al., 2010; Jansen Van Rensburg et al., 2014). Through their downward organisational influence, they clarify and advance the intended strategy (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1997). Their actions “serve to focus organisational efforts and enhance the efficient execution of strategy” (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1997, p.471).

Further, as change intermediaries, middle managers engage in sense-making (Balogun, 2003; Rouleau, 2005; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005; Sharma & Good, 2013) and sense-giving (Rouleau, 2005; Smith et al., 2010; Sharma & Good, 2013). Through sense-making, middle managers undertake personal change, communicate and interpret events and help others through change

(Balogun, 2003). As interpreters and sellers of strategic change, middle managers use their tacit knowledge to make sense of strategic changes, and guide the construction and diffusion of meaning of strategic change (Rouleau, 2005; Wu, Ma, & Wang, 2018). As sense-givers, middle managers articulate and communicate their values to shape workers' understanding and experience of the organisation (Rouleau, 2005; Smith et al., 2010). Such efforts reinforce legitimacy, clarify expectations, enhance motivation and ultimately impact successful change efforts as well as firm performance (Smith et al., 2010).

In addition to sense-giving, middle managers facilitate organisational adaptation, and drive the implementation of deliberate strategy (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992b; Jansen Van Rensburg et al., 2014), promote autonomous or informal corporate entrepreneurial activities (Hornsby, Kuratko, & Zahra, 2002; Rafique, Hameed, & Agha, 2018) and divergent strategic activities, which influence strategic renewal (Pappas & Wooldridge, 2007; Tarakci, Ates, Floyd, Ahn, & Wooldridge, 2018). Furthermore, middle managers play a crucial role in translation; an effort to embed in given work context (e.g. team or unit) ideas that have been originated elsewhere (Radaelli & Sitton-Kent, 2016). As asserted by Floyd and Wooldridge (1992b), the roles played by middle managers are "a synthesis of action and cognition unique to the position of middle managers" (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992b, p.154).

As illustrated above, middle managers play crucial roles in the implementation of the organisation's business strategy. It is therefore pertinent to seek to understand the psychological foundations of their strategy-supportive behaviour. Understanding their intrapersonal sources of motivation to commit to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy may help remedy implementation failure.

1.5 Why is the study positioned within South Africa?

The participating organisation are medium-sized enterprises located in Johannesburg, South Africa. These privately-owned organisations are all in the financial services sector; specifically, the short-term insurance industry. The author's relationships with senior executives led to the choice of these companies and to the granting of permission to use these organisations.

Besides the fact that the author is resident in South Africa and that it is convenient from a cost perspective to conduct the study in South Africa, there are other considerations that make South Africa a unique environment for this study.

First, from a South African perspective, strategy implementation is considered to be "an important but difficult component of the strategic management process", and that "failure of change initiatives is largely due to poor implementation of strategy" (Jooste & Fourie, 2009, p.66). The barriers to strategy implementation within the South African context include poor understanding of strategy by the workforce and ineffective communication of strategy within the organisation

(Jooste & Fourie, 2009), possibly deriving from ineffective sense-making and sense-giving by middle managers, and covert tactics (Pretoria, 2016). Further, strategy execution is highlighted as one of the key variables for high growth companies within the Johannesburg Stock Exchange listed companies (Eitzen & Sartorius, 2012). Furthermore, the strategic roles that South African middle managers play in making strategy work are clarified (Jansen Van Rensburg et al., 2014). These perspectives highlight the importance of strategy execution for South African organisations and the need to further extend the understanding of the strategy implementation phenomenon in the South African context. While the importance of strategy execution is recognised (Eitzen & Sartorius, 2012; Jooste & Fourie, 2009), there is a lack of scholarship within the South African environment, focusing on the role played by middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment in the commitment to the implementation of an organisation's business strategy.

Additionally, research on organisational commitment and psychological empowerment is predominantly conducted in western countries (Blau, 2003; Garcia & Herrbach, 2010; Martin, 2008; Parnell et al., 2002; Peccei, Giangreco, & Sebastiano, 2011; van Vuuren, de Jong, & Seydel, 2007; van Vuuren, de Jong, & Seydel, 2008; Westover, Westover, & Westover, 2010), Asia (Ahmad, Veerapandian, & Gee, 2011; Avolio, Chu, Koh, & Bhatia, 2004; Humborstad & Perry, 2011; Kazmi, 2008; Pai & Yeh, 2008; Rahimnia, Polychronakis, & Sharp, 2009; Tayyab & Riaz, 2004; Tayyab, 2007) and Latin America (Parnell, 2008).

The outcomes of these studies may have possible potential limitations on their relevance to a country like South Africa, whose stage of economic development, political maturity, cultural and societal dynamics are different. South Africa presents a unique environment for the study in that organisations in post-apartheid South Africa face legislative and regulatory changes as the country seeks to democratise the workplace to reflect its demography, increased competition from global competitors; skills shortages, among other challenges of a developmental state. South African middle managers, like any middle managers elsewhere in the world, carry the burden of ensuring that organisational strategies are effectively executed and made an integral part of their organisations, for such organisations to compete effectively against their local and global competitors.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

Following on from this introductory chapter is Chapter Two, which discusses the relevant literature that gives direction to this study. The discussion includes a brief synopsis of strategic management and strategy formulation. This is followed by a more detailed account of the research on strategy implementation; focusing mainly on the research perspectives, outcomes and the theories underpinning strategy implementation studies. In addition, the theoretical framework adopted for the study is clarified.

Thereafter, Chapter Three offers a conceptual model and hypotheses for the study. The conceptual model and its bases are addressed, followed by the statement of the research hypotheses. The rationale for the hypotheses is clarified to give credence and substantial anchor for such hypotheses. Following on from Chapter Three is Chapter Four, in which the research philosophy, research design and methodology are addressed. The chapter discusses the research philosophy and clarifies the philosophical foundations for the study. Additionally, the chapter provides details on triangulation and how methodological triangulation informs the convergent parallel mixed methods research design adopted for the study. Furthermore, population and sampling techniques, data collection instruments and data analysis methods are clarified.

In Chapter Five, the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study are presented separately, in line with the adopted convergent parallel mixed methods research design. The quantitative findings cover the measures of central tendency and dispersion; correlation, regression and path analyses results. The qualitative results cover the coding framework and the narrative on the findings. This is followed by Chapter Six, in which the discussion of research findings takes place. First, in this chapter, clarity is provided on the integration approach adopted in the interpretation and reporting of findings. This is followed by the discussion of findings informed by the comparative view of quantitative and qualitative findings. The discussion, thus, focuses on the (i) general meaning of the commitment to strategy implementation, (ii) middle management's role in

strategy implementation, (iii) the direct effects of managerial psychological states on the commitment to strategy implementation, and (iv) additional peripheral outcomes of the study.

Finally, Chapter Seven focuses on the study conclusions and recommendations. In this chapter, an overview of the key arguments is presented, followed by the review of research questions, highlighting how the study outcomes address the questions raised. Further, the implications of the study are discussed, with particular attention being given to the study's contribution to theory, practice and methodology. Suggestions for future research are proposed. Lastly, a concluding remark is provided.

1.7 Chapter summary

In this introductory chapter, the background to the study was provided and the problem statement was clarified. Also, the research purpose, research questions and the rationale for the study were clarified. Further, a brief overview of the role of middle managers in strategy execution was provided, the reasons for the research context were clarified.

The background to the study highlighted the prominent role that strategy implementation plays in the success or failure of strategies as well as middle managers' contribution to the failure of strategies. Further, the gap identified in the literature indicates a lack of empirical studies focusing on the role of middle

managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) in the execution of strategy. Hence, the study set out to investigate the role of middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment in their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business level strategy.

Aligned to the purpose of this study, key research questions were stated and the rationale for the study was clarified. This included clarifying the theoretical, methodological and practical contribution that the study seeks to make. Also clarified were reasons for focusing the study on middle managers, and the choice of using South Africa as the territorial context, in which the study was conducted. As part of this introductory chapter, a brief overview of the structure of the study was provided as a signpost on how each chapter captures the logical development of the argument.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, a review of the relevant literature to the study is provided. The chapter begins with a brief synopsis of strategic management to highlight its key domains: strategy formulation and strategy implementation. Since this study is anchored in the strategy implementation domain, a more detailed discussion on the strategy implementation literature follows. This focuses mainly on the empirical conceptualisation of strategy implementation; research perspectives and outcomes; and the relevant theories. The review on the empirical conceptualisation of strategy implementation draws out the multiplicity of empirical definitions and helps guide the choice of the operational definition for this study. In addition, the review on the strategy implementation research perspectives and outcomes provides an overview of the location of prior studies and the outcomes of the selected studies. This paves the way for the clarification of the most suited perspective for this study. Furthermore, the discussion on theoretical framework, upon which strategy implementation studies are based, highlights the eclectic nature of strategy implementation research and guides the choice of the relevant theory for the study.

The review also focuses on the definitions of the independent variables of interest in this study: affective organisational commitment and psychological

empowerment. The potential direct links between the independent variables and the dependent variable is argued, thus highlighting the gap in the extant literature, which this study sought to address. The chapter culminates in the clarification of the adopted theoretical framework for the study. Lastly, a summary of the chapter is provided.

2.1 Strategic management

In seeking to clarify the nature of the field of strategic management, scholars have explored its evolution (Herrmann, 2005), tenets (Hafsi & Thomas, 2005) and consensual definition (Nag, Hambrick, & Chen, 2007). Among other aspects, these studies highlight the evolving nature and various views of what constitutes the field of strategic management. Herrmann (2005) posited that strategic management sought to "answer the fundamental question of how firms can achieve competitive advantage" (p.111). Noting the ambiguity in the definitions of what constituted the academic field of strategic management because of its eclectic nature resulting from its intersection with other fields, Nag et al. (2007) sought to explore its essence and distinctiveness. The outcome of their study suggests that the implicit consensual definition of strategic management is that it "deals with the major intended and emergent initiatives taken by general managers on behalf of owners, involving the utilisation of resources, to enhance the performance of firms in their external environments" (Nag et al., 2007, p.944). Similarly, Louw and Venter (2006) saw strategic management as concerned with "effective strategies that balance the organisation's resources and capabilities,

values and goals with its external environment" and the implementation of such strategies to achieve effective performance (p.21).

The above views suggest that, in essence, strategic management is concerned with the clarification of initiatives that establish a clear direction for the organisation and the competitive means to achieve it, and implementation of such initiative to achieve competitive advantage for an organisation (Herrmann, 2005; Louw & Venter, 2006; Nag et al., 2007).

In an attempt to deal with the basic questions of how firms can achieve competitive advantage and superior organisational performance, strategic management research has evolved, taking turns through process (Randall & Dent, 2019; Robinson & Pearce, 1988; van Der Ven, 1992), content (Andrews, Boyne & Walker, 2006; Boyne & Walker, 2004; Randall & Dent, 2019; Robinson & Pearce, 1988), integrative approach (Robinson & Pearce, 1988), and the practice approach (Chia & MacKay, 2007; Whittington, 2006).

The process approach focuses on the organisational process, through which strategies are developed and the activities leading to strategic decisions (Randall & Dent, 2019; Robinson & Pearce, 1988; van der Ven, 1992). Process scholarship concerns itself with 'how' strategy is formed (Randall & Dent, 2019). Such studies include the focus on the planning-performance relationships (Robinson & Pearce, 1988). On the other hand, the content approach is

concerned with the formation, testing and evolution of discrete strategy tools, theories, frameworks and models; which help explain or predict industry and firm performance and assist with strategy formation (Randall & Dent, 2019). The content approach focuses “exclusively on what the strategic positions of the firm lead to optimal performance under varying environmental context” (Chakravarthy & Doz, 1992, p.5). While the process scholarship is concerned with ‘how’ strategy is formed, the content scholarship is concerned with ‘what’ is decided (Randall & Dent, 2019). In the main, strategy content studies focus on the content-performance relationships, and the outcomes of such studies suggest that variations in organisational performance are associated with different strategies (Andrews et al., 2006; Randall & Dent, 2019; Robinson & Pearce, 1988). As noted by Boyne and Walker (2004), the dominant models of strategy content are Miles and Snow’s prospectors, defenders, analysers and reactors, and Porter’s cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategy typologies.

The integrative studies focus on both process and content impact on organisational performance. In such a study, Robinson and Pearce (1988) pointed out that organisational performance is contingent upon the interaction between the level of planning sophistication (i.e. process) and strategic orientation (i.e. content). Lastly, the focal points of the strategy-as-practice studies are either practitioners (i.e. the organisational actors involved in the work of strategy), practices (i.e. the social, symbolic and material tools, through which strategy is done) or praxis (i.e. the activities, through which strategy is

accomplished) (Chia & MacKay, 2007; Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009; Whittington, 2006).

In addition to the process, content, integrative and practice approaches, strategic management research is subjected to a variety of theories. These theories, among others, include contingency (Harrington & Kendall, 2006; Mitchell, 2014), institutional (Jensen, Kjærgaard, & Svejvig, 2009; Shi, Shambare, & Wang, 2008), resources-based (Abu Bakar & Ahmad, 2010; Runyan, Huddleston, & Swinney, 2007), expectancy theory of motivation (Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Judge & Stahl, 1995), strategic choice (Child, 1997), and intra-organisational ecology (Burgelman, 1991). Each of these theories seeks to enrich the inquiry into strategic management.

Besides the different approaches and theories, studies in strategic management research have utilised a variety of methods, including qualitative (Heide, Gronhaug, & Johannessen, 2000; Huy, 2011), quantitative (Ayande et al., 2012; Harrington & Kendall, 2006) as well as mixed methods (Eitzen & Sartorius, 2012; Molina-Azorin, 2012). There is a predominant bias towards quantitative and qualitative methods in management research, and mixed methods approaches are not as prevalent in strategic management research. However, there is a growing call for the application of mixed methods in management research (Cameron, 2011; Molina-Azorin, 2011).

Further, because of the eclectic nature of strategic management (Noble, 1999), boundary spanning scholars link it to other fields of study such as sociology, for example, middle managers' social identities in strategy implementation (Huy, 2011), psychology, for example, sense-making and sense-giving in execution of strategic initiatives (Rouleau, 2005; Smith et al., 2010) and anthropology, for example, the relationship between culture typologies and dimensions of strategy implementation (Ahmadi, Salamzadeh, Daraei, & Akbari, 2012), among others. These distinct aspects help enrich the enquiry into the various focal dimensions of strategic management such as strategy formulation and implementation, which are discussed in the ensuing sections.

2.2 Strategy formulation

Strategy formulation is an essential part of the strategic management process. Multiple perspectives on strategy formulation are evident within the strategic management literature. These include rational planning (Miller, 1998; Okumus & Ropers, 1999), organisational learning (Miller, 1998; Mintzberg & Waters, 1985; Okumus & Ropers, 1999) and incrementalism (Miller, 1998; Okumus & Ropers, 1999), among others. Proponents of the rational planning perspective assume that organisational strategy is a derivative of intellectual analysis of both internal and external organisational environments, which are considered reasonably controllable and predictable, respectively (Miller, 1998). In a rational planning perspective, developing a strategy for an organisation requires leaders to understand the business environment and organisational capability by

undertaking a strategic analysis of the business environment and their organisation. Environmental and organisational analysis provides a source of insights for strategic intuition. As noted by Duggan (2007), strategic intuition comprises flashes of insight, which give one a course of action followed by a vision or a vision followed by a course of action. Arguably, strategic analysis of the business environment and organisational capability triggers flashes of insights on what set of competitive business approaches the organisation may undertake to create distinctiveness in the way it will deliver value to its targeted customers better than its competitors.

Because of the significant focus on strategic analysis of the internal and external business environment from a rational planning perspective, criticisms that strategy development has "tended to be treated as an analytic process for establishing long-range goals and action plans for an organisation" (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985, p.257) are evident. However, it cannot be ignored that historical and current analysis of both the internal and external business environments, coupled with forecasted trends may provide a trigger for strategic intuition, which can alter an organisation's course of action. In addition, the research focus on strategic analysis has yielded essential frameworks for analysing the business environment such as the five forces (Porter, 1980), and core competencies (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990), and organisation's resources and capability frameworks (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993; Collis & Montgomery, 1995; Grant,

1991), among others. These frameworks are essential tools that guide the business in understanding its current environment.

While the rational planning perspective assumes the organisational strategy to be a derivative of intellectual analysis of controllable internal and predictable external organisational environments, the organisational learning perspective assumes that an organisation's intended strategy is shaped by developments in the external business environment as well as learnings by the organisation resulting in an emergent strategy (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). This perspective takes cognisance of the fact that mistakes will be made along the way, and therefore, strategy must be subject to continuous adjustments (Miller, 1998). Though the organisational learning perspective is arguably offered as an alternative to the rational planning perspective, it does not provide clarity on the starting point of strategy development. However, the rational planning and organisational learning perspectives are complementary in that the starting point for the intended strategy is the rational planning process. With implementation of the intended strategy, organisational learnings can inform the necessary adjustments to the strategic path, resulting in emergent strategies.

The incremental perspective assumes that (i) the future is unknown and unknowable, (ii) external forces are uncontrollable, and (iii) managers cannot enforce adherence to their plans (Miller, 1998). As a result, the organisation drifts from one strategy to the next due to the unfolding environmental changes.

Ultimately, the realised strategy may bear little resemblance to the originally intended strategy (Miller, 1998). Therefore, with the incremental perspective, emphasis is on managers concentrating on how the unfolding environmental change determines an organisation's strategic path (Miller, 1998). While incrementalism offers an alternative perspective on strategy development at a theoretical level, its practical application may be questionable. In reality, investors might not be attracted to an organisation, whose strategic direction is unknown and therefore positions itself as a 'drifter', informed by unfolding environmental change. Like the organisational learning perspective, incrementalism does not provide clarity on the starting point of strategy development. From incorporation, an organisation may not merely drift along, hoping the unfolding environmental change will inform its target market, product spectrum and sources of competitive advantage.

The variety of perspectives on strategy development confirm the eclectic nature of the strategic management field and the attendant pluralistic approaches, in which research in strategy is undertaken.

Strategy formulation, as an essential part of the strategic management process, is about defining the appropriate strategies for organisations. Such strategies may take various forms as clarified below.

2.2.1 Forms or levels of strategy

Though various views exist on what constitutes strategy, the prevailing view in the extant literature is that strategy is a set of competitive business approaches undertaken by an organisation to create distinctiveness in the way an organisation delivers products and services to its targeted customers better than its competitors to achieve the desired levels of returns (Hambrick & Fredrickson, 2001; Markides, 2004; Thompson, Strickland, & Gamble, 2010). Markides (2004) sums up strategy as a concern about who the targeted customers will be; what products or services will be offered to targeted customers; and how the organisation will competitively achieve a distinctive strategic position. In essence, strategy is about creating the kind of future an organisation desires (Brenes et al., 2008).

Within the management literature, a hierarchy of interrelated levels of strategy are espoused. The three predominant levels are corporate, business and functional (Thompson & Strickland III, 2003; Thompson et al., 2010). As clarified by the above authors, at the top of the strategy hierarchy is a corporate-level strategy, which is concerned with the overall company-wide game plan for a diversified company (i.e. a company made up of disparate businesses). While a corporate strategy is concerned with the overall game plan for a diversified company, the business strategy is concerned with initiatives that seek to strengthen the market position and competitive advantage of each business unit within a diversified company. In companies that focus on a single business, their

primary concern would be a business strategy. Further down the hierarchy is the functional-level strategy, which provides clarity on functional-level initiatives for supporting the business-level strategy. Essentially, the functional-level strategy, as a derivative of the business-level strategy, should be the anchor, on which implementation of a business-level strategy is based. If functional-level strategies are not aligned to the organisation's business strategy, there is a greater chance that the business strategy will not be achieved.

Underpinning the different levels of strategy is the clarification of the mechanisms, through which the defined strategy is purported to be delivered (i.e. strategy implementation). It is only through the implementation of the defined strategy that envisaged benefits of the strategy can be realised. Therefore, strategy implementation, a focal dimension of this study, is an essential part of the strategic management process. In this regard, the ensuing section deals with the nature of strategy implementation research.

2.3 Strategy implementation

Much of the strategic management literature's focus is on strategy development. Consequently, Noble (1999) ascribed the fascination with strategy development to the strategists' view that "shrewd strategy formulation is the only necessary element of strategic success" (p.119). However, the importance of strategy implementation is prominently argued in the literature. While a well formulated strategy is essential for an organisation to achieve business success, its

implementation is even more vital for the organisation's survival (Kalali et al., 2011). Even though the failure of strategies is also attributable to poor formulation (Markides, 1999; Rumelt, 2011) and the unpredictable changes in the external business environment that renders a brilliant strategy irrelevant (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985), eminent views in the literature suggest that strategy implementation is the most significant factor (Mankins & Steele, 2005; Markides, 2004; Neilson et al., 2008; Speculand, 2009). These scholars argued that failure of strategy predominantly occurs during the implementation phase. Mankins and Steele (2005) argued that as much as up to forty percent of the value anticipated in strategic plans are never realised due to ineffective or poor implementation. Similarly, Speculand (2009) estimated that only ten percent of strategies get implemented.

Markides (2004) emphasised the importance of strategy implementation by asserting that "any strategy, however brilliant, needs to be implemented properly, if it is to deliver the desired results" (p.10). Likewise, Kalali et al. (2011) asserted that the value of strategies lies in their implementation and their failure is usually costly for organisations. Various scholars further argued that organisational performance outcomes are a proximal consequence of strategy implementation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009; Noble & Mokwa, 1999; Pindelski & Mrowka, 2011). Some scholars even posited that a firm's competitive advantage lies in the execution of its strategy rather than the strategy itself (Olson et al., 2005).

Because of its prominence, research on strategy implementation has taken different perspectives, yielding several significant outcomes. These perspectives and outcomes are discussed in the following section.

2.3.1 Research perspectives and outcomes on strategy implementation

Because of the importance (Mankins & Steele, 2005; Neilson et al., 2008; Noble, 1999; Speculand, 2009), multidimensionality and eclectic nature of strategy implementation (Noble, 1999), research on strategy implementation has tended to focus on a variety of factors that either impede or enhance implementation. In identifying factors that affect strategy implementation, multiple approaches or perspectives were adopted by scholars. These perspectives, though varied, include the structural, behavioural or interpersonal process, individual level process (Noble, 1999; Noble & Mokwa, 1999) and the strategy-as-practice (Chia & MacKay, 2007; Janse Van Rensburg et al., 2014; Whittington, 2006). While this categorisation of research perspectives is not exhaustive and does not embrace all strategy implementation studies, it provides a broad umbrella, under which a considerable number of strategy implementation studies fall. These research perspectives are explored in the ensuing sections. In addition, a summary of selected empirical studies within each of these perspectives are provided in Table 1, to highlight the breadth of suggested variables that either enhance or impede the execution of strategy.

2.3.1.1 Structural perspective

Studies adopting a structural perspective enquire into the effects of formal and informal organisations' structural elements on strategy implementation (Kazmi, 2008; Noble, 1999). Such studies include the impact of formal organisational structures; for example, formalisation, specialisation (Skivington & Daft, 1991; Olson et al., 2005) and centralisation (Olson et al., 2005); informal organisational structure such as organisational culture (Lok & Crawford, 2004; Bushardt, Glascoff, & Doty, 2011; Bushardt, Lambert, & Duhon, 2007), rewards (Skivington & Daft, 1991; Bushardt et al., 2011) and control mechanisms (Daft & Macintosh, 1984) on the strategy implementation process.

Within a framework of the organisation (i.e. formal configuration of rules and procedures constituting the rules, prescriptions of authority, division of labour, and hierarchy of authority), strategy implementation may be impacted by redefining duties and roles, resource allocation, enacting new operational criteria, and employee training (Skivington & Daft, 1991). Similarly, within the organisational processes, in which member behaviour is regularised through the identification of significant symbols, values and understandings (i.e. organisational culture), top leadership may impact strategy implementation by creating a new meaning through formal and informal communication, and use of change champions (Skivington & Daft, 1991). In this regard, communication would include describing the

instrumental value of strategy to be implemented. Besides communication, top management, through sanctions, may impact strategy implementation by replacing managers, who exhibit autonomous and subversive behaviours, or by providing monetary and expressive rewards (Skivington & Daft, 1991).

Further, the structural dimensions such as formalisation, centralisation and specialisation “influence communication, coordination and decision making which are key to strategy implementation” (Olson et al., 2005, p.49). Thus, “in order for strategy to create superior performance, it must be complemented by appropriate organisational characteristics and employee behaviours” (Olson et al., 2005, p.47). Such organisational characteristics include formalised rules of decision-making, employee engagement, flat or hierarchical structures (Olson et al., 2005). Rigid hierarchical structures with formal rules may impede communication and decision-making, thus impacting strategy implementation negatively.

Besides the formal structural elements such as rules and decision-making authority, organisational culture is largely posited as having a significant impact on organisational performance and strategy implementation. Prior research confirmed an association between different types of strategies and different corporate cultures (Thakur, Hale, & AlSaleh, 2018). Organisational culture, a primary determinant of employee behaviour

(Bushardt et al., 2007), may impede or enhance execution of strategy (Bushardt et al., 2011; Thakur et al., 2018; Kaul, 2019). Bushardt et al. (2011) suggested that effective strategy implementation would occur, where there is a strong organisational culture, which is congruent with the reward structures. Indirectly, organisational culture can influence strategy implementation by creating enthusiasm and pride, and nurture the development of members' identity (Ogbor, 2001). Similarly, cultural values, cultural uniqueness and cultural ethics constituting a firm's unique cultural proposition, can be a tremendous force for strategy implementation (Kaul, 2019). As argued by Kaul (2019), a unique cultural proposition is essential for "realizing definitive and deterministic positive outcomes from strategy" (p.199).

Additionally, organisational culture can discourage dysfunctional work behaviour and commit organisational members to teamwork designed to achieve organisational goals (Ogbor, 2001). It can also influence personal and professional goal-setting, task performance and administration of resources in achieving goals (Lok & Crawford, 2004). Furthermore, Schein (1990) argued that associating goals with deeper meaning determines individual and collective behaviour and commitment towards achieving such organisational goals.

Empirical studies in the structural domain suggest that there are relationships between formal or informal organisations' structural elements and aspects of strategy implementation (Skivington & Daft, 1991; Olson et al., 2005; Ahmadi et al., 2012). While Skivington and Daft (1991) found no support for hypothesised relationships between low-cost decisions and formalisation (i.e. structure) or between differentiation decisions and specialisation (i.e. structure), they observed partial correlations between low-cost decisions and monetary and expressive rewards. Also, Skivington and Daft (1991) found support for a hypothesised relationship between differentiation decisions and expressive rewards. This study suggests that rewards will impact the implementation of different types of strategies.

Therefore, the structural perspective provides a useful lens, through which to see how structural dimensions may affect strategy implementation. However, its limitation is that it does not enable the capturing of behavioural aspects of or interaction process between organisational members. Evidently, studies that adopt a structural perspective do not clearly draw out how the structural elements, especially the informal structure, may influence managerial commitment to strategy implementation. For example, organisational culture, a primary determinant of employee behaviour (Bushardt et al., 2007; Bushardt et al., 2011) is suggested as a potential informal structure element that may

influence the successful implementation of strategy. Because the studies that adopted a structural perspective primarily focused on the formal and informal elements of the organisational structure, the behavioural or interpersonal processes were largely ignored. This led to the adoption of the behavioural or interpersonal process perspective to research on strategy implementation. The research outcomes of studies adopting this perspective are briefly discussed below.

2.3.1.2 Behavioural or interpersonal process perspective

While the structural perspective considers the effects of organisational structure variables on strategy implementation, studies that take a behavioural or interpersonal process perspective focus on the effects of a range of behavioural or interaction processes on strategy implementation (Kazmi, 2008; Noble, 1999). These include strategic consensus (Dooley et al., 2000; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a; Kellermanns et al., 2011; Rapert, Velliquette, & Garretson, 2002); self-interest (Guth & MacMillan, 1986); communication (Skivington & Daft, 1991; Rapert et al., 2002); leadership and involvement in strategy formulation (Brenes et al., 2008).

Strategic consensus is a crucial variable in the effective implementation of strategy, and consequently, organisational performance (Dooley et al., 2000; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a; Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Kellermanns et al., 2011). Arguably, strategic consensus is perceived to engender

commitment to strategic decisions made (Dooley et al., 2000), reduces counterproductive efforts (Guth & MacMillan, 1986), and improves organisational performance (Kellermanns et al., 2011).

Floyd and Wooldridge (1992a) posited that consensus has two critical dimensions: emotional and cognitive. Emotionally, managers would feel some degree of commitment to the strategy and would therefore direct their efforts towards the accomplishment of set strategic initiatives. Otherwise, their actions would be half-hearted (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a). This view was corroborated by Ayande et al. (2012), who noted that practices relating to dimension of emotions (i.e. resistance to change and commitment of employees to strategic objectives) appear to be the most critical dimension faced by public managers in the implementation of strategy. Similarly, from a cognitive dimension, where managers do not share a common perception of strategy, the result is usually counterproductive efforts towards its implementation (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a). Such counterproductive efforts may take the form of self-interested behaviours (Guth & MacMillan, 1986). As observed by Guth and MacMillan (1986), “middle managers, who believe that their self-interest is being compromised, cannot only redirect a strategy, delay its implementation or reduce the quality of its implementation, but can also even totally sabotage the strategy” (p.313).

In addition to strategic consensus and self-interest, the communication process has a significant impact on strategy implementation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009; Noble, 1999; Skivington & Daft, 1991; Quirke, 2000; Rapert et al., 2002). The use of informal channels of communication and champions are essential communication tools in the implementation of a differentiation strategy (Skivington & Daft, 1991). Additionally, frequent vertical communication enhances strategic consensus, which in turn improves organisational performance (Rapert et al., 2002). Further, poor understanding of strategy emanating from ineffective communication contributes to ineffective strategy implementation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009).

The communication process is, therefore, essential for effective strategy implementation. Not only does internal communication help employees understand the strategy, it also creates competitive differentiation (Quirke, 2000). For example, Tesco used internal communication to “create a deeper understanding of the brand promise among employees, and help them translate it into specific action for customers” (Quirke, 2000, p.5).

Furthermore, leadership plays a crucial role in strategy implementation. The CEO’s support and leadership, a suitably motivated management team as well as involvement of top level staff in strategy formulation are key drivers in the implementation of strategy (Brenes et al., 2008). For example, strategic leadership action such as developing human capital,

exploiting and maintaining core competencies are essential for the implementation of strategy (Jooste & Fourie, 2009).

The behavioural or interpersonal process perspective is important in guiding the strategy implementation research. Not only is it complementary to the structural perspective, but it has broadened the research outcomes on strategy implementation. The suggested possible determinants of commitment to strategy implementation from a behavioural perspective include self-interest (Guth & MacMillan, 1986), strategic consensus (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a; Kellermanns et al., 2011), and participative decision-making (Brenes et al., 2008; Kohtamäki et al., 2012).

Since both the structural and behavioural perspectives do not capture individual level attributes of organisational members in strategy implementation, the individual level process perspective was adopted to close this gap. This perspective is discussed below.

2.3.1.3 Individual level process perspective

Studies that adopt the individual level process perspective explored the effects of individual level attributes such as managerial cognition, commitment, and organisational roles (Noble & Mokwa, 1999) on strategy implementation. Cognition studies highlight the effects of managerial

sense-making (Balogun, 2003; Rouleau, 2005; Weick et al., 2005) and sense-giving (Smith et al., 2010; Rouleau, 2005) on strategy execution. Through sense-making and sense-giving, strategy implementation is impacted by how middle managers interpret and sell the strategy (Balogun, 2003), and guide the construction and diffusion of meaning of strategic change (Rouleau, 2005).

Besides managerial cognition, the commitment to strategy is an essential attribute leading to effective implementation of strategy (Dooley et al., 2000). As empirically observed, the commitment to strategic decisions made is related to the implementation of such strategic decisions (Dooley et al., 2000). Further, consensus on strategic decisions and their implementation is mediated through the commitment to the strategic decisions (Dooley et al., 2000).

The individual level process perspective, in much the same way as the structural and behavioural/interpersonal process perspectives, is important in guiding the strategy implementation research. It helps broaden research outcomes on strategy implementation by highlighting the efficacy of individual level attributes in the implementation of an organisation's strategy. After all, organisational members are considered a "vital resource for strategy execution" (Lee & Miller, 1999, p.579); hence, the need to understand their individual level attributes in strategy

implementation. While the individual level perspective offers another dimension, on which strategy implementation research may be considered, it does not provide adequate direction on addressing micro-processes of strategising, which are the domain of the practice perspective.

In seeking to understand the practice of strategy, scholars adopted a perspective, which brings together elements of the behavioural and individual level process perspectives. This perspective, termed the strategy-as-practice, is elucidated in the section that follows below.

2.3.1.4 The strategy-as-practice perspective

As highlighted above, the perspectives, within which strategy implementation research can be undertaken are varied (i.e. structural, behavioural and individual level perspective). An additional perspective, prominently espoused within the literature, is the strategy-as-practice perspective. The strategy-as-practice perspective brings together the behavioural and individual level perspectives. Studies that adopt a strategy-as-practice perspective seek to "understand human agency in the construction and enactment of strategy", by focusing on the "actions and interactions of strategy practitioners" (Jarzabkowski, Balogun, & Seidl, 2007, p.6). Within this perspective, strategy is considered a social practice of how organisational actors act and interact (Whittington, 1996;

Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). In the main, the strategy-as-practice perspective is concerned with managerial activity in strategising (Whittington, 1996). An activity is considered strategic, if it has consequences for strategic outcomes and competitive advantage (Johnson, Melin, & Whittington, 2003).

The strategy-as-practice's ontological premise is that strategic change results from "active, intentional and deliberate actions of individuals" (Chia & MacKay, 2007, p.225). Its basic research parameters are (i) the role played by specific organisational actors in the strategy process, i.e. strategy practitioners; (ii) the social, symbolic and material tools, through which strategy is accomplished, i.e. practices; and/or (iii) the activities, through which strategy is accomplished, i.e. praxis (Chia, 2004; Chia & MacKay, 2007; Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009; Whittington, 2006).

Strategy practitioners, as a focal point of a study within the strategy-as-practice perspective are "those people, who do the work of strategy" (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009, p.70). As a unit of analysis, there are two main ontological dimensions for identifying strategy practitioners (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009). One dimension is whether the practitioner is an individual, for example, CEO or an aggregate actor such as middle managers. The other dimension is the organisational boundaries, within which the practitioners are located, i.e. whether the practitioner is inside or outside the organisation. Studies on the individual practitioner examine

an individual's actions and attributes, activities specific to that individual such as the Chief Executive Officer (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009). In such instances, data are collected from the individual and such data can only be attributed to the individual as a unit of study. On the other hand, studies focusing on aggregate actors concern themselves with a grouping of practitioners, for example, top management, middle management, accountants or analysts. For such studies, data are collected from an individual (for example, a middle manager) to explain what a group of actors do or did, and attribute specific activities to the aggregate actors, for example, middle management (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009). Examples of studies within the ambits of the strategy-as-practice on strategy practitioners include a focus on middle managers (Balogun, 2003; Janse Van Rensburg et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2010) and top management (Jarzabkowski & Sillince, 2007). Within the strategy-as-practice perspective, specific roles played by strategy practitioners in the implementation strategy include, among others, strategy champions (Mantere, 2005), sense-makers (Balogun, 2003; Rouleau, 2005) and sense-givers (Rouleau, 2005; Smith et al., 2010).

Besides the focus on strategy practitioners, the strategy praxis is another focal point of the strategy-as-practice studies. The praxis is defined as "the stream of activity, in which strategy is accomplished over time" (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009, p.73) or "various activities involved in the

deliberate formulation and implementation of strategy" (Whittington, 2006, p.619). Within the extant literature, studies focusing on the praxis highlight strategy implementation activities such as sense-making (Balogun, 2003; Rouleau, 2005; Weick et al., 2005), sense-giving (Smith et al., 2010; Rouleau, 2005;), framing (Fiss & Zajac, 2006; Kaplan, 2008; Sillince & Mueller, 2007), synthesising information, facilitating organisational adaptation, and driving implementation of deliberate strategy (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992b). Other activities include promoting autonomous or informal corporate entrepreneurial activities (Hornsby et al., 2002); and use of rhetorical constructions (Jarzabkowski & Sillence, 2007; Sillince, Jarzabkowski, & Shaw, 2012).

The third focal dimension of the strategy-as-practice perspective relates to the implicit practices originating from the sociology of everyday life as well as explicit practices defined by the organisation (Whittington 2006). These form the practices. Practices are therefore defined as "shared routines of behaviour, including traditions, norms and procedures for thinking, acting and using things" (Whittington, 2006, p.619).

Within this dimension, not much is offered in terms of the determinants of managerial commitment to strategy implementation. Studies within the strategy-as-practice domain generally ignore the motives or drivers for strategy practitioners' engagement in strategic activities (i.e. praxis) aimed

at enabling the organisation to achieve its desired strategic ends. Hence, this study, on one hand, seeks to explore middle management's strategic activities in the execution of strategy (i.e. strategic roles and the embedded praxis) and on the other hand, seeks to understand how their psychological states influence their commitment to strategy implementation (i.e. the commitment to engage in strategic activities).

Table 1 : Perspectives and research outcomes on strategy execution

Perspective	**Research outcomes**
Structural perspective	• **Control mechanisms**: Daft and Macintosh (1984) confirmed the use of four key control mechanisms (i.e. budget, performance appraisal, policies and procedure, and statistical reports) during implementation of strategy in their study. • **Rewards**: Support for partial correlations between low-cost decisions, and monetary and expressive rewards as well as support for a hypothesised relationship between differentiation decisions and expressive rewards suggests that different rewards may impact implementation of strategies differently (Skivington & Daft, 1991). • **Organisational structure**: Evidence shows that how a firm is structured (i.e. formalisation, specialisation or centralisation) in conjunction with emphasised strategic behaviour (i.e. customer, competitor, innovation or internal cost orientation) influences

Perspective	Research outcomes
	strategy implementation and performance (Olson et al., 2005). Brenes et al. (2008) confirmed in their study that an organisational structure, reflecting strategic abilities and priorities, is regarded as central to implementation of strategy by both successful and less successful companies. • **Organisational culture**: Hypothesised relationships between organisational culture typologies and dimensions of strategy implementation are supported, thus suggesting the centrality of culture in implementation of strategic initiatives (Ahmadi et al., 2012). Additionally, Brenes et al. (2008) reported that organisational culture aligned to the strategy is essential for successful companies; yet, those less successful companies do not regard it that highly. Furthermore, research confirmed an association between different types strategies and different corporate cultures (Thakur et al., 2018).
Behavioural or interpersonal process perspective	• **Strategic consensus**: From a meta-analytical point of view, Kellermanns et al. (2011) provided empirical support for a positive effect of strategic consensus on organisational performance, thus confirming the underlying premise that a higher degree of strategic consensus is associated with effective strategy implementation. • **Autonomous strategic behaviour / Self-interest**: Guth and Macmillan (1986) found that middle managers, who believe that their self-interest is being compromised, cannot only redirect a

Perspective	Research outcomes
	strategy, delay its implementation or reduce the quality of its implementation, but can even totally sabotage the strategy. • **Communication**: Skivington and Daft's (1991) moderate support for hypothesised relationships between differentiation strategic decisions and informal communication, as well as between differentiation strategic decisions and the emergence of champions suggests that use of informal channels of communication and use of champions are essential communication tools in the implementation of a differentiation strategy. Further, evidence in Rapert et al.'s (2002) study suggests that frequent vertical communication enhances strategic consensus, which in turn improves organisational performance. Similarly, in Heide et al.'s (2002) study, communication is rated as the most significant barrier to implementation of strategic initiatives. • **Leadership**: Brenes et al. (2008) reported high scores for CEO's support and leadership, and a suitably motivated management team as key drivers in the implementation of strategy for both successful and less successful companies. Further, leadership style was found to be an antecedent condition for middle management's commitment to strategy implementation (Inyang et al., 2018).

Perspective	Research outcomes
	• **Involvement in strategy formulation**: Brenes et al. (2008) observed that involvement of top level staff in strategy formulation is regarded by both successful (98%) and less successful companies (78%) as a key driver in implementation of strategy.
Individual level perspective	• **Managerial cognition**: Through sense-making, middle managers guide the interpretation of the meaning of change, thus helping others through change (Balogun, 2003). In addition, Rouleau (2005) highlighted four micro-processes of strategic sense-making and sense-giving, through which middle managers interpret and sell change every day: translating the orientation[1], overcoding strategy[2], disciplining the client[3] and justifying the change[4]. • **Commitment to strategy / goal / initiative**: Dooley et al. (2000) found support for a hypothesised relationship between commitment to a strategic decision made and implementation of such strategic decision. Further evidence suggests that the relationship between consensus on strategic decision and

[1] *Translating the orientation involves putting into action a set of micro-practices for translating a company's new strategic orientation.*

[2] *Overcoding the strategy involves inscribing words and actions around the strategy in appropriate professional and socio-cultural codes to reinforce meaning to the new strategic initiative.*

[3] *Disciplining the client involves meticulous use of gestures, words and symbolic objects to produce subjective and emotional effects to sell the new strategic orientation.*

[4] *Justifying the change involves frequent reference to the client's interests and desires to legitimate changes in product and company's positioning.*

Perspective	Research outcomes
	implementation of such decision is mediated through commitment to the strategic decision (Dooley et al., 2000).
Strategy-as-practice perspective	• **Praxis:** Strategy implementation activities include sense-making (Rouleau, 2005; Weick et al., 2005), sense-giving (Smith et al., 2010; Rouleau, 2005), and framing (Fiss & Zajac, 2006; Kaplan, 2008; Sillince & Mueller, 2007). • **Strategy practitioners**: For example, practitioners who shape the strategy implementation process include middle managers (Balogun, 2003; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992b; Janse Van Rensburg et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2010), and top management (Jarzabkowski & Sillince, 2007). • **Practices**: Use of rhetorical constructions (Jarzabkowski & Sillince, 2007; Sillince et al., 2012).

Source: Compiled by author

2.3.1.5 Conclusion on research perspectives and outcomes

The variety of perspectives highlight the multidimensionality and eclectic nature of strategy implementation research. Each perspective provides an alternative path in undertaking research in strategy implementation, thus providing scholars with the liberty to choose an appropriate path that optimally addresses their research questions.

Also, the different research perspectives highlight the multidimensionality of factors that may positively or negatively contribute to the successful implementation or failure of strategies within organisations. Interestingly, the shift from the structural perspective to the behavioural, individual-level and practice perspectives highlight the primacy of the human element of the organisation in strategy implementation research. Apparent in the research outcomes of the studies within the behavioural, individual-level and practice perspectives is the consistent need to influence human behaviour, primarily, to achieve envisaged strategic results.

Specifically, the outcomes and arguments within the behavioural and individual-level process perspectives suggest the primacy of middle management's involvement in the implementation process (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a, 1992b, 1994; 1997; Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Salih & Doll, 2013). Consequently, middle management's lack of commitment to strategy implementation is seen as a significant contributor to the failure of strategies (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994; Noble, 1999; Parnell, 2008; Parnell et al., 2002). Floyd and Wooldridge (1994) posited that the lack of middle management's commitment to strategy implementation can cause serious implementation problems. Such lack of commitment to strategy may manifest itself in counterproductive efforts by middle managers, such as redirecting the strategy, delaying its implementation; reducing the quality of

implementation and even sabotaging the strategy (Guth & MacMillan, 1986); half-hearted actions and effort (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992b), and resistance to strategic change (Ayande et al., 2012). Though these arguments highlight the criticality of middle management's commitment in the implementation of strategy, few empirical studies explore the possible determinants of middle management's commitment to strategy implementation; a gap that this study sought to explore.

The suggestions that organisational members are an essential resource in the execution of strategy (Lee & Miller, 1999) and a source of competitive advantage (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005), inform the positioning of this study within the individual-level process perspective. As clarified above, the individual level process perspective is concerned with the effects of individual level attributes on strategy implementation. It is, thus, argued that understanding the possible determinants of middle management's commitment to strategy implementation may help alleviate strategy implementation failures. The commitment to strategy implementation, as a focal dependent variable of this study, is briefly discussed in the ensuing section.

2.3.1.6 Middle management's commitment to strategy implementation

As highlighted above, the lack of middle management's commitment to strategy implementation can create serious implementation problems

(Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994). Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) noted that commitment, as a stabilising or obliging force, gives direction to behaviour. Thus, the commitment to strategy implementation binds individuals to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of the organisation's strategy. It gives direction to the behaviour required for the effective implementation of an organisation's strategy. For example, Gagnon et al. (2008) suggested that individuals committed to a strategic initiative are predisposed to engage in strategic-supportive behaviour, which leads to the successful implementation of a strategic initiative, and in turn contributes to improved organisational performance. Further, Carlopio (2012), in his social psychological model of strategy implementation, argued that the commitment to the implementation of strategy can be underpinned by behavioural characteristics of visibility, irrevocability and volitionality. Conversely, the lack of commitment to strategy implementation can be exemplified by "either a begrudging compliance or resistance" (Carlopio, 2012, p.82).

Because of the importance of the commitment to strategy implementation, it has been a focal dimension of a number studies (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013; Brenes et al., 2008; Dooley et al., 2000; Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Kohtamäki et al., 2012; Parnell, 2008; Parnell et al., 2002; Smith, 2010). Even BTS, a global consulting firm; has a patented formula for effective strategy execution, which is partly anchored in the organisational members' emotional commitment to and belief in the strategy (Adl, 2015).

The commitment to strategy implementation may impact the strategy execution process either positively or negatively. Importantly, Dooley et al. (2000) empirically observed that the commitment to strategic decisions made is related to the implementation success of such strategic decisions; thus suggesting that the commitment to strategic decisions increases the likelihood of the decision being implemented successfully. Likewise, Kohtamäki et al. (2012) observed that the commitment to strategy implementation, deriving from participative strategic planning, increases company performance. Further, Floyd and Wooldridge (1992a) posited that emotionally, managers, who feel a degree of commitment to strategy, direct their efforts to the accomplishment of such strategy.

In the extant literature, several factors are suggested as possible determinants of managerial commitment to strategy implementation. These include self-interest (Guth & Macmillan, 1986), strategic consensus (Dooley et al., 2000; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a; Kellermanns et al., 2011), participative strategic decision-making (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013; Brenes et al., 2008; Kohtamäki et al., 2012); middle managers' perception of senior management's support for the strategy (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013) and the resistance to change (Ayande et al., 2012). Cognitively, managers, who do not share a common perception of the strategy, engage in counterproductive efforts (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a). Likewise, managers, who perceive that their self-interests are

compromised, can delay implementation, reduce quality of implementation or even sabotage the strategy (Guth & Macmillan, 1986).

The above research outcomes suggest the importance of securing middle management's commitment to strategy implementation in order to enable the successful execution of an organisation's business strategy. However, as opined by Guth and MacMillan (1986), the "problem of securing the organisation's commitment to a particular strategy" is often ignored in eliciting the organisational behaviours required to implement strategy (p.313). The argument that the value created during strategy implementation is a derivative of the voluntary, self-motivated actions of the individual employees, who are committed to the delivery of the strategy (Smith, 2010), highlights the importance of securing organisational members' commitment to the implementation of an organisation's business strategy. However, individual level attributes, which may be the source of voluntary, self-motivated actions of the individual employees are largely ignored in the literature. Specifically, the middle managers' psychological foundations of strategy implementation-supportive behaviour are largely ignored in the extant literature and are a potential area of exploration as suggested by Wooldridge et al. (2008). Among other suggestions for future research, Wooldridge et al. (2008) proposed that further research should explore the link between the psychological foundations of managerial behaviours and the intermediate

outcomes of middle management processes (for example, the commitment to strategy implementation).

In light of the above, this study sought to investigate the link between middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment (i.e. as the psychological foundations of managerial behaviours) and their commitment to strategy implementation (i.e as the intermediate outcome of middle management involvement in strategy implementation).

The following sections clarify the operational definitions of the key variables of this study.

2.3.2 Clarification of operational definitions for the study

Coldwell and Herbst (2004) noted that a critical "ingredient of good research is proper precision and specificity of terms" (p.86). Likewise, Cooper and Schindler (2003) argued that confusion about meaning of concepts can destroy a study's value; hence, it is essential to provide clarity of terms used in a study. Such precision and specificity of terms is provided by clarifying the ostensible, constitutive, dictionary or operational definitions of such terms (Coldwell & Herbst, 2004; Cooper & Schindler, 2003). While the constitutive or dictionary definitions may be adequate for general communication, research requires operational definitions to be clarified (Coldwell & Herbst, 2004; Cooper &

Schindler, 2003). As posited by Cooper and Schindler (2003), an operational definition must be “stated in terms of specific testing and measurement criteria” (p.45). It must have empirical referents, specify characteristics and how they are observed (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Additionally, the operational definition must specify “procedures, by which the concept will be measured or manipulated” (Coldwell & Herbst, 2004, p.86). In view of the importance of the operational definitions in research, the operational definitions of the key variables for this study are clarified below.

2.3.2.1 The empirical conceptualisation of strategy implementation

Since this study is anchored within strategy implementation, it is essential to briefly illustrate how the strategy implementation phenomenon has been conceptualised in prior studies. Within the strategy implementation literature, there is no evident substantive distinction between the terms ‘strategy execution’ and ‘strategy implementation. The words ‘implementation’ and ‘execution’ are commonly used interchangeably (Pryor, Anderson, Tombs, & Humphreys, 2007); together, i.e. ‘implementing and executing’ (Thompson & Strickland, 2003; Thompson, Strickland, & Gamble, 2010); or separately, i.e. either implementation or execution (Miller, 1998; Noble, 1999; Thompson & Martin, 2005; Thompson et al., 2010). Hence, in this study, the words are used interchangeably.

Due to the eclectic nature of the strategy implementation phenomenon, various scholars use a variety of operational definitions for strategy implementation. As illustrated in Table 2, various operational definitions are adopted for strategy implementation in the selected empirical studies. For empirical purposes, the operational definitions for strategy implementation used in these studies include the decision-making scenarios (Guth & MacMillan, 1986), involvement and perceived level of implementation success (Harrington & Kendall, 2006), strategic diffusion (Parnell, 2008), perceived importance, effectiveness, barriers and drivers of strategy implementation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009), implementation process effectiveness (Waweru, 2011), dimensions of implementing managerial objectives (Ayande et al., 2012), and implementation success (Mitchell, 2014).

For example, in investigating determinants of middle managers' implementation effort, Guth and MacMillan (1986) used two dimensions of the decision-making process by middle managers: taking a position and resisting a decision; as interventions that shape how and what strategy will be implemented. In their approach, they use a survey questionnaire containing intervention options: taking a position and resisting a decision. Likewise, Parnell (2008) used strategic diffusion as a measure of the "extent, to which a strategy is effectively implemented and becomes an integral part of the organisation" (p.1278). The strategic diffusion concept

is premised on the fact that the extent to which strategy is effectively implemented within an organisation is dependent on the extent to which middle and lower managers (i) are involved in the strategy-making process, (ii) understand the components of an organisation's strategy, and (iii) are committed to seeing the strategy implemented. Arguably, greater involvement in strategy formulation enhances execution efforts due to the process encompassing some degree of explicit or implicit goal setting (Parnell, 2008). Also, it is easier to implement organisational strategy, if middle and lower managers fully understand it (Parnell et al., 2002). Additionally, greater commitment to the implementation of strategy enhances execution efforts (Parnell, 2008; Parnell et al., 2002).

The highlighted empirical studies show the various dimensions on how strategy implementation is conceptualised and the associated complexity in measuring it in empirical studies. While the eclectic approach to measuring strategy implementation brings richness and breadth to theorising about it, its eclecticism and lack of a universally accepted operational definition may be a source of inadequate depth in its theoretical foundations.

2.3.2.2 The commitment to strategy

Likewise, the clarification of operational definitions in this study does not only create certainty of terms, but also guides the context, in which the

study outcomes are to be understood. Because the focus of this study is on the commitment to strategy implementation, as a key dependent variable, its operational definition is clarified in this section.

A number of studies have empirically examined the commitment to strategy (Ford, Weissbein, & Plamondon, 2003; Gagnon et al., 2008; Kohtamäki et al., 2012; Noble & Mokwa, 1999). The commitment to strategy, considered an empirically distinct form of commitment from organisational commitment, refers to the organisational members' willingness to exert effort in pursuance of the organisation's strategy (Ford et al., 2003; Gagnon et al., 2008). Noble and Mokwa (1999) defined strategy commitment as the extent to which a manager comprehends and supports the goals and objectives of a strategy. As argued by Ford et al. (2003), the commitment to strategy manifests in the relevant behaviours, which are consistent with the organisation's strategy. It may also result in an individual's sense of ownership of strategy (Noble & Mokwa, 1999). Barton and Ambrosini (2013) posited that the commitment to strategy is an essential first stage of an individual's role performance. That is, the commitment to strategy will regulate the extent to which organisational members achieve their role objectives and behaviour that is consistent with facilitating the achievement of the organisation's strategic objectives (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013). This view is consistent with Meyer and Herscovitch's (2001) argument that commitment, as a stabilising or

obliging force, gives direction to behaviour. In essence, the commitment to strategy gives direction to behaviour consistent with facilitating the achievement of the organisation's strategic objectives.

Though the 'commitment to strategy implementation' is a focal dimension of strategy implementation studies (Kohtamäki et al., 2012; Parnell, 2008), it is not different from the 'commitment to strategy' clarified above. Kohtamäki et al. (2012) define the 'commitment to strategy implementation' as "the steering effect of the defined strategy, the commitment of personnel to the implementation of strategic decisions, and the alignment of strategy implementation and strategic decisions" (Kohtamäki et al., 2012, p.162). Likewise, Parnell (2008) defined the commitment to strategy implementation, a component of strategic diffusion, as the "the degree to which managers are determined to see the strategy effectively implemented, ultimately becoming part of the organisation" (Parnell, 2008, p.1280). Both definitions, in similar manner as the commitment to strategy, connote the exertion of effort towards the achievement of the organisation's strategic goals. In essence, the commitment to strategy will regulate the extent to which organisational members achieve their role objectives and behaviour that is consistent with facilitating the achievement of the organisation's strategic objectives. Therefore, for empirical purposes, this study adopts Parnell's (2008) definition of the commitment to strategy implementation. Thus, the

adopted definition for the commitment to strategy implementation is the extent to which middle managers are determined to see the organisation's strategy effectively implemented.

As suggested by Coldwell and Herbst (2004), in addition to clarifying the operational definition, one must clarify the measurement procedures for the concept. This study, thus, adopts the commitment instrument, which is part of Parnell's (2008) Strategic Diffusion Scales. The details of this instrument are clarified in Chapter Four.

With the operational definition of the dependent variable of this study (i.e. commitment to strategy implementation) clarified, the following sections clarify the operational definitions of the independent variables of this study: affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment (i.e. the key variables adopted as the psychological foundations of managerial behaviours).

Table 2 : Selected empirical conceptualisation of strategy implementation

Research focus	Operational definition of the commitment to strategy	Elements of what is being measured	Authors
Examining the impact of self-interest on managerial effort in implementation of strategic change	Managerial effort in implementing decisions based on taking a decision during decision-making process or resisting a decision after it has been made	Decision-making scenarios based on taking a decision during decision-making process or resisting a decision after it has been made	Guth & MacMillan (1986)
Examining the relationship between personnel commitment to strategy implementation and company performance	Personnel commitment to strategy implementation	Strategy as a form of guidance for daily decisions, prioritisation of tasks based on company strategy, employee commitment to implement strategy, and consistency of implementation against strategic plan	Kohtamäki et al. (2010)

Research focus	Operational definition of the commitment to strategy	Elements of what is being measured	Authors
Assessing strategy execution in emerging economies (Peru and Mexico)	Commitment dimension of Strategic diffusion (i.e. the extent to which strategy is effectively implemented and becomes an accepted part of the organisation)	The commitment dimension: i.e. the extent to which middle managers are determined to see the strategy effectively implemented)	Parnell (2008)
Comparative analysis of competitive strategy implementation	Implementation process effectiveness, encompassing preparedness (i.e. new capabilities), resistance to change, and soft and hard implementation armaments (i.e. culture, management and power structures)	Preparedness, resistance to change, soft (leadership, communication, training, consensus, culture) and hard (structure, resources, rewards) implementation armaments	Waweru (2011)

Research focus	Operational definition of the commitment to strategy	Elements of what is being measured	Authors
Examining the impact of inter-organisational resources in the implementation of a responsive supply chain strategy	Key variables relevant to the implementation of a successful responsive supply chain strategy: information sharing with customers, collaboration with suppliers, use of advanced manufacturing technology, pull production and operational responsiveness to market	Information-sharing with customers, collaboration with suppliers, use of advanced manufacturing technology, pull production and operational responsiveness to market	Roh, Hong, & Min (2014)
Examining the role of employee strategic knowledge and strategic commitment on subsequent engagement in strategy-supportive behaviour	Strategic commitment, i.e. willingness to support strategy	Commitment to specific program, for example, lean manufacturing	Gagnon et al. (2008)

Research focus	Operational definition of the commitment to strategy	Elements of what is being measured	Authors
Examining the moderating effect of organisational change cynicism on middle manager strategy commitment	Strategy commitment	Relevance and appropriateness of strategy, agreement with strategy, support for strategy	Barton & Ambrosini (2013)

Source: Compiled by author.

2.3.2.3 The definition of affective organisational commitment

As indicated above in section 2.3.2, the clarification of operational definitions of variables of interest in a study not only creates specificity of terms, but also guides the context, in which study outcomes are to be understood. Therefore, this section seeks to provide clarity on one of the key independent variables of this study: affective organisational commitment.

While organisational commitment is conceptualised from a behavioural and attitudinal perspective (DeCotiis & Summers, 1987; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979), the attitudinal perspective is the predominant focus of commitment studies (Allen & Meyer, 1990b; Meyer & Maltin, 2010; Meyer, Stanley, & Parfyonova, 2012; Riketta, 2002; Steers, 1977). Attitudinal commitment is "a state, in which an individual identifies with a particular organisation and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in order to facilitate these goals" (Mowday et al., 1979, p.225). It is characterised by "(1) a strong belief in and acceptance of organisation's goals and values; (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation; and (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organisation" (Mowday et al., 1979, p.225). Rather than mere loyalty, the attitudinal organisational commitment, as defined thus, connotes an active involvement in the organisation and a willingness to make meaningful contribution (Mowday et al., 1979).

Similarly, attitudinal commitment is defined as “a psychological state that binds the individual to the organisation” (Allen & Meyer, 1990b, p.14), characterised by a desire, need and an obligation to maintain employment with an organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990b; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Organisational commitment is also conceptualised as a multidimensional construct comprising three components: a desire (affective commitment), need (continuance commitment) and an obligation (normative commitment) to maintain employment with an organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990b; Meyer & Allen 1991). While affective commitment is “employees’ emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in, the organisation”, continuance commitment is seen as “commitment based on the costs that employees associate with leaving the organisation” (Allen & Meyer, 1990b, p.1). Further, normative commitment refers to “employees’ feelings of obligation to remain within the organisation” (Allen & Meyer, 1990b, p.1). The multidimensionality of organisational commitment is distinguished by the underlying mindset that shapes behaviour (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

The multidimensional conceptualisation of organisational commitment is a shift from the one-dimensional approach adopted by other scholars (Mowday et al., 1979). Though a three-component approach to organisational commitment is proposed, Meyer and Allen (1997) suggested a commitment profile approach in examining the combined

impact of the three components on behaviour. Such examination should consider the relative strength of each component. While scholars have adopted the commitment profile approach in their studies (Gellatly, Meyer, & Luchak, 2006; Meyer et al., 2012; Somers, 2009; Stanley, Vandenberghe, Vandenberg, & Bentein, 2013; Wasti, 2005), there are many studies that do not follow the commitment profile route. Though such studies focus on each component of organisational commitment, there is preponderance towards affective commitment (Albrecht & Andreetta, 2011; Galletta, Portoghese, & Battistelli, 2011; Gardner, Wright, & Moynihan, 2011; Lew, 2009; Mercurio, 2015).

The debate on the multidimensionality of organisational commitment still persists. Some scholars argued in favour of the one-dimensional approach to organisational commitment (Bergman, 2006; Mercurio, 2015; Solinger, van Olffen & Roe, 2008). These scholars even suggested the abandonment of the continuance and normative components in favour of the retention of affective commitment (Bergman, 2006; Solinger et al., 2008). Mercurio (2015) argued that affective organisational commitment is the core essence of organisational commitment. Further, Solinger et al. (2008) argued that among the three components, affective commitment reflects an attitude to the organisation, while continuance and normative commitments are indicative of an attitude towards the outcomes of behaviour, i.e. leaving the organisation. Moreso, by its definition, affective

commitment mirrors the one-dimensional conceptualisation of attitudinal commitment to the organisation adopted by other scholars such as Mowday et al. (1979), and Cook and Wall (1980). Thus, from an attitudinal perspective, affective commitment entails an active involvement, through which individuals are willing to make meaningful contribution to the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990b; Meyer & Allen 1991; Mowday et al., 1979). In this regard, this study focuses on the affective organisational commitment component.

Within the extant literature, various factors contributing towards employees' affective attachment to their organisation are suggested. Such factors, termed antecedents of affective organisational commitment, include job challenge, role clarity, goal difficulty, management receptiveness, organisational dependability, personal importance, participation, equity and peer cohesion (Allen & Meyer, 1990b), and corporate culture (Rashid, Sambasivan, & Johari, 2003). Other variables suggested as antecedents of affective commitment are employee trust in the firm; employee satisfaction and relational norms (Martin, 2008); transformational leadership (Bučiūnienė & Škudienė, 2008; Lee, 2005); organisational socialisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990a); job satisfaction (Fu, Bolander & Jones, 2009; Lumley, Coetzee, Tladinyane, & Ferreira, 2011); and perceived organisational support (Fu et al., 2009), among others.

In as much as there are various factors (i.e. antecedents) that engender one's emotional attachment to the organisation, there are also various consequences of affective commitment proffered in the literature as its suggested influence on individual and organisational outcomes. Research outcomes suggest that affective commitment is a predictor of work-related behaviours such as employee attendance or absenteeism (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & TopoInytsky, 2002); job or perceived performance (Lee et al., 2010; Meyer et al., 2002; Park, 2007); organisational citizenship behaviours (Meyer et al., 2002, Gellatly et al., 2006); and turnover or continued employment (Meyer et al., 2002). The positive behavioural outcomes suggest that an individual's affective attachment to their organisation is likely to be a source of autonomous motivation.

While these individual-level behavioural outcomes highlight the importance of affective organisational commitment, there is a lack of studies highlighting the direct effect of affective organisational commitment on strategy implementation. More specifically, there is a lack of empirical attention on how middle managers' affective organisational commitment, as a source of autonomous motivation, influences their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy. Though not much is offered in the literature in terms of a direct link between an individual's affective attachment to their organisation and

their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy, the behavioural consequences of affective organisational commitment (for example, job performance and organisational citizenship behaviours) suggest its motivational impact on an individual's effort and outcomes; hence, its proposed potential to positively influence organisational members' effort towards the implementation of their of organisation's strategy as detailed in section 2.3.4 below.

Based on the selected empirical evidence, it is proposed that an individual's affective attachment to their organisation may have implications for the execution of strategy as illustrated in Table 3 below. Arguably, employees with a strong affective attachment to their organisation are intent on staying and being good organisational citizens, i.e. persisting with extra effort on the job, volunteering to do additional tasks, and helping others (Gellatly et al., 2006). Further, individuals' strong belief in and acceptance of organisational goals and desire to maintain organisational membership can spur their willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation (Lee et al., 2010). Furthermore, highly committed individuals would want to stay and work for the good of the organisation (Copper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) and may engage in pushing beyond the boundaries through creativity and innovative behaviours (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Even, Zeffane and Al Zaroomi (2012) noted that consistent findings on organisational

commitment research point to “organisational commitment to be in the centre of a web that is made up of behaviours and attitudes that can affect organisational outcomes positively or negatively” (p.333). Therefore, an individual’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and a willingness to make a meaningful contribution to their organisation is likely to be a determinant of the extent to which they will make an effort towards the execution of their organisation’s business strategy.

Table 3 : Outcomes / consequences of affective organisational commitment

Empirical outcomes / consequences of affective organisational commitment	Authors	Implications for the commitment to strategy implementation
Behavioural outcomes: (i) desire and intent to remain in the organisation, and (ii) attendance – strong desire to come to work and contribute to organisational goal achievement	Steers (1977)	Because of the employees' strong desire and intent to remain in the organisation, and strong desire to come to work and contribute to organisational goal achievement (Steers, 1977), they are more likely to be keen to exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisational strategy.
Job performance and organisational citizenship behaviours Strong intention to stay and good organisational citizenship	Meyer et al. (2002) Gellatly et al. (2006)	Likewise, employees with strong intention to stay and become good organisational citizens (Meyer et al., 2002; Gellatly et al., 2006) are likely to be motivated to drive the execution of their organisation's business strategy. Additionally, because individuals, who are affectively attached to their organisation, are driven to perform and achieve quality in their work outcomes (Park, 2007), they are more likely to be committed to the successful implementation of their organisation's strategy.
Job satisfaction, perceived performance and quality of work	Park (2007)	

Source: Compiled by author

2.3.2.4 The definition of psychological empowerment

Likewise, as indicated above, the operational definition for one of the key independent variables: psychological empowerment; is clarified in this section.

Various conceptualisations of empowerment are evident in the extant literature. The predominant perspectives are structural (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Maynard, Gilson, & Mathieu, 2012; Menon, 2001; Seibert, Wang, & Courtright, 2011) and psychological (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Maynard et al., 2012; Menon, 2001; Seibert et al., 2011; Spreitzer, 1995, Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Structural empowerment is concerned with the transition of power and responsibility from upper management to employees (Maynard et al., 2012).

In contrast, psychological empowerment is "less concerned with the actual transition of authority and responsibility, but instead focuses on employees' perceptions or cognitive states regarding empowerment" (Maynard et al., 2012, p.1234). Conceiving empowerment as a motivational construct, Conger and Kanungo (1988) sowed the seed of psychological empowerment, when they defined empowerment as "a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organisational members through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through the removal by both formal organisational

practices and informal techniques of providing information" (p.474). This definition is based on their proposed five-stage process of empowerment, which begins with identifying conditions leading to a psychological state of powerlessness (stage 1), dealing appropriately with such conditions (stage 2), ultimately leading to behavioural effects such as initiation and persistence of behaviour to accomplish task objectives (stage 5).

Building on Conger and Kanungo's (1988) motivational proposition, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) conceptualised psychological empowerment as changes in cognitive variables or task assessments, which determine intrinsic task motivation in workers; i.e. intrinsic task motivation being the "positively valued experiences that individuals derive from a task" (p.668). These cognitive variables are impact, competence, meaningfulness and choice (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). First, impact is the extent to which an individual's behaviour makes a difference in terms of task accomplishment and task outcomes. Second, competence is an individual's belief in their capability to perform a task. Third, meaningfulness is "the value of a task goal or purpose, judged in relation to the individual's own ideals or standards" (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990, p.672). Lastly, choice "involves causal responsibility for a person's actions" (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990 p.673). The cognitive variables: impact, competence, meaningfulness and choice; are "presumed to be the proximal cause of intrinsic task motivation and satisfaction" (Thomas

& Velthouse, 1990, p.668). They energise and sustain an individual's behaviour such as focused effort, flexibility in task accomplishment, initiation of new tasks in light of problems or opportunities, and resiliency to obstacles (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

Likewise, building on Thomas and Velthouse's (1990) conceptualisation, Spreitzer (1995) defined psychological empowerment as a "motivational construct manifested in four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination and impact" (p.1444). In Spreitzer's (1995) model of psychological empowerment, the choice cognitive variable is replaced with self-determination. Self-determination is summed up as an individual's sense of freedom to initiate and regulate actions, and is reflected in decision-making about work methods, pace and effort (Spreitzer, 1995). Spreitzer (1995) argued that the four cognitive variables reflect an active orientation, in which individuals believe they are able to shape their role and context. The cognitive variables are considered additive in creating an overall construct of psychological empowerment. In essence, psychological empowerment, rather than being a dispositional trait, is a cognitive state achieved, when individuals perceive that they are empowered (Maynard et al., 2012).

Within the extant literature, various factors contributing towards an individual's perception of psychological empowerment are suggested.

Such factors, termed antecedents of psychological empowerment, include structural empowerment or managerial practices, individual characteristics, work design, leadership and organisational or socio-political support (Maynard et al., 2012; Seibert et al., 2011). Structural empowerment, which is the transition of power and responsibility from upper management to employees, is considered one of the key predictors of psychological empowerment (Maynard et al., 2012). Structural empowerment such as high-performance managerial practices and leadership, which include open information sharing, participative decision-making, extensive training and contingent compensation, are likely to facilitate higher levels of psychological empowerment (Seibert et al., 2011). Likewise, individual characteristics such as age, tenure, job level and positive self-evaluation traits have a strong association with psychological empowerment (Seibert et al., 2011).

Besides the individual characteristics, the work design is shown to have a significant relationship with psychological empowerment (Seibert et al., 2011), suggesting that job characteristics are possibly the strongest antecedent of psychological empowerment (Maynard et al., 2012). In addition, organisational or socio-political support variables such as the organisational climate and culture, levels of formalisation and decentralisation among others, have an effect on psychological empowerment (Maynard et al., 2012; Seibert et al., 2011).

The choice of psychological empowerment as a key variable in this study is based on the fact that being psychologically empowered not only drives attitude, but also positively drives work performances (Spreitzer, 1995). Evidently, psychological empowerment has influence on individual-level behavioural outcomes. These individual-level behavioural outcomes include managerial effectiveness, i.e. the extent to which a manager fulfils or exceeds work role expectations (Spreitzer, 1995; 1997), work satisfaction (Spreitzer, 1997), employee innovativeness (Sangar & Rangnekar, 2014; Seibert et al., 2011; Spreitzer, 1995), and job performance (Meyerson & Kline, 2008; Seibert et al., 2011). The other individual-level behavioural outcomes are task performance and organisational citizenship behaviours (Jin-Liang & Hai-Zhen, 2012; Seibert et al., 2011) and employee engagement (Jose & Mampilly, 2014). These individual-level behavioural outcomes suggest that an individual's perceived level of psychological empowerment is likely to be a source of autonomous motivation.

While the above individual-level behavioural outcomes highlight the importance of psychologically empowered employees within an organisation, there is not much offered in the literature in terms of a direct link between an individual's perceived level of psychological empowerment and the commitment to the execution of their organisation's business strategy. More specifically, there is a lack of empirical attention

to how middle managers' psychological empowerment, as a source of autonomous motivation, influences their commitment to strategy implementation. The individual-level behavioural consequences of psychological empowerment such as managerial effectiveness, job and task performance, organisational citizenship behaviours and employee innovativeness, suggest its motivational impact on individual-level behavioural outcomes, hence its proposed potential to positively influence organisational members' efforts towards the execution of their organisation's strategy as further clarified in section 2.3.4 below.

Based on the selected empirical evidence, highlighted in Table 4, it is argued that an individual's perceived psychological empowerment may influence the commitment to the execution of their organisation's strategy. Arguably, psychologically empowered employees are intent on fulfilling or exceeding work role expectations and engage in innovative work behaviours (Sangar & Rangnekar, 2014; Seibert et al., 2011; Spreitzer, 1995). They perform well in their jobs or tasks (Meyerson & Kline, 2008; Seibert et al., 2011). As good organisational citizens, psychologically empowered employees persist with extra effort on their jobs, offering alternative solutions or suggestions and helping to drive change within the organisation (Seibert et al., 2011).

Table 4 : Outcomes / consequences of psychological empowerment

Empirical outcomes / consequences of psychological empowerment	Authors	Implications for the commitment to strategy implementation
Managerial effectiveness (i.e. the degree to which a manager fulfils or exceeds work role expectations) and innovative behaviours	Spreitzer (1995)	Individual-level behavioural consequences of psychological empowerment such as managerial effectiveness (Spreitzer, 1995), job performance (Meyerson & Kline, 2008), organisational citizenship behaviours (Seibert et al., 2011) employee engagement (Jose & Mampilly, 2014), and creativity (Sangar & Rangnekar, 2014) reflect dimensions of motivated behaviours, whose outcome is focused effort, flexibility, resilience and initiation (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Such behaviours suggest that individuals, who perceive to be psychologically empowered, are self-motivated to direct their focused effort on outcomes beneficial to the organisation.
Job performance	Meyerson & Kline (2008)	
Task performance, organisational citizenship behaviour and innovation at work	Seibert et al. (2011)	
Creativity	Sangar & Rangnekar (2014)	
Employee engagement	Jose & Mampilly (2014)	

Source: Compiled by author

2.3.3 Theories on strategy implementation

In as much as there are different perspectives or approaches to strategy implementation research, there are various theories, on which strategy implementation studies are based. Among others, these include the resources-based, contingency, institutional and motivation theories. The selected relevant theories on strategy implementation, shown in Table 5, are briefly explored in below.

2.3.3.1 Resources-based theory

The resources-based view of the firm posits that a firm's success is a derivative of its resource endowments (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993; Collis & Montgomery, 1995; Connor, 2002). A firm's resource endowments are its range of tangible and intangible assets and capabilities (Galbreath, 2005). Specifically, it is the type and magnitude of resources that are an important determinant of a firm's profitability (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993; Collis & Montgomery, 1995). The heterogeneity in the firms' resource endowments and uniqueness in the deployment of such resources is the source of competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Collis & Montgomery, 1995; Conner, 2002).

The prescriptive nature of the resources-based view lies in the suggestion that resources that have certain characteristics can generate and sustain competitive advantage (Galbreath, 2005). A range of characteristics of

resources and capabilities, which are a source of competitive advantage, are suggested within the resources-based literature. Barney (1991) asserted that for resources to be a source of competitive advantage, they must be rare, valuable, inimitable and non-substitutable. Similarly, Grant (1991) noted that competitive advantage in resources lies in the levels of durability, transparency, transferability and replicability of such resources. Furthermore, Amit and Schoemaker (1993) proposed a list of eight such characteristics: complementarity, scarcity, low tradability, inimitability, limited substitutability, appropriability, durability, and overlap with strategic industry factors. From the foregoing, there is congruence in suggested characterisation of resources that are a source of competitive advantage. Also, by implication, the characterisation suggests that not all resources and capabilities within the firm's resource and capability pool are a source of competitive advantage.

While environmental changes in the form of consumer tastes, industry structure and technology changes may render a firm's resources and capabilities less valuable in future (Barney, 1995), sustained competitive advantage can be achieved, if resources and capabilities are consciously and systematically developed by wilful choices and actions of the strategic leaders (Lado, Boyd, & Wright, 1992; Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997)

through renewing, redeploying, replicating or recombining[5] dynamic capabilities that have reached their maturity stage (Helfat & Peteraf, 2003), or structuring, bundling and leveraging[6] of resource and capability endowments (Sirmon, Hit, & Ireland, 2007).

A firm's strategy can be based on resources' and capabilities' endowments that are distinctive or superior relative to those of rivals (Mahoney & Pandian, 1992; Peteraf, 1993). Likewise, successful implementation of a firm's strategy can be dependent on the deployment of unique organisational resources and capabilities that result in sustained superior performance (Rouse & Daellenbach, 1999).

With regard to strategy implementation, management skill is regarded as a critical resource required for successful implementation (Barney, 1986). Apparent sources of advantage in strategy implementation are, in fact, a manifestation of special insights into the future value of strategies. Through the concept of dynamic managerial capabilities, managers build, integrate and reconfigure organisational resources and competencies

[5] *Renewing involves development of new alternative capabilities. Redeploying involves deploying a capability to a different product market. Replicating entails reproducing same capability in another geographic market, and recombining involves combining an existing capability with a new one.*

[6] *Structuring involves acquiring (i.e. purchasing resources from strategic factor markets), accumulating (i.e. developing resources internally) and divesting (i.e. shedding firm-controlled resources). Bundling involves stabilising (i.e. making minor incremental improvements in existing capabilities), enriching (i.e. extending current capabilities) and pioneering (i.e. creating new capabilities to address firm's competitive context). Leveraging involves mobilising (i.e. identifying capabilities needed to exploit new opportunities), coordinating (i.e. integrating identified opportunities into effective and efficient configuration) and deployment (i.e. physically using capability configurations to support a chosen strategy).*

(Adner & Helfat, 2001), which are an essential ingredient in the execution of strategy.

Empirically, fewer studies highlight the impact of resources and capabilities on strategy implementation. For example, technology is highlighted as a critical resource in the implementation of a responsive supply chain strategy (Roh et al., 2014). Abu Bakar and Ahmad (2010), in assessing the relationship between a firm's resources and product innovation performance, concluded that intangible resources are drivers of product innovation success. Likewise, Sirmon and Hitt's (2009) study on the interdependence of dynamic managerial capabilities on a firm's performance suggests that optimal results are produced by matching resource investment decisions with congruent deployment decisions. Additionally, Galbreath (2005), in his study on the relative contribution of capabilities, tangible and intangible assets on the success of businesses, found that capabilities contribute significantly more to a firm's success than intangible or tangible assets as well as that intangible resources impact a firm's success more than tangible resources.

Though the resources-based theory complements other theories in explaining inter-firm differences, criticisms have been levelled against it. While resources and capabilities are potential sources of competitive heterogeneity, they do not explain all persistent performance differences

in firms (Conner, 2002; Hoopes, Madsen, & Walker, 2003). Specifically, the resources-based theory lacks empirical evidence on how firms differ (Hoopes & Marsden, 2008). While the resources-based theory offers suggestions on resource and capability characteristics, it does not offer clarity on how resources and capabilities are created (Conner, 2002). Thus, its usefulness is of "a descriptive rather than explanatory nature and as such does not equip strategists with practical competitive advantage-building propositions" (Connor, 2002, p.312).

Additionally, organisational capabilities, despite being a source of competitive advantage, are vulnerable to threats of erosion or substitution, and can be superseded by a higher-order capability (Collis, 1994). Furthermore, while practice theorists affirm that organisational practices and activities could well constitute a source of competitive advantage, (Johnson et al., 2003), resources-based theory "marginalises the activities, managerial or otherwise, that is going on in organisations" (Johnson et al., 2003, p.7).

Despite the foregoing criticism of the resources-based theory, it remains a useful theoretical framework, which is complementary to other theoretical frameworks (Cockburn, Henderson, & Stern, 2000; Conner, 2002). Cockburn et al. (2000) argued that the resource-based view and the environmental perspective are complementary rather than alternatives

to each other. While the environmental perspective focuses attention on external industry structure, the resource-based view is founded on the fact that internal capabilities and investments provide instruments and tools to shape the environment. Similarly, Conner (2002) argued that the resources-based and positioning views combine “with each other to provide an integrated understanding of the process of seeking the highest probability of strategic success” (p.313).

2.3.3.2 Contingency theory

A contingency approach to strategy suggests that an optimal strategy exists for each set of environmental and organisational variables (Ginsberg & Venkatraman, 1985). Likewise, a contingency theory of strategy implementation suggests that there is not one best way of successfully implementing strategy. Successful implementation of strategy will depend on the interaction between a variety of factors within the firm’s internal and external environment (Harrington & Kendall, 2006; Mitchell, 2014; Okumus & Roper, 1999). The contingent view of strategy implementation is that the “effectiveness of a strategy implementation process depends on how multiple factors interact within any situation” (Okumus & Roper, 1999, p.25).

Accordingly, contingency studies examine the effects of the interaction of a variety of contingent factors on strategy implementation. Examples

include studies that examined (i) how the fit between decision-making content and contextual factors impacts successful implementation of a worksite smoking policy (Willemsen, Meijer, & Jannink, 1999); (ii) the relationship between environmental complexity, firm size, organisational member involvement in the strategy implementation process and success (Harrington & Kendal, 2006); (iii) how resource investment and deployment decisions affect firm performance (Sirmon & Hitt, 2009); (iv) the role of manager leadership style in salesperson implementation of a sales strategy (Inyang et al., 2018), and (iv) the impact of strategic context factors (i.e. internal innovation, centrepiece, routine and public relations) and design factors (i.e. Performance Management System integration, fiscal and non-fiscal accessibility) on strategy implementation success (Mitchell, 2014). The outcomes of these studies suggest that the interaction of independent variables of choice has an optimal effect on the dependent variable, which is congruent with the normative basis of contingency theory. For example, Sirmon and Hitt (2009) concluded in their study that optimal results are produced by matching resource investment decisions with congruent deployment decisions. Similarly, Mitchell (2014) asserted that different implementation tools work better in different contexts (Mitchell, 2014).

Though contingency studies are a common feature of strategy literature, there is notable criticism of the theory. Its normative basis is questionable.

For example, Schoonhoven (1981) argued that contingency theory is not a theory and lacks a well-developed set of interrelated propositions. Schoonhoven (1981) argued that the contingency theory is more of an orientating strategy or metatheory, in which a phenomenon ought to be conceptualised or explained. Further criticism has been directed towards the contingency hypotheses and their analyses (Boyd, Haynes, Hitt Bergh, & Ketchen, 2012; Schoonhoven, 1981). The framing of contingency hypotheses lacks clarity and is ambiguous (Schoonhoven, 1981) as are analytical tools used in the analysis of such hypotheses (Boyd et al., 2012; Schoonhoven, 1981).

Despite it being criticised, the contingency theory remains a theoretical basis for several studies (Hartmann & Moers, 1999; Mitchell, 2014; Nutt, 1983; Sirmon & Hitt, 2009; Zott & Amit, 2008). It is still a pertinent theory for strategy implementation research (Sirmon & Hitt, 2009; Mitchell, 2014). The contingency theory can offer plausible explanations for the effect of contingent organisational variables, if the ambiguity in contingent hypotheses and their analyses are addressed. Different strategic orientations by firms such as cost leadership, differentiation or focus call for a combination of different variables in ensuring effective implementation. Variations in industries, firms' customer value propositions, institutional and competitive pressures require firms to respond appropriately though a myriad of combinations of relevant

internal and external factors. In this regard, the contingency theory still offers a sound basis for understanding a firm's contingent factors that may deliver optimal organisational performance.

2.3.3.3 Institutional theory

The institutional theory focuses on the influences of institutions on the organisation's legitimacy (Scott, 2014). Institutions, in this regard, "comprise the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life" (Scott, 2014, p.56). The regulative elements consist primarily of government regulation, industrial agreements and standards (Bruton, Ahlstrom, & Li, 2010), which constrain and regularise behaviour through coercive mechanisms (Scott, 2014). The logic therefore is that organisations conform to regulative pressures in fear of possible sanctions or due to attendant rewards (Scott, 2014). The normative elements are "obligatory dimensions of social, professional and organisational interaction" (Bruton et al., 2010, pp.422-423), derived from values and norms (Scott, 2014). Values and norms therefore constrain behaviour as conformity avoids or shields the organisations from feelings of shame or disgrace (Scott, 2014). The cultural-cognitive elements represent "constructed rules and meanings that limit appropriate beliefs and action" (Bruton et al., 2010 p.423), "taken-for-grantedness" and a shared understanding basis of compliance (Scott, 2014).

From an institutional perspective, organisational success and survival are not only dependent on efficient control of productive activities, but also on environmental adaptation, through which legitimacy is attained (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Morphew & Huisman, 2002). Such adaptation is achieved through the acquisition of normatively defined practices and structures (Morphew & Huisman, 2002) in response to regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive institutional elements (Scott, 2014). Institutional theory therefore is concerned with the "macro-sociological understanding of how organisations operate, are structured, and relate to each other" (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2011, p.52) in view of the regulatory, social and cultural pressures, from which organisational survival and legitimacy is derived (Scott, 1987; Bruton et al., 2010). As succinctly posited by Suddaby (2010), the central point of institutional hypothesis is "understanding how and why organisations attend, and attach meaning, to some elements of their institutional environments and not others" (p.15).

The focal point of institutional theory is the nature and structure of the environment rather than the individual (Steidlmeier, 1993). Consequently, studies in business that take an institutional approach focus on social characteristics of individuals in business structures and processes (Steidlmeier, 1993). As such, the business environment is considered as "a shared existence of intrinsically related persons, who act not only for

individual interests, but to construct a shared reality" (Steidlmeier, 1993, p.194). Thus, an institutional approach adds a social dimension to the analysis of actions of individuals and gives more attention to "the processes of creating and instilling social values, and to the guiding role of belief systems in framing the logic of social change" (Steidlmeier, 1993, p.198). Among others, studies that use institutional theory include: understanding patterns of academic drift in higher education (Morphew & Huisman, 2002), examining the mediating role of absorptive capacity in the relationship between institutional pressure and implementation of corporate environmental practices (Shubham, Charan, & Murty, 2018), investigating the extent to which the institutional context impacts on strategic decision making in an emerging market (Anchor & Aldehayyat, 2016), adoption of internet banking (Shi et al., 2008), and information system implementation in healthcare (Jensen et al., 2009).

Despite institutional theory being a popular theoretical foundation for a diversity of domains (Bruton et al., 2010), it ignores the "lived experience of organisational actors", and its connection to institutions that structure and are structured by it (Lawrence et al., 2011, p.53). Therefore, a suggestion to a new focal dimension of institutional work, which refers to practices of organisational actors, i.e. as individuals or a collective, aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions (Lawrence et al., 2011; Suddaby, 2010).

2.3.3.4 Expectancy theory of motivation

In the literature, various expectancy theories are offered, but the one pertinent to strategy implementation is suggested by Guth and MacMillan (1986). As argued by Guth and MacMillan (1986), the expectancy theory of motivation offers a rich explanation for an individual manager's commitment to strategy. Guth and MacMillan (1986) posited that an individual manager's level of effort in implementation will depend on their perceived ability and organisational potential to successfully execute the strategy, and the perceived likelihood that successful execution of strategy would lead to a desired outcome. Therefore, the perceived ability, perceived probability of success, and the perceived consistency between personal goals and strategic outcomes are determinants of implementation effort (Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Judge & Stahl, 1995). Using expectancy theory of motivation, Guth and MacMillan (1986) found evidence that suggests that middle managers, who perceive their self-interests to be compromised would even sabotage implementation of strategy. Similarly, Judge and Stahl (1995) suggested that personal characteristics of middle managers influences their perception.

2.3.3.5 Conclusion on theories on strategy implementation

The various theories provide different theoretical lenses, through which strategy implementation can be explored. Though disparate in nature, these theories explain and enrich the inquiry into the strategy

implementation phenomenon. The application of variety of theories in strategy implementation research highlights the eclectic nature of strategy implementation research. Scholars undertaking research in strategy implementation enjoy the luxury of choice of appropriate theoretical framework that optimally addresses their research questions.

Though the perspective adopted by scholars sets the broad parameters, within which a study is conducted, in addition, a theoretical framework provides a clear road map on how a study is framed within a perspective. Therefore, this study draws from the self-determination theory in examining the impact of middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment, as sources of autonomous motivation, on their commitment to strategy implementation. The adopted theoretical framework is explained in more detail in section 2.3.4 below.

Table 5 : Selected theories on strategy implementation

Theoretical lens	Research focus	Authors	Research Findings
Resources-based theory	Examining the impact of inter-organisational resources in the implementation of a responsive supply chain strategy	Roh et al. (2014)	Effective implementation of a responsive supply chain strategy involves the integration of inter-organisational resources across the global supply chain.
	Examining the notion of resources and testing the main prescription of the resources-based theory	Galbreath (2005)	Capabilities contribute significantly more to a firm's success than either intangible or tangible assets. Also, intangible resources impact firm success more than tangible resources.
Contingency theory	Examining the role of managers' leadership style in the implementation of the sales strategy for salespeople.	Inyang et al. (2018)	The transformational leadership style has stronger effects on sales strategy implementation behaviours of salespeople when compared to the transactional leadership style. However, in competitive environments, the effects of transactional leadership on the sales strategy implementation behaviours of salespeople become stronger.

Theoretical lens	Research focus	Authors	Research Findings
	Examining a contingent model of strategy implementation in public entities	Simon & Hitt (2009) Mitchell (2014)	Optimal results are produced by matching resource investment decisions with congruent deployment decisions. The association between strategic context factors (internal innovation, centrepiece, routine and public relations) and design factors (Performance Management System integration, fiscal and non-fiscal accessibility) supports the view that different implementation tools work better in different contexts.
Institutional theory	Examining the mediating role of absorptive capacity in the relationship between institutional pressure and implementation of corporate environmental practices.	Shubham et al. (2018)	The results support the mediating role of absorptive capacity in the relationship between institutional pressure and implementation of corporate environmental practices. The study highlights the importance of acquisition and utilisation of environmental knowledge in driving environmentalism through developing absorptive capacity.

Theoretical lens	Research focus	Authors	Research Findings
	A case study of information system implementation in healthcare.	Jensen et al. (2009)	The findings show that rationalised myths of an efficient Electronic Patient Record travelled from an organisation field to hospital ward (i.e. group) and on to individual doctors (i.e. individuals).
Expectancy theory	Managerial effort in implementation of strategic change.	Guth & MacMillan (1986)	Determinants of middle managers' effort in implementation include perceived ability to implement; probability of success and goal congruence.
	Influence of middle managers' personal characteristics and national culture on perceived ability to implement; perceived probability of success and perceived goal congruence, i.e. consistency perception.	Judge & Stahl (1995)	Among the three determinants of implementation effort, perceived goal congruence is relatively more important. Middle managers' personal characteristics such as experience and formal educational levels are predictors of middle managers' perceived ability to implement and perceived goal congruence.

Source: Compiled by author

2.3.4 Theoretical framework for this study

A theory provides an explanation of how variables are related to the phenomena of interest (Van Maanen, Sorensen, & Mitchell, 2007; Weick, 1995; Whetten, 1989). Thus, a theoretical framework provides an essential guidepost for a study and lays down the foundation, for which research outcomes can be understood or further interrogated. As highlighted in section 2.3.2 above, various theories have been adopted by scholars in exploring the strategy implementation phenomenon. The ensuing sections provide clarity on the theoretical framework adopted for this study and how it is applied.

2.3.4.1 Motivation theory

As highlighted earlier, motivation theory can provide useful insights into the strategy implementation phenomenon. Smith (2009; 2010) suggested that motivation theories may help explain strategy implementation. For example, Guth and MacMillan (1986) used the expectancy theory of motivation in exploring the role of middle management's self-interest in strategy implementation. Likewise, Judge and Stahl (1995) explored the effects of middle management's perceptions on their strategy implementation effort, using the expectancy theory of motivation. These studies (i.e Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Judge & Stahl, 1995) highlight the utility of motivation theory in strategy implementation research.

In general, motivation is a force that energises, directs or sustains behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 2000a; Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004; Steers, Mowday, & Shapiro, 2004). Specifically, from a work context, work motivation is defined as “a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual’s being, to initiate work-related behaviour, and to determine its form, direction, intensity and duration” (Pinder, 1998, p.11). Pinder (1998) clarified that the recognition of a set of energetic forces in the definition of work motivation implied that a variety of sources account for human behaviour, and that the idea of force suggested that motivation will manifest itself through effort. Thus, effort is recognised as a consequence and a primary indicator of motivation (Pinder, 1998).

Further, the origin of the energising forces may be external (i.e. characteristics of the work environment) or internal (i.e. self-determined behaviour) (Pinder, 1998). The intensity of motivation, defined as “the momentary magnitude of motivational arousal” recognises the magnitude of motivational arousal (i.e. the total amount of effort a person would make to satisfy a motive) at a point in time (Brehm & Self, 1989, p.110). Through the direction dimension of motivation, the specific goals, toward which motivated energy is directed is recognised. The duration dimension of motivation recognises that goal attainment is a likely outcome of motivated behaviour (Pinder, 1998).

Because of the various dimensions of motivation, many theories of motivation seek to explain, which factors or events energise, direct or sustain human behaviour, and how these elements interact to influence behaviour in organisations (Steers et al., 2004). While Smith (2010) positioned expectancy and goal-setting motivation theories as front-runners in explaining the strategy implementation phenomenon, there is a solid rationale that self-determination theory of motivation offers a promising framework in exploring the variables being studied. Since this study is concerned with exploring the link between the psychological foundations of managerial behaviours (i.e. middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) and the intermediate outcomes of middle management processes (i.e. the commitment to strategy implementation), a motivation lens is adopted. Thus, motivation theory guides the attempt to understand the relationships among the variables of interest. Specifically, for the purposes of this study, the self-determination theory of motivation is adopted for reasons clarified below.

2.3.4.2 The motivation to engage in strategy-supportive behaviour

Empirical evidence suggests that individuals are stimulated by various factors to engage in strategy supportive-behaviour. Among other factors, these include: self-interest (Guth & Macmillan, 1986), strategic consensus (Dooley et al., 2000; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a; Kellermanns et al.,

2011), participative strategic decision-making (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013; Brenes et al., 2008; Kohtamäki et al., 2012); strategic knowledge and perceived organisational trust (Gagnon et al., 2008); and middle managers' perception of senior management support for the strategy (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013). These factors suggest that the commitment to strategy implementation may derive from motivational processes that can be mapped onto the controlled versus autonomous motivation continuum as proposed by Gagné and Deci (2005). On one end of the spectrum, the commitment to strategy implementation may be stimulated by contingencies external to the individual as such (i.e. controlled motivation). On the other end of the spectrum, the commitment to strategy implementation may be stimulated by an organisational member's sense of choice and volition (i.e. autonomous motivation).

Guided by the view that factors influencing the commitment to strategy implementation may be mapped onto the controlled to autonomous motivation continuum proposed by Gagné and Deci (2005), this study adopts the self-determination theory of motivation to examine the effects of managerial psychological states on the commitment to strategy implementation. Prior research has shown that affective commitment is positively associated with the satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Meyer et al., 2012). Likewise, as argued by Thomas & Velthouse (1990), cognitive variables that constitute

psychological empowerment are the proximal cause of intrinsic task motivation.

While the commitment to strategy implementation may be stimulated by both controlled and autonomous motivation, in this study, for reasons clarified below, the focus is on autonomous motivation derived from the individual's affective attachment to the organisation as well as their perceived psychological empowerment.

2.3.4.3 Self-determination theory of motivation

The self-determination theory (SDT), among other theories of motivation, "maintains that an understanding of human motivation requires a consideration of innate psychological needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness" (Deci & Ryan, 2000b, p.227). As summed up by Sheldon, Turban, Brown, Barrick, and Judge (2003), autonomy is the need to be self-regulating, and to be the maker or at least owner of one's choice; competence is the need to be effective in what one does, mastering new skills in the process; and relatedness is the need to feel connected and in sympathy with at least some others. Thus, understanding the social contexts that are supportive of competence, autonomy and relatedness is essential in motivating others in a way that engenders commitment, effort and high-quality performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000a).

A research framework grounded in self-determination theory focuses on the behavioural consequences of the extent to which the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness are satisfied (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Thus, self-determination theory offers a framework for understanding individuals' discretionary and focal behaviours emanating from their perceived sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Meyer et al., 2004; Sheldon et al., 2003).

One of the key tenets of self-determination theory is its distinction between autonomous motivation and controlled motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005). While intrinsic motivation (i.e. engaging in an activity because it is inherently interesting and enjoyable) is autonomous; extrinsic motivation (i.e. behaviour driven by a perception of a contingency between behaviour and a desired consequence such as reward or punishment) can vary to the degree to which it is autonomous versus controlled (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Autonomy "involves acting with a sense of volition and having the experience of choice", while controlled motivation "involves acting with a sense of pressure, a sense of *having to* engage in the actions" (Gagné & Deci, 2005, pp.333-334).

The self-determination theory (SDT) "posits a controlled-to-autonomous continuum to describe the degree to which an external regulation has been internalised" (Gagné & Deci, 2005, p.334). Internalisation enables

extrinsically prescribed behaviour to be internally or autonomously regulated such that the motivation to act is self-determined (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015). The internalisation of extrinsic motivation is operationalised in terms of the four types of extrinsic motivation: (i) external motivation, i.e. behaviour is driven by an external contingency such as reward or punishment; (ii) introjected motivation, i.e. behaviour is driven by a sense of pride, self-worth, ego or to avoid shame or guilt, (iii) identified motivation, i.e. self-endorsed behaviour is driven by a sense of greater freedom, volition and congruence with personal goals and identities (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Van den Broek, Ferris, Chang, & Rosen, 2016), and (iv) integrated motivation – driven by the full sense that the behaviour is an integral part of who the individual is (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

Intrinsic, identified and integrated motivation, by virtue of the endorsement of the reasons behind one's behaviour, are considered autonomous motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Van den Broek et al., 2016). Both autonomous and controlled motivations are intentional (Gagné & Deci, 2005). As argued by Battistelli, Galletta, Portoghese and Vandenberghe (2013), all intentionally motivated behaviours are oriented towards target fulfilment.

Arguably, organisational environments that promote the satisfaction of the needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness "will enhance

employees' intrinsic motivation and promote full internalisation of extrinsic motivation" (Gagné & Deci, 2005, p.337). This in turn will, among other important work outcomes, result in (i) persistence and maintained behaviour change; (ii) effective performance; (iii) positive work-related attitude, and organisational citizenship behaviours (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

Various organisational studies have adopted the self-determination theoretical framework in exploring a variety of relationships. Examples of such studies include exploring the relationships between (i) autonomy supportiveness of work climate, psychological needs satisfaction and consequent outcomes such as engagement, anxiety, and general self-esteem (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001); (ii) autonomous motivation and organisational commitment (Gagné, Chemolli, Forest, & Koestner, 2008); (iii) empowering leadership behaviours and in-role and extra-role employee behaviour (Raub & Robert, 2010); (iv) work design and employee work affect (Rayburn, 2014); and (v) empowerment practices and job satisfaction (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015). These studies highlight the utility of self-determination theory in organisational studies.

Evidently within the literature, the prior application of the SDT framework suggests two distinct approaches, in which the framework can be applied in empirical studies. These approaches are shown graphically for

illustrative purposes in Figure 1. The indirect effect approach (termed Approach One in Figure 1) focuses on exploring the relationships between contextual factors that promote psychological needs satisfaction (for example, autonomy supportiveness of work climate; employees' autonomy causality orientation, perceived managerial autonomy support; person-organisation fit, person-group fit, and person-job fit) and psychological needs satisfaction (for example, autonomy, competence and relatedness needs satisfaction); and the consequent outcomes of the psychological needs satisfaction (for example, engagement, anxiety and general self-esteem; performance evaluations and psychological adjustment; job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and job performance) (Baard, Ryan, & Deci, 2004; Deci et al., 2001; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009). This approach adopts the contextual factors→psychological needs satisfactions→outcomes relationships.

The direct effect approach (termed Approach Two in Figure 1 below) to the application of the self-determination theory (SDT) framework explores the direct relationships between contextual factors that promote psychological needs satisfaction (for example, autonomous motivation; empowering leadership behaviour; job autonomy and intrinsic work motivation; empowering practices) and the consequent behavioural outcomes (for example, organisational commitment; in-role and extra-role

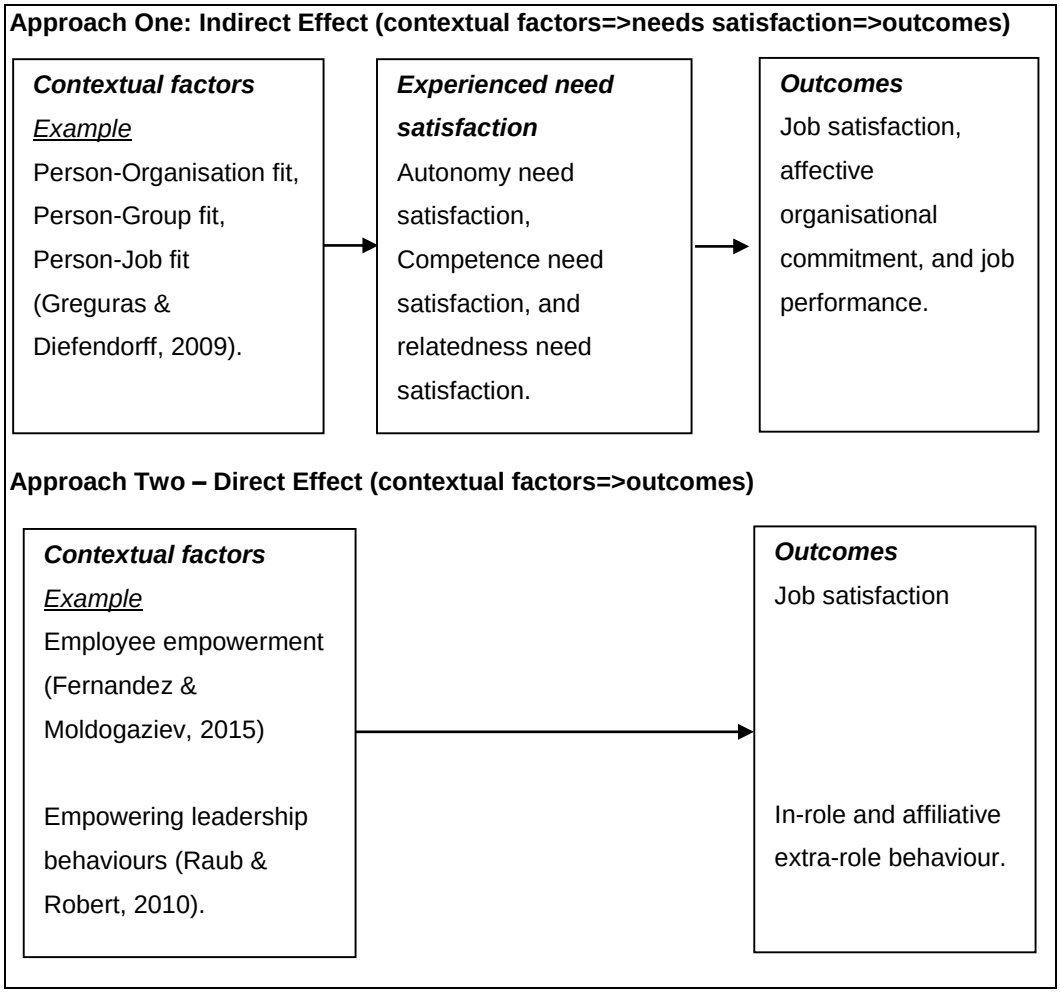
behaviour; turnover intentions; job satisfaction) (Gagné, 2008; Galletta et al., 2011; Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015; Raub & Robert, 2010).

The direct approach adopts the contextual factors→outcomes relationship. This approach is based on a presumed link between the contextual factors of interest and psychological needs satisfaction. For example, Raub and Robert (2010) adopted this approach in examining the impact of empowering leadership behaviours on in-role and affiliative extra-role behaviours on the presumption that empowering leadership behaviours satisfy the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Thus, empowering leadership behaviours were found to have a direct effect on in-role and affiliative extra-role behaviours.

Similarly, in examining the direct relationships between empowerment practices and job satisfaction, Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2015) adopted the direct effect approach in assessing the impact of empowerment practices aimed at promoting self-determination (such as sharing information about goals and performance, providing access to job-related knowledge and skills, and granting discretion to change work process) on job satisfaction. Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2015) did not initially test for the impact of empowerment practices on psychological need satisfaction as that relationship was presumed. They directly explored the impact of empowerment practices on job satisfaction based

on the presumption that empowerment practices satisfy the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Thus, employment practices promoting self-determination were found to have positive and sizable direct effects on job satisfaction.

Figure 1 : Empirical application of the SDT framework



Source: Compiled by Author

2.3.4.4 The application of self-determination theory for this study

In line with Smith's (2010) suggestion that motivation theories may help explain strategy implementation, the self-determination theory of motivation is adopted for this study. A direct effect approach (i.e. Approach Two, in Figure 1 above) to self-determination theory is applied to this study. This is similar to the approach used by Raub and Robert (2010), and Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2015), in which the direct effects of independent variables of interest on outcome variables were explored.

Sheldon et al. (2003) asserted that forms of extrinsic motivation can be autonomous, if an individual identifies with them, for example, an individual engaging in a work behaviour because of a genuine identification with their role in the organisation. Likewise, an individual may exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisation's strategy because of a genuine affective attachment to their organisation or their perceived level of psychological empowerment. Thus, drawing from Gagné and Deci's (2005) self-determination theory framework, it is hypothesised that middle managers' affective attachment to their organisation (i.e. affective organisational commitment) and their perceived level of psychological empowerment (as sources of autonomous motivation) would have a direct effect on their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy.

Gardner et al. (2011) argued that factors that lead to psychological needs satisfaction result in intrinsic motivation and positive work attitudes. In this study, therefore, it is assumed that the perceived sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness, emanating from an individual's affective attachment to their organisation and perceived psychological empowerment will promote the internalisation of extrinsic motivation (i.e. identified regulation), which in turn will result in the autonomous regulation of strategy-supportive behaviour. The basis of the proposed direct relationship between affective organisational commitment, perceived psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation is explained in the ensuing sections.

2.3.4.4.1 The direct effect of affective organisational commitment on the commitment to strategy implementation

The direct effect of an individual's affective attachment to the organisation on their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy is not prominently evident in the strategy implementation literature. However, there are compelling arguments in the literature, which suggest the possibility of such a direct relationship, which can be illustrated from the self-determination framework. Arguably, commitment in general, as one of the energising forces that contribute to motivated and intentional behaviour, "can serve as particularly powerful source of motivation and can lead to persistence in a course of action, even in the

face of opposing forces" (Meyer et al., 2004, p.994). This argument suggests that affective attachment to the organisation, as an energising force that contributes to motivated and intentional behaviour, can serve as a powerful source of motivation in work efforts directed towards the implementation of an organisation's business strategy.

As further suggested by Meyer et al. (2004), embedding commitment within a general motivation framework can help explain how commitment exerts influence on employee behaviour, especially strategy-supportive behaviour. The proposition that the "nature and strength of employees' commitments to social foci will affect their commitment to goals of relevance to these foci" (Meyer et al., 2004, p.1002), further attests to the potential motivational prospects of one's affective attachment to the organisation.

Further, empirical evidence suggests that affective organisational commitment is a source of autonomous motivation. As argued by Meyer et al. (2004), individuals, who are affectively committed to their organisation, experience more autonomous forms of regulation (i.e. identified regulation). Even Gagné et al. (2008) confirmed in their study that affective organisational commitment is more related to autonomous motivation than introjected and external regulation. Likewise, research outcomes in the study by Meyer et al. (2012) suggests that an affective

commitment dominant profile is positively associated with the satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness.

Furthermore, Meyer et al. (2004) posited that “affective commitment has been found to have stronger links to behaviour, particularly discretionary behaviour” (p.996). Therefore, the above empirical evidence suggests that affective organisational commitment, as a source of autonomous motivation, has the potential to energise, direct and sustain behaviour. Since motivation manifests itself through effort (Pinder, 1998), it is proposed that affective organisational commitment has the potential to stimulate an individual’s efforts toward the achievement of the organisation’s goals. Thus, the basic premise of this study is that individuals, who are affectively attached to their organisation, are bound to exert considerable effort towards the achievement of their organisation’s strategic goals. It is, thus, presumed that the perceived sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness emanating from an individual’s affective organisational commitment will promote internalisation of extrinsic motivation (i.e. identified regulation).

As asserted by various scholars, identified regulation is present, when self-endorsed behaviour is driven by a sense of greater freedom, volition and congruence with personal goals and identities (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Van den Broek, Ferris, Chang, & Rosen, 2016). Therefore, because of the

strong belief in and acceptance of organisational goals and values, individuals, who are affectively attached to their organisation, will internalise the organisational values, identity, goals and related contingencies into personal values, which become a source of autonomous motivation. Because of the desire to make meaningful contribution to the organisation, individuals, who are affectively attached to their organisation, are predisposed to act from a sense of choice and volition (i.e. identified regulation as is explained below).

Affective organisational commitment, as a motivational force, is characterised by the willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation (Lee et al., 2010) and the desire to make meaningful contribution to the organisation (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005). Thus, because of their desire to make meaningful contribution to and their willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation, individuals, who are affectively attached to their organisation, are more likely to be energised to put concerted effort towards the implementation of their organisation's strategy. Their effort is likely to be volitional because they want to make it.

Further, because they are keen to push beyond boundaries through creativity and innovative behaviours (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), individuals, who are affectively attached to their organisation, will be driven to

transcend strategy implementation challenges and obstacles in their quest to make a meaningful contribution to their organisation. Furthermore, as organisational citizens, they are more likely to persist with extra effort in their roles (Gellatly, 2006), as a way of contributing towards the implementation of their organisation's business strategy.

In summary, the proposed direct effect of affective organisational commitment on the commitment to strategy implementation is premised on the fact that affective organisational commitment, as a source of autonomous motivation, will stimulate organisational members' willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation; drive creativity and innovative behaviours; and inspire the persistence with extra effort to achieve the organisation's strategic goals. The achievement of the organisational goals will reflect the organisational members' meaningful contribution to the organisation. Because individuals, who affectively attached to their organisation, have a strong belief in and have accepted their organisation's goals (Lee et al., 2010), they are more likely to exert considerable effort in their work to ensure the achievement of organisational goals. Since they are emotionally attached to the organisation and want to remain a part of it, it is reasonable to expect that they will be motivated to work for the good of the organisation. They are bound to take on greater responsibilities and engage in volitional efforts in order to achieve their organisation's strategic goals.

Besides the affective attachment to the organisation, it is also proposed that the perceived psychological empowerment, as a psychological foundation for middle management behaviour, has the potential to stimulate strategy-supportive behaviour (i.e. the exertion of considerable effort towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy). The basis of such a proposition is clarified below.

2.3.4.4.2 The direct effect of psychological empowerment on the commitment to strategy implementation

While the direct relationship between psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation is not evident in the strategy implementation literature, the possibility of such a relationship can be illustrated from the self-determination framework. As noted by Sheldon et al. (2003), the need for autonomy in the self–determination theory framework is satisfied, when individuals are self-regulating and make their own choices. Such need is therefore satisfied within the self-determination or choice cognitive variable of psychological empowerment, i.e. when an individual perceives a sense of having a choice in initiating and regulating actions (Spreitzer, 1995).

Further, Sheldon et al. (2003) noted that the need for competence in the self-determination theory framework is satisfied, when individuals perceive to be effective in what they do and master new skills in the

process. Likewise, such a need is satisfied within the competence variable of psychological empowerment, when individuals believe in their capability to perform a task or activities (Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Therefore, a feeling of psychological empowerment results in the autonomy and competence needs satisfaction, thus providing a motivational force that energises, directs or sustains behaviour. As argued by Thomas and Velthouse (1990), cognitive variables that constitute psychological empowerment: impact, competence, meaningfulness and choice are considered to be the proximal cause of intrinsic task motivation. They energise and sustain an individual's behaviour such as focused effort, flexibility in task accomplishment, initiation of new tasks in light of problems or opportunities, and resiliency to obstacles (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

These arguments suggest the motivational prospects of perceived psychological empowerment. Based on the fact that "there is strong support for the contention that individual-level psychological empowerment is consistently beneficial for individual performance" (Maynard et al., 2012, p.1248), it is proposed that psychological empowerment, as a source of autonomous motivation, will have a direct effect on the commitment to strategy implementation. Arguably, psychologically empowered individuals experience more autonomous forms of regulation (i.e. identified regulation). They feel a greater sense of

freedom and volition because they perceive the cause of their behaviour to have an internal locus of control (i.e. the cognitive states regarding empowerment) (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Maynard et al., 2012). Thus, the identified regulation of behaviour for psychologically empowered individuals emanates from their perception that: (i) their work goals are aligned to personal beliefs and values (i.e. meaning); (ii) they have discretion in decision-making (i.e. self-determination); (iii) they possess skills and abilities to perform well in their roles (i.e. competence); and (iv) they can influence work strategic and administrative outcomes (i.e. impact) (Spreitzer, 1995).

There is strong support for the contention that the perceived level of psychological empowerment will stimulate an individual's commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy. As argued by Spreitzer (1995), being psychologically empowered not only drives attitude, it positively drives work performance. Empirical evidence suggests that psychological empowerment, as a source of autonomous motivation (Raub & Robert, 2010), stimulates the engagement in challenging extra-role behaviours (Raub & Robert, 2010), managerial effectiveness (Spreitzer, 1995; 1997), employee engagement (Jose & Mampilly, 2014), creativity (Sangar & Rangnekar, 2014) and organisational citizenship behaviours (Jin-Liang & Hai-Zhen, 2012).

Arguably, psychologically empowered individuals are predisposed to engage in strategy-supportive behaviour. Because they are performance-driven (Spreitzer, 1995), psychologically empowered individuals are bound to exert considerable effort towards the implementation of the organisation's strategy. As pointed out by Pinder (1998), the level of motivation manifests itself through effort exerted towards a specific or targeted goal. Therefore, psychologically empowered individuals are more likely to exert considerable effort towards the execution of their organisation's strategy. Their perceptions of work-goal-personal-values congruence can stimulate the commitment to the implementation of the organisation's strategy because they perceive that what they have to do (i.e. work goals representing a part of their role in the execution of the organisation's business strategy) is aligned or appealing to their personal cause or value. Likewise, the perceived discretion in decision-making in their role encourages self-regulation in their work effort, which gives the individual space to work with unimpeded volition, and engage in innovative ways in delivering the organisation's strategy.

In addition to the perceived decision-making in their own role, the individual's perceived competence can stimulate the belief that the individual can deliver on what is seemingly out of their depth. Ultimately, the belief that one can influence work-related outcomes can stimulate the resilience and exertion of considerable effort towards the execution of the

organisation's strategy. Thus, the motivation derived from the perception of themselves as active contributors, who take initiative (Raub & Robert, 2010), will drive them to be psychologically empowered to act responsibly, take risk and go an extra-mile in the execution of their organisation's business strategy.

2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed a variety of crucial elements within the extant strategic management literature. The brief overview of strategic management highlighted the metamorphosis that the strategic management field and research has gone through. Moreso, it highlighted its main constituents; strategy formulation and strategy implementation, which have become the focus of strategic management research. Because of this study's focus on strategy implementation, the chapter provided insights on the multiple research perspectives to strategy implementation, such as structural, behavioural / interpersonal, individual level process and the strategy-as-practice; and the associated research outcomes of selected studies within each perspective. This clarified the gap in the literature, which is the focus of this study.

In addition to the research perspectives and outcomes, selected theories underpinning strategy implementation research were also discussed. This reflected the multidimensionality of the theoretical approaches to strategy implementation studies and their outcomes. The different theoretical approaches

enrich the enquiry into and theorising about strategy implementation. This discussion informed the adopted theoretical framework for this study.

Consequently, insights emanating from the literature review informed the basis of the conceptual model and hypotheses discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Conceptual model and hypotheses

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, a conceptual model, which captures diagrammatically the possible relationships among variables that are of interest in this study, is presented and discussed. In addition, the formulated hypotheses, including their rationale, are clarified to give credence and substantial anchor for these hypotheses. These elements provide clarity in the direction of the study and moreso, the research methodology, which follows in the next chapter.

3.1 Conceptual model

While there are various definitions of a model, Cooper and Schindler (2003) defined a model as a "representation of a system that is constructed to study some aspect of that system or the system as a whole" (p.55). Similarly, Render, Stair and Hanna (2009) defined a model as a representation of a situation. The purpose of a model is representation (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). A conceptual model, therefore, in the context of this study, captures in schematic form the proposed relationships among variables that are being studied.

As previously clarified in Chapter Two, empirical evidence suggests that individuals are stimulated by various factors to engage in strategy-supportive

behaviour. Such factors can be mapped onto the controlled to autonomous motivation continuum as proposed by Gagné and Deci (2005). Thus, the conceptual model, as represented diagrammatically in Figure 2 below, posits that middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and their perceived level of psychological empowerment, as sources of autonomous motivation, will influence their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy. The extent to which middle managers are committed to strategy implementation is therefore presumed to be a proximal consequence of their affective organisational commitment and perceived psychological empowerment. Because of the presumed psychological needs satisfaction derived from their affective commitment to the organisation (Meyer et al., 2004; Meyer et al., 2012) and their perceived psychological empowerment (Thomas & Velthouse, 1980; Raub & Robert, 2010), middle managers are more likely to exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisation's strategy.

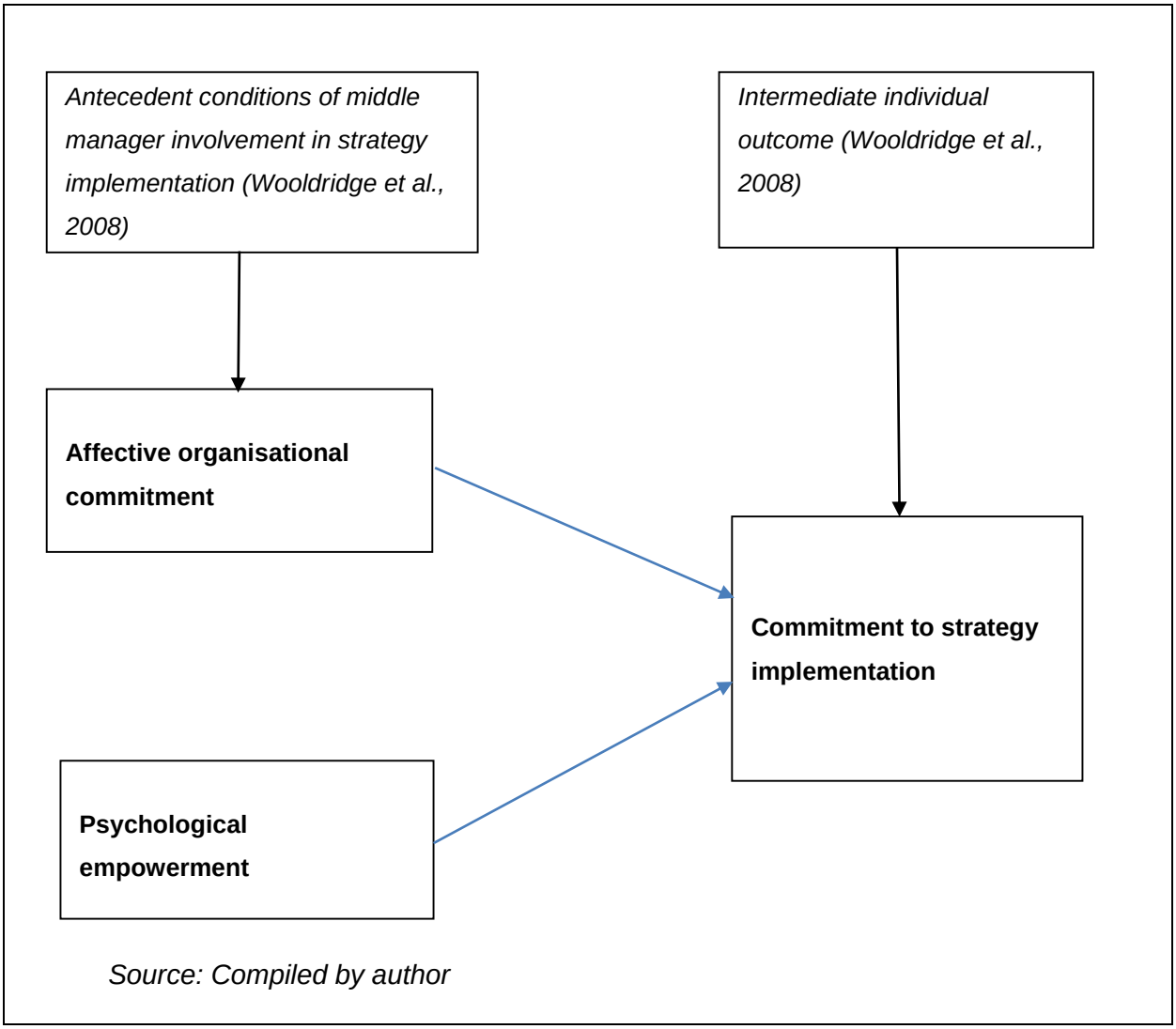
The constructed conceptual model is premised on the proposition that individuals' affective attachment to their organisation and perceived psychological empowerment will have a direct effect on their commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy. Thus, the perceived sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness, emanating from an individual's affective organisational commitment and perceived psychological empowerment will promote the internalisation of extrinsic motivation (i.e. identified regulation).

The conceptual model, therefore, captures the view that individuals' affective organisational commitment and perceived psychological empowerment will influence their commitment to the execution of their organisation's strategy. Prior studies show that individuals, who are affectively committed to their organisation, experience more autonomous forms of regulation (i.e. intrinsic, identified or integrated) (Gagné et al., 2008; Galletta et al., 2011; Meyer et al., 2004). As a powerful source of motivation that can lead to persistence in the course of action (Meyer et al., 2004), affective organisational commitment has the potential to stimulate the exertion of considerable effort toward the achievement of the organisation's business strategy.

Likewise, it proposed that perceived psychological empowerment will have a direct effect on managerial efforts towards the execution of the organisation's strategy. Psychological empowerment, as a source of autonomous motivation (Raub & Robert, 2010), has an impact on behavioural outcomes such as employee engagement (Jose & Mampilly, 2014) and creativity (Sangar & Rangnekar, 2014). Arguably, employees, who perceive themselves to be psychologically empowered, have internalised the values associated with engagement in autonomous, self-determined activities and are more likely to engage in challenging extra-role behaviours (Raub & Robert, 2010). Because they (i) perceive work goals to be aligned to personal beliefs and values (i.e. meaning); (ii) have discretion in decision-making (i.e. self-determination); (iii) believe that they possess skills and abilities to perform well in their roles (i.e.

competence); and (iv) believe that they can influence work strategic and administrative outcomes (i.e. impact), psychologically empowered individuals are more likely to engage in extra-role behaviours directed towards the successful execution of strategy. As argued by Thomas and Velthouse (1990), cognitive variables that constitute psychological empowerment; impact, competence, meaningfulness and choice are the proximal cause of intrinsic task motivation. They energise and sustain an individual's behaviour such as focused effort, flexibility in task accomplishment, initiation of new tasks in light of problems or opportunities, and the resiliency to obstacles (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Therefore, the basic premise of the model is that perceived psychological empowerment will have a direct effect on the commitment to the execution of the organisation's strategy.

Figure 2 : Conceptual model for the study



Source: Compiled by author

3.2 Statement of research hypotheses

Drawing from the conceptual model (Figure 2 above), appropriate hypotheses are developed to crystallise the envisaged relationships between variables. As posited by Cooper and Schindler (2003), hypotheses guide the direction of the study, suggest the most appropriate form of research design, and provide a framework for organising conclusions from the study.

A hypothesis is defined as a "testable proposition, stating that there is a significant difference or relationship between two or more variables" (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009, p.593). A hypothesis is regarded as a proposition, which is formulated for empirical testing and as a declarative statement: It is of a tentative and conjectural nature (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Accordingly, appropriate hypotheses, which are the subject of investigations in this study, are therefore formulated. In line with academic research practice, the formulated hypotheses are stated in two ways: null and alternative hypotheses. While the null hypothesis statement denies the existence of an envisaged relationship between operationalised variables, the alternative hypothesis suggests the existence of such relationship. The formulated hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis: H1a

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): *There is a positive association between middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy.*

Null hypothesis (H_0): *There is no positive association between middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and their commitment to the*

implementation of the organisation's business strategy.

Hypothesis: H1b

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): *There is a positive association between middle managers' perceived psychological empowerment and their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy.*

Null hypothesis (H_0): *There is no positive association between middle managers' perceived psychological empowerment and their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy.*

The rationale for hypotheses H1a and H1b

As indicated earlier, studies within the middle management perspective have highlighted the strategic roles that middle managers play in the strategy process; managerial cognition and its influence in the strategy process; and the link between managerial activity and organisational outcomes (Wooldridge et al., (2008). Additionally, Wooldridge et al. (2008), proposed that further research within the middle management perspective should focus on the individual and

organisational antecedents of managerial processes; deepen the understanding of such processes; and explore the outcomes of middle processes (i.e. intermediate and economic performance). Along similar lines, this study sought to explore the relationship between individual antecedent conditions of middle management's involvement in strategy implementation, such as the psychological foundations of middle managers' behaviour, and the intermediate individual outcome, such as the commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy. Therefore, the significance of this study is that it has the potential to advance an understanding of intra-personal sources of middle managers' motivations underlying their contribution to strategic change within organisations.

The formulated hypotheses, thus, are informed by outcomes of empirical studies on affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment, which suggest that both have an influence on individual and organisational outcomes.

Research outcomes on affective organisational commitment suggest that it is a predictor of work-related behaviours such as job performance (Lee et al., 2010; Meyer et al., 2002) and organisational citizenship behaviours (Gellatly et al., 2006; Meyer et al., 2002). These outcomes suggest the motivational prospects of affective organisational commitment.

Employees with a strong affective attachment to their organisation are intent on staying and being good organisational citizens, i.e. persist with extra effort on the job, volunteering to do additional tasks and helping others (Gellatly et al., 2006). Individuals' strong belief in and acceptance of organisational goals and desire to maintain organisational membership can spur their willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation (Lee et al., 2010). Also, highly committed individuals would want to stay and work for the good of the organisation (Copper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) and may engage in pushing beyond boundaries through creativity and innovative behaviours (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Zeffane and Al Zaroomi (2012) noted that consistent findings on organisational commitment research point to "organisational commitment to be in the centre of a web that is made up of behaviours and attitudes, which can affect organisational outcomes positively or negatively" (p.333). This suggests that affective organisational commitment has the potential to impact organisational members' effort towards the implementation of their organisation's business strategy.

Likewise, research outcomes on psychological empowerment suggest that psychological empowerment has effects on a variety of individual-level behavioural outcomes such as managerial effectiveness, i.e. extent to which a manager fulfils or exceeds work role expectations (Spreitzer, 1995), employee innovativeness (Sangar & Rangnekar, 2014; Seibert et al., 2011; Spreitzer, 1995), job performance (Meyerson & Kline, 2008; Seibert et al., 2011); task

performance and organisational citizenship behaviours (Seibert et al., 2011; Jin-Liang & Hai-Zhen, 2012); and employee engagement (Jose & Mampilly, 2014). Thus, employees, who perceive themselves to be psychologically empowered, are intent on fulfilling or exceeding work role expectations, engage in innovative work behaviours (Sangar & Rangnekar, 2014; Seibert et al., 2011; Spreitzer, 1995), and perform well in their jobs or tasks (Meyerson & Kline, 2008; Seibert et al., 2011). As good organisational citizens, psychologically empowered employees persist with extra effort in and on their jobs, offer alternative solutions or suggestions and help drive change within the organisation (Seibert et al., 2011). These outcomes highlight the potential motivational prospect of perceived psychological empowerment on the individual to deliver or contribute to strategic organisational outcomes.

In essence, affective organisational commitment and perceived psychological empowerment, as sources of autonomous motivation, may be particularly effective in stimulating proactive, resilient and volitional behaviour directed at the achievement of the organisation's strategic objectives.

3.3 Chapter summary

This chapter clarified the basis of the constructed conceptual model and the rationale for the formulated hypotheses. The conceptual model captured diagrammatically the proposed relationships among variables that are of interest

in this study, namely; affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment, and the commitment to strategy implementation.

Additionally, the bases of the formulated hypotheses were clarified to give credence and substantial anchor for such hypotheses and the study. Essentially, the hypotheses sought to test and clarify the nature of proposed relationships.

Chapter Four: Research philosophy, design and methodology

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research philosophy and philosophical foundations for this study. The details and rationale for methodological triangulation adopted for this study are clarified. In addition, the details of the population for the study and sampling techniques used are provided. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the data collection instruments, data collection and analysis processes. Lastly, a chapter summary is provided.

4.1 Research philosophy

Underpinning a methodology for social inquiry are the philosophical assumptions and stances among other domains (Greene, 2006), which researchers, whether by design or default, always bring to their research (Creswell, 2013). Such philosophical assumptions constitute the research philosophy, which is concerned with the "development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge" (Saunders et al., 2009, p.107). The research philosophy clarifies the researcher's assumptions about their worldview and it informs the researcher's strategy, choice of theories and methods (Creswell, 2013; Saunders et al., 2009). Thus, not only does the research philosophy set the parameters, within which a study is conceived and carried out by clarifying the researcher's philosophical

position; it also has implications for legitimacy and consistency of conclusions made (Bryman, 2006b).

A range of philosophical paradigms are espoused in the literature such as positivism, postpositivism, realism, interpretivism / social constructivism and pragmatism, among others (Creswell, 2013; Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Saunders et al., 2009; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Each philosophical paradigm has implications for knowledge development, particularly the relationship between knowledge and the process of its development (Saunders et al., 2009). Underpinning each philosophical position are central concepts of the research philosophy, namely; ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology and methods (Blaikie, 1993; Grix, 2002; Saunders et al., 2009). Ontology is defined as “claims or assumptions that a particular approach in social enquiry makes about the nature of social reality” (Blaikie, 1993, p.6). Ontological assumptions relate to the nature of reality and its characteristics (Creswell, 2013). The clarification of ontological assumptions is the “starting point of all research” (Grix, 2002, p.177). Such clarification deals with two aspects of the nature of reality; objectivism and subjectivism. The objective view suggests that “social entities exist in reality external to social actors” (Saunders et al., 2009, p.110). On the other hand, the subjective view suggests that “social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequence of actors” (Saunders et al., 2009, p.111).

Once the ontological stance is clarified, what follows logically is the clarification of one's epistemological and methodological positions (Grix, 2002). Epistemology is a "theory of knowledge" representing "a view and justification for what can be regarded as knowledge" (Blaikie, 1993, p.7). Further, methodological clarification centres on "how research should or does proceed", while clarity on methods is about the "actual techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data" (Blaikie, 1993, p.7). In view of the key issues clarified above regarding one's philosophical assumptions, the philosophical foundation for this study is clarified in the ensuing section.

4.2 Philosophical foundations for this study

As noted above, researchers anchor their studies within certain beliefs or philosophical assumptions (Creswell, 2013). These beliefs or assumptions constitute a philosophical paradigm, which sets the parameters, within which a study is conceived and carried out. Likewise, this study is situated within the pragmatist paradigm in exploring the role of managerial psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) in the execution of strategy. Pragmatism is anchored in the view that the research question is the determinant of the researcher's ontology, epistemology and axiology (Saunders et al., 2009). The research question therefore determines pluralistic approaches in deriving knowledge about the research problem (Morgan, 2007). This is popularly referred to as the dictatorship of the research question (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Thus, a research question may be

appropriately addressed by a variation in the researcher's ontology, epistemology and axiology (Saunders et al., 2009).

Thus, a pragmatic approach is appropriate in investigating, whether middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective commitment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment) influence their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's strategy. Not only does the study seek to establish the nature of the relationship between middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) and their commitment to strategy implementation, it also seeks to ascertain the behavioural mechanisms underlying the relationship.

Epistemologically, the adoption of pragmatism as a philosophical orientation for the study is also informed by the view that both quantitative and qualitative methods may be used in a single study in valuing subjective and objective knowledge (Hanson, Creswell, Clark, Petska, & Creswell, 2005). Further pragmatism allows for abduction, i.e. moving back and forth between induction and deduction, and inter-subjectivity, i.e. capturing the duality of subjectivity and objectivity (Morgan, 2007). Thus, pragmatism informs the methodological triangulation framework adopted for the study, which is discussed below.

4.3 Triangulation framework for the study

The concept of triangulation dates back to Campbell and Fiske's (1959) multitrait-multimethod matrix proposition, which sought to achieve convergent and discriminant validity. The proposition is that a convergent validation can be achieved through the use of independent measurement procedures, in which measures for the same trait should correlate highly with each other. In addition, a discriminant validation can be achieved through the use of independent measurement procedures, in which measures for the different traits should not correlate with each other. Though this approach laid the foundation to triangulation, it had its bias towards quantitative methods.

Denzin (1978) defined triangulation as the "combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena" (p.291). In its original form, triangulation narrowly reflected the use of multiple forms of quantitative methods (for example, Campbell & Fiske, 1959) or qualitative research methods (for example, Denzin, 1978), rather than the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods (Denzin, 2012). Thus, in its original form, its basic focus was on scaling, reliability and convergent validation (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Jick, 1979), and offsetting or counteracting biases (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). However, triangulation has broadened since its advent in social sciences (Moran-Ellis, Alexander, Cronin, Dickinson, Fielding, Sleney, & Thomas, 2006). Triangulation now reflects an attempt to generate a better understanding of a phenomenon in question through the use of multiple methods (Denzin, 2012; Moran-Ellis et al.,

2006) and can provide explanations of interrelations between phenomena that are both causally and meaningfully adequate (Coldwell, 1985; 2007). Its definition has also evolved. Triangulation is defined as “an epistemological claim concerning what more can be known about a phenomenon, when the findings from data generated by two or more methods are brought together” (Moran-Ellis et al., 2006, p.47).

The essence of triangulation is the use of at least two or more theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches, data sources, investigators or data analysis methods in an attempt to secure in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Denzin, 1978; Denzin, 2012; Moran-Ellis et al., 2006; Thurmond, 2001). Triangulation, thus, involves the following forms: (i) data triangulation; (ii) investigator triangulation; (iii) methodological triangulation; (iv) theoretical triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Kimchi, Polivka, & Stevenson, 1991; Thurmond, 2001); (v) data analysis triangulation (Thurmond, 2001); (vi) comprehensive triangulation (Flick, 2016); and (vii) dialectical triangulation (Coldwell, 1985, 2007).

Data triangulation involves the collection of data from multiple different data sources based on time, place and the person (Denzin, 1978). Thus, person, time and space data sources, respectively, include collecting data (i) from at least two levels of persons, i.e. individuals, groups or collectives such as communities, organisations or societies; (ii) collecting data at different times (for example,

daily, weekly or monthly basis) to validate congruence of the same phenomenon across points in time; and (iii) collecting data in different places or settings to test multi-site consistency and rule out cross-site variation (Kimchi et al., 1991).

Investigator triangulation involves the use of multiple investigators, observers, coders, interviewers or data analysts in a study (Denzin, 1978; Thurmond, 2001). Kimchi et al. (1991) provided a caveat that investigators must be 'research trained' and should have divergent backgrounds. Such triangulation removes potential bias from a single observer and ensures greater reliability in observations (Denzin, 1978).

Methodological triangulation is the "use of two or more research methods in one study and may occur at the level of design or data collection" (Kimchi et al., 1991, p.365). There are two forms of methodological triangulation: 'within-method' or 'between- or across-methods' (Denzin, 1978). The within-method triangulation involves at least two data collection procedures within the same design approach, i.e. quantitative or qualitative approach (Denzin, 1978; Thurmond, 2001). For example, the use of two or more quantitative measures of the same phenomenon in a study is a case of within-method triangulation (Kimchi et al., 1991). On the other hand, between- or across-method triangulation involves the use of multiple methods in examining the same dimension of a research problem (Denzin, 1978; Jick, 1979), for example, the use of a survey questionnaire and open-ended interviews to explore the same phenomenon.

Theoretical triangulation involves the use of multiple theories in examining a phenomenon guided by a small set of hypotheses (Denzin, 1978). Thus, theoretical triangulation “involves testing through research, the competing theories, rival hypotheses or alternative explanations of the same phenomenon” (Kimchi et al., 1991, p.364).

Data analysis triangulation involves the combination of two or more methods of analysing data (Thurmond, 2001). Comprehensive triangulation involves the integration of investigator, data, methodological and theoretical triangulations, if the research questions require more than one form of triangulation (Flick, 2016).

Similarly, within a triangulation context, Coldwell (1985, 2007) proposed a dialectical approach. The methodological synthesis proposed by Coldwell (1985) “consists of comparing the thesis and the antithesis quantitatively” with the view of achieving a provisional synthesis, in which the “findings of the antithesis corroborate the findings of the thesis” (p.181). The purpose of such dialectical triangulation is to be able to infer causality as well as achieve adequacy at the level of meaning (Coldwell, 1985, 2007). The dialectical model of triangulation consists of nomothetic (thesis), idiographic (antithesis) and dialectical synthesis (provisional synthesis) parts. As proposed by Coldwell (1985), the nomothetic part of the dialectical model deals with causal inference through the product-moment correlations at different points in time. The required correlations are “test-retest correlations, static correlations, cross-lagged correlations and

dynamic correlations" (p.182). Each of these correlations helps explain causal inference in some way. For example, the test-retest correlation would indicate the amount a variable has changed over time, while the asymmetrical cross-lagged correlations suggest causality between variables. Likewise, the static and dynamic correlations suggest the existence of a causal relationship, but not source (Coldwell, 1985).

The ideographic component of the dialectical model (i.e. the antithesis), underpinned by a phenomenological analysis, seeks to achieve adequacy at the level of meaning by understanding the meaning of constructs from the interview participant's view point (Coldwell, 1985; 2007). Lastly, the dialectical synthesis (i.e. the provisional synthesis) part focuses on examining, whether findings based on nomothetic techniques are corroborated by the idiographic findings. Specifically, the tests of the goodness-of-fit between the nomothetic and idiographic level of analysis "aim at indicating the validity of the concepts and the plausibility of a causal association on the level of meaning; in other words, whether or not such a causal association is confirmed on the level of individual subjective experience" (Coldwell, 1985, p.185). As opined by Coldwell (2007), a combination of nomothetic and idiographic approaches, through a methodological synthesis, can provide an explanation of interrelations between phenomena that are both causally and meaningfully adequate.

The above types of triangulation highlight a broad spectrum, in which triangulation can be applied in a study to offset biases through the convergence or corroboration of results (Greene et al., 1989) as well as securing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Denzin, 1978; Denzin, 2012; Moran-Ellis et al., 2006; Thurmond, 2001). While different forms of triangulation are advocated for in the extant literature, scholars predominantly employ methodological triangulation (i.e. within or across / between-method). Examples of business studies that apply methodological triangulation include investigating consumer motivations in impulse buying behaviour (Hausman, 2000); exploring why customers, who experience dissatisfactory service, do not complain (Voorhees, Brady, & Horowitz, 2006); exploring factors that influence the magnitude of change in distribution channels (Coelho & Easingwood, 2008); and examining relational norms that determine social capital in virtual communities (Mathwick, Wiertz, & de Ruyter, 2008). In these studies, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis procedures are used.

Despite the complexities associated with triangulation, its purpose and benefits are eminently espoused in the literature (Coldwell 1985; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Moran-Ellis et al., 2006). Among others, the benefits for triangulation include providing an explanation of interrelations between phenomena that are both causally and meaningfully adequate (Coldwell, 1985, 2007), obtaining complementary findings and strengthening research results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Thurmond, 2001); enabling an

in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in question (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Denzin, 2012; Moran-Ellis et al., 2006) and enhancing the integrity of findings (Harrison & Reilly, 2011). Specifically, the benefits of methodological triangulation include complementarity between methods (Bryman, 2006a; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), enriching the outcome of findings; and attaining a deeper meaning and verification of findings from each method (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). As reflected in Table 6 below, scholars use methodological triangulation for a variety of reasons or purposes, which, among others, include development, i.e. using results from one method to develop or inform the other (Almandoz, 2014; Battilana & Casciaro, 2012; Gardner, 2012; Grant, Berg, & Cable, 2014; Hausman, 2000); better understanding of a phenomenon (Coelho & Easing, 2008; Gardner, 2012), construct validation (Autio, Dahlander, & Frederiksen, 2016; Chen, Yao, & Kotha, 2009); and complementarity (Barley, Meyerson, & Grodal, 2011; Kistruck, Sutter, & Smith, 2013; Voorhees et al., 2006).

Considering the above, methodological triangulation (i.e. across- or between-method triangulation) underpins the mixed methods research design for this study for purposes of convergence and corroboration of results across quantitative and qualitative methods. The section below therefore provides a detailed description of, and justification for the adopted mixed methods research design.

Table 6 : The rationale for using methodological triangulation

Author	Type of methodological triangulation	Application of triangulation	Purpose or rationale for triangulation
Coldwell (1985; 2007)	Across-method (Dialectical triangulation)	Data collected via interviews and survey instrument	Confirmation of causal adequacy and adequacy at the level of meaning of explanations
Hausman (2000)	Across-method (both qualitative and quantitative)	Data collected via interviews and survey	Development (Exploratory and confirmatory)
Voorhees et al. (2006)	Across-method triangulation	Data collected through interviews and survey	Complementarity
Coelho & Easingwood (2008)	Across-method triangulation	Data collected through interviews and survey	Better understanding of the phenomenon
Chen et al. (2009)	Within-method (quantitative)	Data obtained through a laboratory experiment and field study (surveys)	Construct validation

Author	Type of methodological triangulation	Application of triangulation	Purpose or rationale for triangulation
Davies & Eisenhardt (2011)	Within-method (multiple case studies)	Data collected from archival records (private and public) and interviews (multiple informants at each site)	To confirm or disconfirm emerging conceptual insights
Barley et al. (2011)	Across-method	Data collected via surveys, interviews and communication logs	Complementarity
Battilana & Casciaro (2012)	Across-method	Data obtained through surveys and interviews	Development (Exploratory and confirmatory)
Gardner (2012)	Across-method	Data obtained through multi-source surveys, observations, and interviews	Better understanding (development and complementarity)
Kistruck et al. (2013)	Across-method	Data obtained through quasi-experiment field study, interviews and laboratory experiment	Complementarity
Almandoz (2014)	Across-method	Data sources include: interviews, archival records, and quantitative data from publicly available records	Development

Author	Type of methodological triangulation	Application of triangulation	Purpose or rationale for triangulation
Grant et al. (2014)	Across-method	Data collected through interviews, non-participant observation, archival records and surveys	Development (Exploratory and confirmatory)
Autio et al. (2016)	Across-method	Data collected via interviews, survey, and web log of interactions	Construct validation and choice of an appropriate theoretical lens

Source: Compiled by author

4.3.1 Methodological triangulation: mixed methods research design

A research design constitutes the general plan on how the researcher goes about answering the research questions (Saunders et al., 2009). It provides answers to questions on what techniques are used in gathering data; what kind of sampling is adopted; how issues of time and cost constraints are dealt with and how the results are analysed (Coldwell & Herbst, 2004; Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Saunders et al., 2009). It, thus, embodies the strategy and plan of executing the study in an attempt to achieve the study's objectives (Coldwell & Herbst, 2004, Saunders et al., 2009). To this end, a mixed methods research design is adopted for this study.

Mixed methods research is defined as “the class of research, where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.17). It is grounded in the pragmatism research philosophy. Its pragmatic approach allows researchers to employ multi-methods to answer research questions that are not suited to mono-methods (Doyle, Brady, & Byrne, 2009).

The use of mixed methods in business and management related disciplines is increasingly an area of focus in the literature. A variety of studies focus on the incidence, usage and acceptance of mixed methods in business and management related disciplines (Harrison, 2013; Harrison & Reilly, 2011; Hurmerinta-Peltomaki & Nummela, 2006; Molina-Azorin, 2012). These studies highlight the use of mixed methods in marketing (Hanson & Grimmer, 2005; Harrison & Reilly, 2011), international business (Hurmerinta-Peltomaki & Nummela, 2006); business and management research (Cameron, 2011; Cameron & Molina-Azorin, 2011; Harrison, 2013; Molina-Azorin, 2009; Molina-Azorin, 2011); strategic management (Molina-Azorin, 2012; Molina-Azorin & Cameron, 2010), leadership (Stentz, Plano Clark, & Matkin, 2012), entrepreneurship (Molina-Azorin, Lopez-Gamero, Pereira-Moliner, & Pertusa-Ortega, 2012); and organisational science (Gibson, 2016). The outcome of these studies reflects a growing acceptance of mixed methods in business and management research.

To this end, the adoption of a mixed methods research design for this study is in congruence with growing acceptance of mixed methods in business and management research, as well as a response to a call for use of mixed methods in business and management studies by various scholars (for example, Cameron, 2011; Cameron & Molina-Azorin, 2011; Gibson, 2016). Additional reasons for adopting mixed methods are clarified in the ensuing section.

4.3.1.1 Rationale for the mixed methods research design

The purposes for which mixed-methods research designs serve in studies are prominently espoused in the literature. Greene, Benjamin and Goodyear (2001) noted that mixed methods research designs afford a "greater reduction in uncertainty" and attaining a "better understanding of a social phenomenon being studied" (p.30). This is achieved through (i) enhanced validity and credibility inferences; (ii) comprehensiveness of findings; (iii) insightful understandings; and (iv) increased value consciousness and diversity (Greene et al., 2001). In addition, mixed methods draw on the strengths of qualitative and quantitative techniques to minimise the weaknesses of each technique in single research studies (Bryman, 2006a; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004); enable researchers flexibility in techniques to address a range of research questions that arise; enable the symbiotic use of each method in informing the other (i.e. qualitative on quantitative and vice versa), help attain a deeper meaning and verification of findings from each method (Onwuegbuzie & Leech,

2005); and enhance the capacity for elaboration, generalisation, triangulation and interpretation (Gibson, 2016).

As argued by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005), since all social science research “attempts to understand human beings and the world around them” (p.381), “relying on one type of data (i.e. number of words) is extremely limiting” (p.384). Hence in mixed methods, researchers can make use of multiple data sets to enrich the outcome of findings (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

Furthermore, researchers use mixed methods for triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation and expansion purposes (Greene et al., 1989). A mixed methods research design with a triangulation intent seeks to achieve convergence, corroboration and correspondence of results from both qualitative and quantitative methods. This increases the validity of constructs and results by counteracting inherent method bias (Greene et al., 1989). Similarly, in complementarity, the researcher seeks for elaboration, enhancement, illustration and clarification of results from one method with results of the other method. This increases the interpretability, meaningfulness and validity of construct and results (Greene et al., 1989).

Likewise, Bryman (2006a) noted in his review of mixed methods studies that among other reasons, the top five reasons for using mixed methods are: enhancement (i.e. augmenting either qualitative or quantitative findings by gathering data, using a different approach), triangulation or greater validity (i.e. combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to triangulate and corroborate findings); completeness (i.e. bringing a more comprehensive account of an area of enquiry, in which a researcher is interested by using both quantitative and qualitative approaches); illustration (i.e. using qualitative data to illustrate quantitative findings); and sampling (i.e. using one approach to facilitate sampling of respondents or case).

In view of the espoused purposes, for which mixed methods research designs can serve, this study adopted a mixed methods research design primarily for convergence and corroboration of results from one method (i.e. quantitative) with results of the other method (qualitative). Thus, the mixed methods approach adopted in this study enables the examination of the nature of the hypothesised relationships between variables of interest, as well as the illumination of the behavioural mechanisms underlying the hypothesised relationships. Through convergence, corroboration and elaboration, meanings of tested hypotheses are corroborated with and clarified through interview results. This approach helps deepen the understanding of the relationships at hand. For

example, at a quantitative level, the nature of the relationships among the variables of interest in this study are explored. At a qualitative level, the behavioural mechanism underlying the relationships are further examined. This is done through a convergent parallel mixed methods research design explained in detail below.

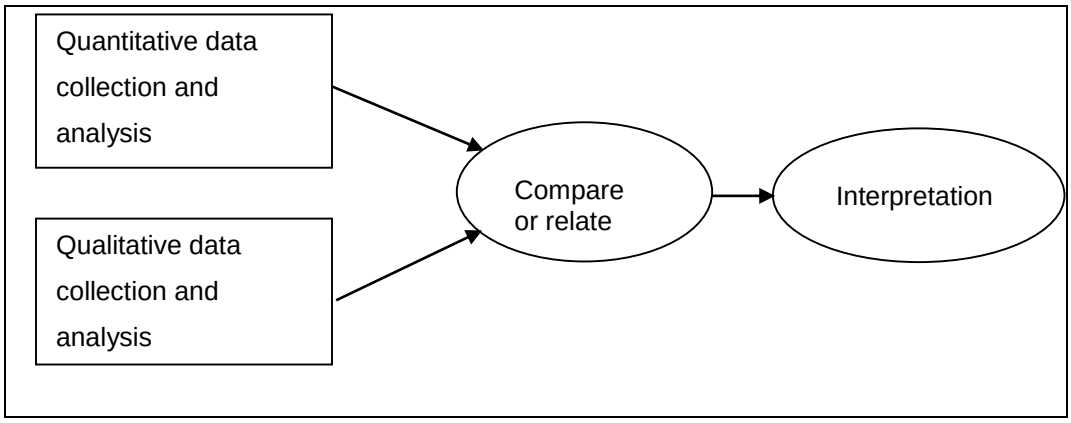
4.3.1.2 Convergent parallel mixed methods research design

With the rationale for mixed methods clarified above, it is essential to provide clarity on the chosen mixed methods research design. Among other reasons, the choice of the research design guides the researcher on how to proceed in designing their study to accomplish study goals (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006). As mixed methods combine qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single or multi-phased study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), various types of mixed methods research designs are espoused in the literature. These designs are primarily dependent on (i) priority, weight or status to the quantitative and qualitative aspects; (ii) the order, in which the researcher collects quantitative and qualitative data; (iii) numbers of phases in the study; and (iv) the level and time of interaction between quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Lopez-Fernandez & Molina-Azorin, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006). Among others, the major designs suggested in the literature include: sequential (i.e. explanatory, exploratory and transformative) and concurrent (i.e. triangulation, nested and

transformative) (Hanson, et al., 2005); sequential, concurrent, conversion and fully integrated (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006); convergent parallel, sequential (i.e. exploratory and explanatory), embedded, transformative and multiphase (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Arguably, these typologies of mixed methods designs are not exhaustive due to "their (the designs') capacity to mutate into other diverse forms" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006, p.13).

For the purposes of this study, a convergent parallel design is adopted. A convergent parallel design, as shown in Figure 3, involves the use of quantitative and qualitative methods equally but independently during data collection and analysis. Quantitative and qualitative results are then mixed during the overall interpretation (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The typical philosophical foundation for a convergent parallel design is pragmatism (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Figure 3 : Convergent parallel mixed-methods design



Source: Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011

Arguably, a convergent parallel design aids triangulation by "directly comparing and contrasting quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings for corroboration and validation purposes" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p.77). Additionally, a convergent parallel design enables "synthesizing complementary quantitative and qualitative results to develop a more complete understanding of a phenomenon" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p.77). Furthermore, a convergent design offsets the weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative methods by drawing on the strengths of both and brings together a more comprehensive account, thus enhancing the integrity of findings (Harrison & Reilly, 2011). Thus, the convergent parallel mixed methods design adopted for this study enables convergence, corroboration and elaboration of results. The meanings of tested hypotheses are corroborated with and clarified through interview results.

A variety of business studies use convergent designs (Adobor, 2005; Coelho & Easingwood, 2008; Coulter, Price, & Feick, 2003; Gomez & Ranft, 2003; Luomala, 2008; Mathwick et al., 2008; Schelfhaudt & Crittenden, 2005; Voorhees et al., 2006). In these studies, quantitative and qualitative data are collected, analysed separately and integrated into the discussion of findings. For example, in examining relational norms that determine social capital in virtual communities, Mathwick et al. (2008) collected online survey data as well as observational data through netnography. They analysed the data sets separately and integrated the results in their discussion of findings. Similarly, Voorhees et al. (2006), in exploring why customers, who experience dissatisfactory service, do not complain, used a critical incident survey, which collected both quantitative and qualitative data. The collected data were analysed separately and integrated into the discussion of the findings to inform the outcome of the study.

4.4 Population of the study

For research purposes, a population is defined within the context of a particular focus of a study. A population is thus defined as a set of all members or a total collection of elements, about which a study intends to make inferences (Albright, Winston, & Zappe, 2006; Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Thus, members or elements of a defined population share some common characteristics that are of interest to the study. For the purposes of this study, the population comprises middle managers employed by medium-sized enterprises in South Africa. While

there are numerous views on what constitutes middle management, in the context of this study, middle managers are those managers, who operate one or two levels below top or executive management (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). The choice of the middle manager as a unit study is clarified in Chapter One.

4.5 The sample for study

From a defined population, an element within the population is identified for data collection purposes. Such population element is, therefore, the unit of analysis; a subject, on which measurement is taken (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Where it is not possible to collect data from the entire population, owing to restrictions such as time, costs, speed of data collection, and access or availability of population elements, large size of many populations, sampling techniques may be used in defining an appropriate sample (Coldwell & Herbst, 2004; Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Saunders et al., 2009). A sample, therefore, is a selection of some elements of the population, from which conclusions can be drawn about the entire population (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

As is common with studies that involve organisations, sampling is in two parts (Saunders et al., 2009). First, there is the selection of the organisations to study, and second, a selection of the specific group of employees in the organisations as the unit of analysis. Therefore, in the first instance, 7 out of the 20 purposively selected companies agreed to participate in the study. The rationale for focusing this study on these companies is clarified in section 4.5.3 below.

Saunders et al. (2009) suggested that after choosing the organisations, the second part is the selection of the specific group of employees in the organisations as the unit of analysis. For this study, the unit of analysis was middle managers. The sampling frame, being the complete list of all the cases in the population from which a sample is drawn (Saunders et al., 2009), consisted of 236 middle managers employed by the 7 South African companies that agreed to participate in the study.

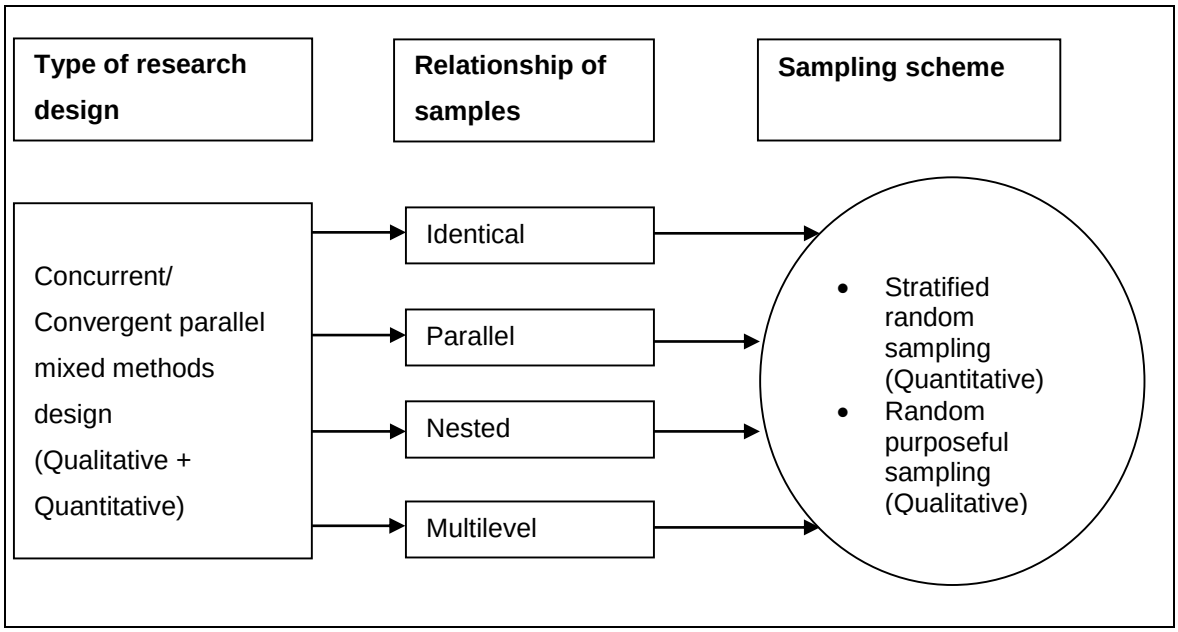
It is common practice, owing to restrictions such as time, costs, speed of data collection, and access or availability of population elements (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Saunders et al., 2009) to choose a sample, from which data is collected. Additionally, sampling has implications for generalisation of research outcomes to the population, from which a sample is chosen (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006).

Within mixed methods research design, various sampling schemes are suggested that are appropriate for each design (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao, 2006; Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao, 2007; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007; Teddlie & Yu, 2007). As illustrated in Figure 4, the suggested sampling schemes are primarily informed by the time orientation of mixed methods design, i.e. concurrent or sequential, and the relationship between quantitative and qualitative samples, i.e. identical, parallel, nested or multilevel (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). First, an identical relationship indicates that the same sample is

used for both quantitative and qualitative studies. Second, a parallel relationship indicates that the samples for both qualitative and quantitative studies are drawn from the same population of interest. Third, a nested sample is when a sample for one phase of the study, for example, qualitative study, is a subset of a sample for another phase, for example, quantitative study. Lastly, a multilevel relationship involves use of multiple samples extracted from different populations (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007).

In addition to time orientation and the relationship between samples, the purposes for choosing mixed methods, such as triangulation, complementarity, development, enhancement, initiation and expansion (Greene et al., 1989), informs the choice of an appropriate sampling scheme (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). As noted by Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007), a concurrent nested sampling design is appropriate for triangulation and complementarity purposes. Therefore, a nested sampling design was adopted for this study. As noted above, in the nested sampling framework, sample members selected for one phase of the study, for example, qualitative study, represent a subset of participants chosen for the other facet of investigation; for example, a quantitative study (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Such a sampling design is appropriate for this study as it combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to triangulate and corroborate findings. In addition, a nested sampling design enhances complementarity through illustration, and clarification of results from quantitative study with results of the qualitative study.

Figure 4 : Sampling model for a convergent parallel mixed-methods design



Source: Adapted from Onwuegbuzie & Collins (2007).

4.5.1 The sample for the quantitative study

In accordance with the nested sampling model above, the process for determining the appropriate quantitative and qualitative samples is explained below. This process is guided by views in the literature on appropriate sample sizes. Various views on appropriate sample sizes are commonly expressed in the literature. Even minimum sample sizes for quantitative studies are suggested, such as 64 participants for one-tailed hypotheses and 82 for two-tailed hypotheses in correlational research designs (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007), 100 participants (Bailey, 1987), and a range from 44 to 9 595 participants, depending on population size and level of margin of error (Saunders et al., 2009). Even a formulaic approach to sample size determination is suggested in the literature (Bartlett, Kotrlik, & Higgins, 2001; Boyd, Gove, & Hitt, 2005; Saunders

et al., 2009). The formulaic approach results in what is considered to be an adequate sample size after adjusting for expected response rates. However, the formulaic approach has limitations in that it is convenient in instances, where the population is significantly large to accommodate the calculated sample size.

Consistent with the suggested sample sizes above, an initial sample of 82 participating managers was adopted for this study. However, taking into account that potential respondents generally opt out of completing questionnaires for various reasons (Bailey 1987; Baruch & Holton, 2008; Saunders et al., 2009) and the fact that survey response rates in organisational research average 52% for individuals and 37% for organisational response (Baruch & Holton, 2008), the initial sample of 82 was adjusted to 205, assuming a minimum of a 40% estimated response rate for this study. Therefore, the sample size for this study was 205 middle managers. While the Baruch and Holton (2008) study on response rates considers, among other issues, individual and organisational response rates for organisational studies published in major business journals, it does not deal with response rates by geography or territory. Response rates, therefore, may differ from country to country; hence, this study assumed a 40% response rate for the South African environment.

In accordance with the above mixed methods sampling model in Figure 4, stratified sampling was adopted for this study. Stratified sampling involves dividing the sampling frame into subsets or strata, from which a random sample

is selected (Saunders et al., 2009). Each participating organisation therefore represented a subset of the sampling frame, from which a random sample of middle managers was selected.

In determining an appropriate sample for the quantitative phase of the study, the proportionate stratified sampling process was followed. In proportionate stratified sampling, the sample drawn from each stratum is in proportion to the stratum's share of the population (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The benefits of stratified sampling include a higher statistical efficiency and self-weighting in samples (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). First, as shown in Table 7, a proportion of managers that each company contributed to the sampling frame was calculated by expressing each organisation's total number of managers in the sampling frame as a percentage of the sampling frame (i.e. the total of 236 managers). Second, this percentage was applied to the preferred sample size of 205 managers to determine the number of managers that each organisation contributed to the preferred sample. Third, using Microsoft Excel, a random sample was undertaken for each organisation to select the number of managers that made up the sample to which a survey questionnaire was distributed.

Table 7 : Stratified random sample for quantitative study

Unique identifier for participating organisation*	Middle managers in sampling frame	% of middle managers in sample	Preferred quantitative stratified random sample
PO1	61	25.80%	53
PO2	25	10.60%	22
PO3	30	12.70%	26
PO4	36	15.30%	31**
PO5	52	22.00%	45
PO6	25	10.60%	22
PO7	7	3.00%	6
Total	236	100.00%	205
* Actual names of organisations retained for confidentiality reasons ** Withdrew from study after survey had been distributed to the stratified sample			

Compiled by author

4.5.1.1 Response rate; general and demographic characteristics of the sample

As shown in Table 8, the initial stratified sample constituted 205 middle managers from the 7 organisations that agreed to participate in the study. However, 31 of the 205 middle managers, who constituted the stratified sample, were withdrawn by their organisation. The withdrawal was necessitated by the fact that the organisation had entered the busiest period of its business cycle and could no longer find time to participate in the study. Therefore, the survey questionnaire was not distributed to these

managers. Because of the withdrawal of one organisation at a time that the online survey was being distributed to the participating organisations, the sample was not reconstituted. As a result, the original stratified sample was reduced from 205 to 174. Of the 174 middle managers to whom the online survey was distributed, 101 participants completed the survey, resulting in a response rate of 49.3% from the original sample of 205. However, considering the reduced sample of 174, a 58% response rate was achieved. In comparison to the benchmark of 52% survey response rates for individuals in organisational research (Baruch & Holt, 2008), the achieved response rate of 58% for this study was considered satisfactory. Additionally, the 101 respondents for this study exceeded a minimum benchmark of 82 participants suggested for correlational studies (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007).

Table 8 : Response rate

	Sample size	**Total number of respondents**	**Percentage (%)**
Original sample	205	101	49.3
Final sample *	174	101	58.0
** One organisation withdrew from the study, thus reducing the original stratified sample by 31*			

Compiled by author

.

Data on the basic general and demographic characteristics of the respondents were collected. These characteristics include respondent's gender, age, tenure with the organisation and highest formal educational qualification. As shown in Table 9 below, 52.5% of the respondents were male and 47.5% were female.

Table 9 : Respondents' gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	53	52.5
Female	48	47.5
Total	101	100.0

Compiled by author

For convenient presentation of the respondent's age profile, as shown in Table 10, an effort was made to represent such information by selected age categories for this study. Of these categories, the highest proportion of managers were within the 18-40 years age band (i.e. 42.6%). The smallest proportion of managers was above 55 years old (i.e. 5%). The remaining managers were almost equally distributed within other age categories: 18.8% for 41-45 years, 16.8% for 46-50 years and 16.8% for 51-55 years.

Table 10 : Respondents' age

Age category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-40 years	43	42.6
41-45 years	19	18.8
46-50 years	17	16.8
51-55 years	17	16.8
Above 55 years	5	5.0
Total	101	100.0

Compiled by author

In addition to gender and age profiles, the respondents' tenure with the organisation is shown below in Table 11. As shown in Table 11, fewer managers fell within the 2-4 years tenure category (i.e. 12.9%). A sizeable proportion fell within the 5-7 years (i.e. 26.7%) and more than 10 years (i.e. 30.7%) categories. The other categories accounted for the balance of 12.9% and 16.8% for the 2-4 years and 8-10 years categories, respectively. Therefore, 74.2% of managers have been with their organisation for a minimum of 5 years. Their experience of the organisation over time has the potential to shape their affective commitment to the organisation and their perceived level of psychological empowerment.

Table 11 : Respondents' tenure with the organisation

Tenure with the organisation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 2 years	13	12.9
2-4 years	13	12.9
5-7 years	27	26.7
8-10 years	17	16.8
More than 10 years	31	30.7
Total	101	100.0

Compiled by author

Lastly, one of the demographic considerations taken into account in this study is the respondents' highest formal educational qualification. Table 12 shows that the highest proportion of participants have a Bachelor / Honours degree (45.5%), followed by those, who have a Diploma (22.8%). 9.9% of participants have a Master's degree. Surprisingly, 21.8% of participants have only a Matric qualification. However, in total, 78.2% of participants have post-Matric qualifications in the form of a Diploma, Bachelor / Honour's or Master's degree. None of the participants reported having a Doctoral degree.

Table 12 : Respondents' highest formal educational qualification

Highest formal qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Matric	22	21.8
Diploma	23	22.8
Bachelor/Honour's degree	46	45.5
Master's degree	10	9.9
Doctoral degree	0	0
Total	101	100.0

Compiled by author

4.5.2 Sample for the qualitative study

The sampling for the qualitative study was conducted in line with the nested sampling model adopted above (Figure 4 above). In this study, the sample for the qualitative phase of the study is a subset of the sample for the quantitative phase of the study. Yin (2006) posited that in order to maintain a single study within mixed methods, "desirably, the samples of each method may be nested within that of the other" (p.44). The use of a sub-sample from the quantitative sample for the qualitative study aids triangulation and complementarity in findings. As posited by Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006), nesting of samples enhances sample integration legitimation, in which meta-inferences may be constructed.

The adequacy of a sample size for a qualitative study is a contested matter within the literature. While some scholars argued for smaller purposive samples

(Sandelowski, 1995), others posited that larger samples are more preferable (Sandelowski, 1995; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) argued that qualitative samples should not be too small to inhibit "data saturation, theoretical saturation and informational redundancy" (p.289). On the other hand, Sandelowski (1995) posited that qualitative samples should not be too large to inhibit deeper analysis. Depending on research design, sampling design, and data collection procedure for a qualitative study, Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) noted that sample sizes may range from as small a sample as 3 to 5 participants for a case study, up to 15 to 20 for grounded theory. In this study, an initial sample of 30 middle managers was adopted. Such sample size is neither too small nor too large a sample and enables "data saturation, theoretical saturation and informational redundancy" (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007, p.289).

Since the preferred sample of 30 managers was nested within the quantitative sample, it was determined by considering the proportion that each company contributed to the quantitative sample. Thus, Table 13 shows the make-up of the preferred stratified and random sample of 30 managers for the qualitative study. Because this study was based on volitional participation by middle managers, all managers selected for the quantitative study (174 after the withdrawal of PO4) were requested to participate in the interviews. However, only 24 managers agreed to be interviewed. Hence, no further random sampling was undertaken for the qualitative study. Thus, the final sample for the qualitative part of the study was 24 managers as shown in Table 14 below. Though the preferred sample of

30 was not achieved, a final sample of 24 middle managers was considered adequate for this study.

Table 13 : Stratified and random purposeful sample for qualitative study

Unique identifier for organisation	**Middle managers in quantitative sample**	**% of middle managers in sample**	**Preferred qualitative random sample**
PO1	53	30.5%	9
PO2	22	12.6%	5
PO3	26	15.0%	4
PO4	0	0.0% (withdrew from study)	0 (withdrew from study)
PO5	45	25.9%	8
PO6	22	12.6%	4
PO7	6	3.4%	1
Total	174	100.0%	30

Compiled by author

Table 14 : Final purposeful sample for qualitative study

Unique identifier for organisation	Middle managers in quantitative sample	Final purposive qualitative sample
PO1	53	9
PO2	22	5
PO3	26	3
PO4	0	0 (withdrew from study)
PO5	45	5
PO6	22	2
PO7	6	1
Total	174	24

Compiled by author

4.5.2.1 Brief demographic characteristic of the qualitative sample

The sample for the qualitative study constituted 24 middle managers from 6 participating companies. Of the 24 middle managers participating in the study, 9 were women (37.5%) and 15 were men (62.5%). These participants occupied a variety of roles, broadly categorised in Table 15 for the purposes of this study. The corresponding number reflects the number of participants in the category.

Table 15 : Participant's role in organisation

Role category	Number of participants
Legal and Compliance	2
Human Resources	3
Finance and Marketing	4
Operations and Information Technology	4
Business development and Client relationship management	11
Total	**24**

Compiled by author

4.5.3 Rationale for focusing the study on selected organisational participants

As clarified in section 4.5 above, sampling for studies that involve organisations is conducted in two parts (Saunders et al., 2009). First, there is a selection of the organisations to study, and second, a selection of the specific group of employees in the organisations as the unit of analysis. As clarified in section 4.5 above, 7 out of the 20 purposively-selected companies agreed to participate in the study. These privately-owned organisations are all in the financial services sector, specifically, the short-term insurance industry. The rationale for focusing the study on these organisation is clarified below.

First, the participating organisations are all located in Johannesburg, South Africa. As a self-funding and part-time student who is permanently employed, the

author's limited available time and costs associated with travelling constrained the consideration of including organisations outside of the Johannesburg area.

Second, besides the author's familiarity with the insurance industry, having been an employee within the insurance industry for more than twenty years, the author's relationships with senior executives led to the choice of the companies and enabled the granting of permission to use the organisations.

Third, the participating organisations are medium-sized to large companies, whose organisational structures offer a clear delineation for the middle manager compared to large conglomerates, in which the middle management level is often blurred within group structures. In general, the characterisation of organisations is territorially and legislatively determined (Abor & Quartey, 2010; Smit & Watkins, 2012). In South Africa, the level of revenue, number of permanently-employed staff and the industry sector, in which an entity falls informs its classification (Abor & Quartey, 2010; Mahembe, 2011). For example, a medium-sized organisation in the financial services sector would be categorised as such if it employs no more than 200 permanent staff and its revenue does not exceed R26 million, as prescribed in the South African's National Small Business Act 102 of 1996, as amended in 2003 and 2004. However, such a matrix approach has its own limitations as organisation's revenue levels and number of permanent employees do not always precisely match the legislatively-defined permutations. Though the participating organisations do not precisely match the

legislatively-defined permutation, for the purposes of this study, they are treated as medium-sized organisations for the following reasons: (i) the permanent staff employed by these organisations ranged from 100 to 300; (ii) they did not have subsidiary or branch structures and operated from one location; and (iii) they had clearly delineated organisational structures, in which the middle manager was clearly defined. Further, as medium-sized companies, these organisations have to survive cut-throat competition from large, local and international conglomerates. Their competitive marketplace requires astute formulation and effective execution of dynamic strategies to survive.

Fourth, the author's consideration of medium-sized companies within the short-term insurance industry was informed by the challenging environmental factors that such organisations face. Such environmental factors include significant regulatory changes, the impact of disruptive technologies, social changes and the evolution of customer expectations (PwC, 2014, 2018; Fitzgerald & Williams, 2019; Friedman, Mais, Canaan, & Gokhale, 2019). These environmental factors require the insurance industry to develop and implement appropriate responsive strategies. Thus, middle managers in these organisations, as sense-makers (Balogun, 2003; Rouleau, 2005; Weick et al., 2005) and sense-givers (Smith et al., 2010; Rouleau, 2005), carry the burden of ensuring that intended or deliberate strategies are effectively executed. These companies, therefore, offered an interesting environment to explore the variables under study.

4.6 Data collection instruments and process

Yin (2006) posited that different types of instruments may be used for mixed methods "as each method's preferred instrumentation is central to the method itself" (p.44). Accordingly, this study used a self-administered survey questionnaire and interviews for data collection. Yin (2006) proposed that there should be an overlap of items in different instruments to ensure that the mixed methods are part of a single study. This study adopted Yin's (2006) proposal by ensuring that semi-structured interviews carry some of the key themes in the self-administered survey questionnaire.

4.6.1 Ethical considerations

Since this study involved human participants, careful consideration had to be given to the possibility for physical or psychological harm, exploitation, invasion of privacy or loss of dignity (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). To safeguard study participants against any potential harm or loss of privacy, Cooper and Schindler (2003) suggested three guidelines that a researcher can follow. These are: (i) explaining the benefits of the study to the participants, (ii) explaining the participants' rights and protections, and (iii) obtaining the participant's informed consent. These three guidelines were adopted for this study as clarified below.

In line with the university guidelines, prior to collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, the appropriate approval was sought from and granted by the Wits University's Ethics Committee (see Appendix I – Ethics Clearance

Certificate, Protocol Number H14/11/45). The approval, through the issuance of a clearance certificate, confirmed that the questionnaire and interview questions met the University's ethical standards.

In line with Cooper and Schindler's (2003) suggestions, the purpose and benefits of the study were explained to participants prior to obtaining their informed consent. Prior to starting the interview, participants were requested by the author to sign a statement, acknowledging that they willingly and voluntarily consent to the interview (see Appendix H – Participant's consent for interview). The informed consent declaration clarified the participant's rights and protections such as the fact that the information provided by the participant was to be used solely for research purposes. Further, it was brought to the attention of the participants that all data collected during the interview remained confidential and could not be ascribed to any participant's identity in the study. Furthermore, participants were made aware that, since their participation was strictly voluntary, they could terminate the interview at any point if they wished to do so. Participants were also made aware that should they feel or experience any harm or unethical conduct on the part of the author, before, during or after the interview, they were at liberty to report such experience to the authors' academic study leader, whose email and telephone number were provided to the participants.

For the quantitative study, participants had to consent to voluntary participation in the survey. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants were required to indicate that their participation was voluntary and acknowledge that their participation was subject to their identity remaining anonymous throughout the research study (see Appendix F). They were also made aware that if they experienced any harm or unethical conduct on the part of the author during or after the process of data collection, they were at liberty to report such experience to the authors' academic study leader through the email and telephone number provided.

4.6.2 Quantitative study

In the quantitative study, cross-sectional primary data to test formulated hypotheses were obtained by means of an online survey questionnaire, using the Kwiksurvey facility (www.kwiksurveys.com). The choice of the survey questionnaire was based on its prevalence in quantitative studies and dynamic analysis of data (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Avolio et al., 2004; Jha, 2011; Parnell, 2008; Parnell et al., 2002). Its advantages are that it is a low-cost option that allows contact with otherwise inaccessible respondents, and its perceived anonymity allows respondents to think through the questions or statements being considered (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

The survey questionnaire (Appendix F) comprises sections that deal with (i) respondents' brief demographic details; (ii) perceptions of affective

organisational commitment; (iii) perceptions of psychological empowerment; and (iv) perceived levels of commitment to strategy implementation.

Affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment, and the commitment to strategy implementation, are all based on existing prominent and credible instruments, whose application is common within the literature across a variety of samples and geographies. For example, items that address respondents' perceptions of affective organisational commitment are based on Meyer and Allen's (1997) Affective Organisational Commitment Scales. In a similar manner, items on psychological empowerment are based on Spreitzer's (1995) Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire. Lastly, items that deal with the commitment to strategy implementation are based on Parnell et al.'s (2002) Strategic Diffusion Scale, but only for items dealing with the commitment to strategy implementation. As clarified in Appendix A, the choice of the above instruments is informed by their proven reliability in several studies across different geographic areas.

The survey was set up and successfully tested for online accessibility and proper functionality. A pilot study was undertaken to further test online accessibility, proper functionality, clarity of questions, completeness of completion (i.e. Did the questionnaire allow items or questions to be skipped? Was there email notifications of completion, and instrument reliability?). After the pilot was undertaken, the main survey was launched online and the author asked the

coordinating company representative to distribute the link internally to selected individuals constituting the stratified and random sample. The first reminder was sent after two weeks, and the second reminder was sent after a month. The online survey was closed a month after its launch.

The results below show the internal consistency / reliability level of the instruments used in data collection. As indicated, one questionnaire was used, containing different variables: affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment, and the commitment to strategy implementation. Each variable had its own instrument, whose reliability is shown in below. The Cronbach's alpha was used as measure of internal consistency for each instrument. Thus, the results of the calculated alpha, using SPSS, were 0.800 for affective organisational commitment, 0.893 for psychological empowerment, and 0.679 for the commitment to strategy implementation. Despite the Cronbach's alpha for commitment to strategy implementation (i.e. 0.679) being lower than 0.700, the instrument is considered reliable as shown in prior use in different samples and geographies as clarified in Appendix A.

4.6.3 Qualitative study

In seeking to establish how middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) influence their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy, data for the qualitative study were collected through semi-structured interviews. Cooper and Schindler (2003) defined a personal interview (i.e. face-to-face

communication) as “a two-way conversation initiated by an interviewer to obtain information from a participant, with pronounced differences in roles between interviewer and participant, where the interviewer gains and generally controls the topics and patterns of discussion” (p.323). The choice of the personal interview was based on its advantages. Such advantages include the good cooperation from respondents, which can result in depth of information and detail being secured (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). In addition, the interviewer can clarify questions, use follow-up questions and gather information by observation (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Furthermore, interviews are insightful as they provide perceived causal inferences (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

Though interviews have some advantages, they also have weaknesses: time constraints for both interviewer and interviewee, follow-ups may not be possible, bias due to poorly constructed questions, and response bias (Cooper & Schindler (2003). However, some of the weaknesses were addressed through the review of the questions by the thesis supervisor, Prof D. Coldwell, as well as approval by the Wits Ethics committee. In addition, the questions were pilot-tested for clarity.

In the main, the interviews conducted with middle managers consisted of open-ended questions focusing on uncovering their role in strategy implementation; and how their psychological states (i.e. affective commitment to their organisation and psychological empowerment) influenced their commitment to

the implementation of their organisation's strategy. In addition, the interviews explored middle managers' motives for implementing the strategy; antecedent conditions for their affective attachment to the organisation as well their behavioural demonstration of the commitment to strategy implementation.

4.7 Data analysis

Data analysis within a mixed methods study involves using quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques either concurrently or sequentially in analysing collected data, and in which interpretations can be made in parallel, integrated or iteratively (Onwuegbuzie, Slate, Leech, & Collins, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006). While data analysis in mixed methods may consists of separate analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, using quantitative and qualitative methods, respectively; ultimately, further analysis should involve "analysing both sets of information, using techniques that 'mix' the quantitative and qualitative data and results" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p.203).

Several scholars have suggested techniques or strategies for mixed methods data analysis. Some of these techniques or strategies include: data transformation, typology development, extreme case analysis, data consolidation or merging (Caracelli & Greene, 1993), and parallel mixed-data analysis, conversion mixed-data analysis, sequential mixed-data analysis, multilevel mixed-data analysis, fully integrated mixed-data analysis, and application of analytic frameworks of one tradition to the other (Teddlie &

Tashakkori, 2009). Even mixed methods data analysis techniques specific to each type of mixed methods design are suggested (for example, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In this study, the parallel mixed methods data analyses were adopted. Parallel mixed methods data analyses involve two separate processes, i.e. quantitative and qualitative data analyses, using appropriate quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques, respectively (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Though each analysis provides an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, such understandings are integrated into meta-inferences (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). As shown in Figure 3 above, the collected quantitative and qualitative data were analysed independently, and the results were then mixed during overall interpretation, in line with Creswell and Plano Clark's (2011) suggested strategy of merging data analysis to compare results. In addition, Coldwell's (1985, 2007) dialectical analysis was used. This method enables the corroboration of quantitative and qualitative findings. It is clarified in more detail in section 4.7.3 below. Each of the sections below, therefore, addresses the details of the strategies adopted for quantitative, qualitative and integrative data analysis.

4.7.1 Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data analysis involves the "numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect" (Babbie, 2004, p.396). In this study,

data collected through an online survey was considered primarily quantitative. Therefore, the quantitative analysis of such data was guided by suggested protocols or steps in the literature (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). For example, in analysing quantitative data, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) suggested steps that can be followed. These steps include: (i) preparing the data for analysis; (ii) exploring the data; and (iii) analysing the data. As argued by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), preparing the data for analysis allows the researcher to convert raw data into a form useful for analysis, check for errors and create special variables, where needed. In this study, data preparation involved (i) downloading individual responses from the Kwiksurvey facility, which was used for the online survey; (ii) checking each participant's response across the 30 items on the questionnaire against the email responses from Kwiksurvey facility; (iii) checking for blanks or incomplete responses; (iv) rescoring reversed items on the survey; (vi) calculating the overall score of multi-item variables such as mean and median scores; and (vii) reorganising the randomised items on the online questionnaire back into the initial order before the randomisation. The responses to specific items on the questionnaire dealing with each variable were regrouped into that variable, namely: (i) affective organisational commitment; (ii) psychological empowerment; and (iii) the commitment to strategy implementation.

Following on from data preparation is the exploration of data. Exploring the data in quantitative data analysis consists of "visually inspecting the data and

conducting a descriptive analysis (the mean, standard deviation and variance of responses to each item on instruments or checklist) to determine the general trend in the data" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p.206). Exploring the data guides the choice of analysis (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). In this study, exploring the data involved calculating the response rate for the participants of the study and creating frequency tables for demographic data and other attributes of participants. Additionally, measures of central tendency and dispersion, such as the mean, median, mode and standard deviation for each variable were determined. Furthermore, the data collected for each variable were assessed to determine, whether they were approximately normally distributed. Assessing normality of the distribution of each variable was done through three common interrelated approaches, namely: graphical methods (for example histograms with normal curves superimposed and normal-quartile [Q-Q] plots), numerical methods to determining skewness and kurtosis; and normality tests, using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests.

The next step undertaken after exploring the data was analysing the data. This consisted of analysing the data based on research questions or hypotheses, using appropriate statistical tests (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In this study, parametric methods of data analysis were used to explore the nature of the relationships between the variables of interest. The parametric methods used in this study included correlation, multiple regression and path analyses.

Though parametric tests were applied to Likert-type scaled data in this study, recognition was given to the fact that basic assumptions for such statistical methods were considered. The key assumptions for parametric tests are that the data must be interval or ratio-scaled and should be approximately normally distributed (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Razali & Wah, 2011). The violation to these assumptions may lead parametric statistics that are suspect and invalid inferences and conclusions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Razali & Wah, 2011). In this study, data obtained for predictor and dependent variables were based on 7-point Likert-type scale responses. There are arguments in the literature on whether Likert-type scaled data can be subjected to parametric tests or not (Carifio & Perla, 2008; Jamieson, 2004; Norman, 2010; Sullivan & Artino, 2013). The core of the argument is that such data are predominantly presumed to be ordinal due to the ordering of the responses (for example, from 1 to 5 or from 1 to 7) without equal distance presumed between the responses (Jamieson, 2004; Norman, 2010), and as such should only be subjected to non-parametric methods of analysis (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Jamieson, 2004; Kuzon, Urbanchek & McCabe, 1996).

However, many published articles in peer-reviewed journals employed parametric analysis of Likert-type scaled data (Allen & Meyer, 1991; Parnell, 2008; Spreitzer, 1996; Zeffane & Al Zaroomi, 2012) despite views to the contrary. The continued publication of such articles by reputable peer-reviewed journals is an indication that parametric analysis is generally an acceptable practice within

various research communities. Moreso, without much being offered in terms of how much violation of statistical assumptions increase the chance of an erroneous conclusion, it would seem prudent to apply the more powerful parametric methods due to the robustness of such methods even under the violation of statistical assumptions (Edgell & Noon, 1984; Fowler, 1987; Norman, 2010). Even Cooper and Schindler (2003) argued that a non-parametric test of a sample of 100 will provide the same statistical power as a parametric test a sample of 95. Furthermore, it is considered acceptable to apply parametric techniques to Likert-type scaled data, if the basis of such practice is clarified and if data is of appropriate size and shape (Pell, 2005).

In view of the above arguments, this study applied parametric tests to Likert-scaled data because such tests offer a more dynamic analysis (Norman, 2010). In addition, the data were obtained from a sizable sample of 101 participants, which negated the violation assumption. Furthermore, as shown in the next chapter, the tests of normality undertaken fairly indicated that the collected data for variables of interest in this study were approximately normally distributed.

Arguably, a descriptive statistical summary provides a “preliminary step leading to an understanding of the data collected” (Cooper & Schindler, 2003, p.455). Descriptive statistics not only enable description and comparison of variables numerically (Saunders et al., 2009), but also serve to describe a body of data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In addition to descriptive statistical analysis, inferential

analysis is also undertaken to test the formulated hypotheses. Specifically, bivariate / zero order correlation and partial correlation analyses are undertaken to test appropriate null hypotheses. Correlation coefficients quantify the strength of linear relationships between two ranked or numerical variables (Saunders et al., 2009). Thus, in this study, the Pearson's product moment of correlation was used to assess the strength of the relationship between variables of interest.

As posited by Crawshaw and Chambers (1991), two tests can be performed, depending on the alternative hypothesis being made. These are one-tailed or two-tailed tests. Because the alternative hypotheses in this study are directional in that they are specific on the presumed or anticipated nature of relationships between variables (i.e. positive association), the basis of acceptance or rejection of each null hypothesis is a one-tailed test at a 5% level of significance testing ($\alpha = 0.05$). As posited by Cooper and Schindler (2003), a one-tailed test is a directional test, which "places the unlikely outcome into a tail specified by the alternative hypothesis" (p.524). Thus, a one-tailed test was conducted for this study. Therefore, at a 5% level of significance testing, the null hypothesis is rejected, if the calculated *p*-value statistic (shown as Sig. in SPSS tables) is less than 0.05 (i.e. $p < 0.05$) and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

As per the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 23 tutorial, bivariate correlation procedure computes Pearson's correlation coefficient, which measures a linear association between two variables. Likewise, as explained in the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 23 tutorial, a partial correlations procedure computes partial

correlation coefficients that describe the linear relationship between two variables, while controlling for the effects of one or more additional variables. As this study considers the role of affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment on the commitment to strategy implementation, partial correlation analysis was undertaken to assess the nature and strength of the relationships between the independent variables (affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) and the dependent variable (the commitment to strategy implementation). In this regard, a partial correlation procedure allows for assessing the nature and strength of the relationship between managerial psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) and the commitment to strategy implementation, while controlling for the effects of formal qualifications, age, gender and tenure with the organisation.

In addition to correlational analysis, multiple regression and observed variable path analyses were undertaken. While correlational analysis provides the nature, direction and strength of the relationships between variables (Meyers et al., 2006; Miller, Acton, Fullerton, & Maltby, 2002), multiple regression analysis assumes that independent variables are, at least in part, a cause or predictor of the dependent variable (Jaccard & Turrisi, 2003; Meyers et al., 2006; Miller et al., 2002). Thus, multiple regression analysis was undertaken to test the predictive role of affectional organisational commitment and psychological empowerment in the commitment to the implementation of a business strategy.

Using the Enter Method in SPSS, a multiple linear regression analysis was undertaken to predict middle managers' commitment to the implementation of their organisation's strategy based on their affective attachment to their organisation as well as their perceived level of psychological empowerment. As per IBM SPSS Version 23 tutorial, the Enter Method is a procedure for variable selection, in which all the variables in a block are entered in a single step; for example, entering paired independent variables (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) in a single step for the corresponding dependent variable (i.e. the commitment to strategy implementation).

As recommended by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010), it is essential to examine, if assumptions for regression analysis are met prior to undertaking the analysis. This includes checks for normality, linearity, multicollinearity and the impact of outliers. As suggested by Hair et al. (2010), the scores for each variable were converted to z-scores, using SPSS and all scores outside of the range of -2.5 to 2.5 were treated as outliers and therefore removed. This reduced the sample from 101 to 92.

Multiple regression analysis informed the observed variable path analysis undertaken for this study. Observed variable path analysis, a type of structural equation modelling (Pituch & Stevens, 2016; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014), "is an extension of multiple regression analysis, in which relationships among

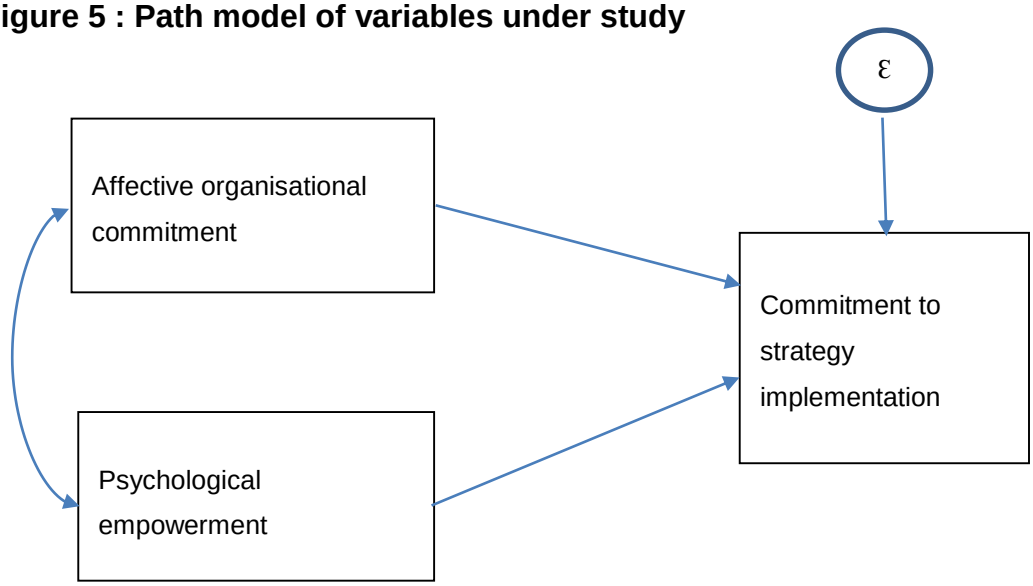
measured variables may be modelled" (Pituch & Stevens, 2016, p.663). Arguably, path analysis, as a pattern of interpretation, "is invaluable in making explicit the rationale for a set of regression calculations" (Duncan, 1966, p.7). It involves the estimation of presumed causal relationships among observable variables (Kline, 2005). Path analysis estimates the strength of each relationship depicted in a path diagram, utilising a correlation or covariance matrix as input (Hair et al., 2010). The path coefficients, as statistical estimates of direct effects, are interpreted as regression coefficients in multiple regression (Alwin & Hauser, 1975; Duncan, 1966; Kline, 2005); especially the beta weights associated with predictor variables in the regression equation (Meyers et al., 2006). As defined, the "*direct effect* of one variable on another is simply that part of its total effect which is not transmitted via the intervening variables" (Alwin & Hauser, 1975, p.39). Thus, a direct effect will "tell us how much change in a consequent variable is induced by a given shift in an antecedent variable, irrespective of the mechanisms by which the change may occur" (Alwin & Hauser, 1975, p.39).

In this study, a simple path model is constructed as shown in Figure 5 below. The theory behind the constructed path model and the basis of the hypothesised relationships, which this study sought to investigate, have been clarified earlier in this study (Chapters 2 and 3). Since a simple path model was adopted for this study, the direct effects of each independent variables on the dependent variable shall equate to the total effects of each independent variable. Therefore, path

analysis is suitable for analysing the direct effects of independent variables on the dependent variable in this study.

In this study, the path model of hypothesised direct effects is captured in Figure 5. In line with Meyers et al.'s (2006) suggestion on analysing path models, the multiple regression analysis procedure was used in the analysis of the strength of each relationship in the constructed path model (Figure 5). The path coefficients were derived from the multiple regression analysis undertaken. As shown in Figure 5, the direct effects of the independent variables, are reflected by straight one-directional arrows. As well, the correlation between the independent variables is shown by the double-headed arrow. The magnitude of the standardised coefficients was examined to determine "if the hypothesised causal model has any statistical viability (usually at 0.3 or greater)" (Meyers et al., 2006, p.590).

Figure 5 : Path model of variables under study



Source: Compiled by author

4.7.2 Qualitative data analysis

A variety of methods are available for qualitative data analysis. Such methods, among others, include: thematic analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012), ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, historical research (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), and content analysis (Cho & Lee, 2014; Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen, & Kyngäs, 2014; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Schreier, 2012). In this study, qualitative content analysis was used for analysing data collected from participants through open-ended interviews.

Qualitative content analysis is defined as a “research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1278). Similarly, Schreier (2012) defined qualitative content analysis as a “method for

systematically describing the meaning of qualitative material" by "classifying materials as instances of the categories of a coding frame" (p.1). As noted by Schreier (2012), qualitative content analysis is systematic, flexible and reduces data.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) proposed three approaches to qualitative content analysis, namely, conventional, directed and summative content analyses. Conventional content analysis is suited to a study that seeks to describe a phenomenon and is "appropriate, when existing theory or research literature on a phenomenon is limited" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1279). This approach is also known as the inductive content analysis (Mayring, 2000; 2014; Schreier, 2012). Directed content analysis is analysis guided by existing theory or prior research theory, seeking to "validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1281). This approach is also known as the deductive content analysis (Mayring, 2000; 2014; Schreier, 2012). Lastly, the summative content analysis "starts with identifying and quantifying certain words or content in text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use of the words or content" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1281). As is explained below, this study used a combined approach, i.e. inductive / deductive, in analysing the interview data predominantly guided by Schreier's (2012) procedure for qualitative content analysis.

The advantage of qualitative content analysis includes making inferences to multiple aspects: the communicator's experiences, opinions and feelings, situation of text production, socio-cultural background, the text itself or the effect of the message (Mayring, 2000). An additional advantage is that it is a step-by-step analysis procedure, in which categories of textual interpretations are guided by the research question (Mayring, 2000; Schreier, 2012).

The unique characteristics of qualitative content analysis are its flexibility to use either inductive and deductive approaches or a combination of both in data analysis, as well as its ability to extract manifest and latent content meaning (Cho & Lee, 2014). Because of its procedural similarities and overlaps with grounded theory (Cho & Lee, 2014; Schreier, 2012), qualitative content analysis can use some of the procedures of grounded theory such as open, axial and selective coding (Schreier, 2012).

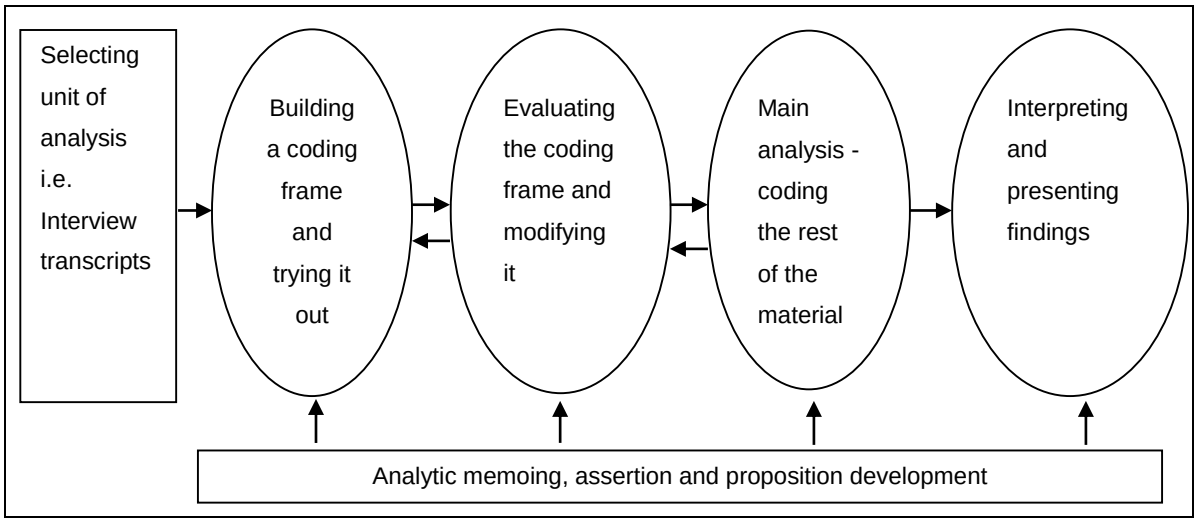
The purpose of the study guides the choice of approach: inductive or deductive qualitative content analysis (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). While the inductive approach is appropriate, when there is limited prior knowledge about the phenomenon; the deductive approach is suitable, when data analysis is based on prior knowledge and the purpose of the study is theory testing (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). Central to the inductive approach is the fact that aspects of interpretation, i.e. categories developed, should be as close to the material being analysed as possible (Mayring, 2000). Further, Graneheim and Lundman (2004) suggested that when

performing content analysis, researchers should decide on whether to focus on manifest or latent content or both. In manifest content analysis, the researcher focuses on what the text says, whereas in latent content analysis, the researcher focuses on the underlying meaning of the text. Therefore, in this study, a combined approach (i.e. inductive and deductive approaches) was adopted and particular attention given to both manifest and latent content. This approach is relevant in deepening the understanding whether middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) directly affect their commitment to the execution of their organisation's business strategy.

The qualitative content analysis approach adopted for this study was predominantly guided by Mayring's (2000, 2014) and Schreier's (2012) suggested procedures for qualitative data analysis. However, guidance was also taken from Guest et al.'s (2012) applied thematic analysis process in the construction of elements that make up the subcategories of the coding frame as discussed in the next chapter. Additionally, the analysis process was also influenced by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) and Yin's (2016) procedures for qualitative data analysis. Therefore, the resulting qualitative content analysis procedure adopted for the study is shown in Figure 6 and includes the following iterative steps: (i) selecting the unit of analysis (i.e interview transcripts); (ii) building the coding frame for the study guided by the research questions and interview guide and then trying it out in the pilot phase (i.e coding the first 10 of

the 24 interviews); (iii) evaluating the coding frame and modifying it accordingly guided by the outcome of the pilot phase; (iv) coding the entire interview scripts using the modified coding frame (i.e. resulting in the preliminary coding frame in Appendix D - Table 33) and constantly revising such codes, where necessary (i.e. resulting in the final coding frame in Appendix D - Table 34); and (iv) finally, interpreting and presenting the results.

Figure 6 : Qualitative content analysis procedure adopted for the study



Source: Adapted from Guest et al. (2012), Schreier (2012), Miles et al. (2014) and Yin (2016)

Prior to engaging in any qualitative data analysis, there are essential preliminary steps that are undertaken such as data processing and preparation (Miles et al., 2014) or compiling (Yin, 2016). The data processing and preparation phase, as suggested by Miles et al. (2014), assumes that basic raw data collected by a researcher such as interview recordings and field notes, are to be processed into

a useable form before analysis. Likewise, Yin's (2016) compiling technique involves organising data in meaningful chunks prior to coding. Therefore, in this study, the recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. Due to time constraints, the author employed the services of a transcribing organisation to transcribe all 24 interviews. The transcribed scripts were verified against the recordings by the author to ensure that the interview transcripts were a correct record of the recordings prior to data analysis. All errors and omissions were corrected prior to the coding process.

Prior to clarifying the coding frame, it is essential to clarify what coding is and how this process guides the building of a coding frame as well as the entire analysis process. Codes are defined as "labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles et al., 2014, p.71). Codes enable a researcher to retrieve and categorise similar data chunks in order to cluster segments relating to particular research questions, construct or themes (Miles et al., 2014). Specifically, a code is a "word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldana, 2013, p.3). Miles et al. (2014) suggested three elemental methods of coding, namely, descriptive, in vivo and process coding. In addition to descriptive, in vivo and process elemental methods of coding, Saldana (2013) suggested two additional methods. These are structural and initial coding.

While a descriptive code assigns labels to data to summarise in a word or short phrase, a passage of qualitative data, in vivo coding uses words or short phrases from the participants' own language in the codes (Miles et al., 2014). Process coding "uses gerunds ("-ing" words) exclusively to connote observable and conceptual action in the data" (Miles et al., 2014, p.75).

Likewise, structural coding "applies a content-based or conceptual phrase representing a topic of inquiry to a segment of data to both code and categorise the data corpus" (Saldana, 2013, p.83). Structural codes are the foundation for further detailed coding and more suited to interview transcripts than any other data (Saldana, 2013). In this study, structural coding was used in deriving the main categories of the coding frame. This approach is in line with Guest et al.'s (2012) applied thematic analysis process, in which structural codes are derived from interview questions. Additionally, descriptive, in vivo and process coding methods were used in deriving subcategories of the coding frame. Though Saldana (2013) contends that such an approach may be necessary, depending on the nature and goal of the study, he cautioned of muddying the analytical waters. However, the eclectic approach adopted in this study was appropriate for the following reasons. First, structural coding aligns perfectly well with the deductive approach, in which the interview guide is used in determining the main categories linked to the research question. Primarily, the interview questions provide topics of inquiry, in which structural codes are based. Second, the use of descriptive, in vivo and process coding for the subcategories are essential in that

the richness of data within the data corpus are appropriately and adequately captured through such an eclectic approach.

In line with the adopted procedure for qualitative content analysis (Figure 6), the interview transcripts were selected as the unit of analysis. Following the verification of the interview transcripts, a coding frame for the study was defined. A coding frame is a way of structuring one's data, consisting of main categories or dimensions and relevant subcategories guided by research questions (Schreier, 2012). The main categories or dimensions are aspects, on which the researchers want to focus their analysis, while relevant subcategories specify relevant meanings of aspects of interest in the main category (Schreier, 2012). In building a coding frame, scholars pay particular attention to the requirements for coding frames. These are unidimensionality, mutual exclusiveness, exhaustiveness and saturation (Schreier, 2012). While the unidimensionality requirement ensures that each category or dimension captures only one aspect of the material; mutual exclusiveness ensures that a unit of coding can be assigned only to one subcategory within a given dimension or category. Additionally, the exhaustiveness and saturation requirements ensure that each unit of coding in the material is assigned to at least one category in the coding frame, and that each subcategory is used at least once during the analysis respectively. In this study, these requirements are considered in building the coding frame as explained below.

As suggested by Schreier (2012) and shown in Figure 6 below, building a coding frame involves “selecting, structuring, generating, defining, revising and expanding” (p.80). Selecting involves deciding, which part of the material (i.e. interviews transcripts in this study) is relevant to the research question. To avoid bias, Schreier (2012) suggested that the researcher can start by coding the material into two categories; namely, relevant and irrelevant. In this study, since the focus was on affective organisational commitment, all parts of the interview transcripts interpretable to be within the domains of continuance or normative commitment were considered irrelevant material and discarded from further analysis.

After selecting the relevant parts of the material, the next step is structuring and generating the coding frame. Structuring and generating the coding frame involves deciding, which categories or dimensions will be used to describe the data and how subcategories will be generated. Schreier (2012) suggested three ways to structuring the coding frame. These are concept-driven or data-driven strategies or a combination of both. In this study, a combination of concept-driven and data-driven strategies (i.e. deductive–inductive approach) was adopted. Concept-driven strategies draw upon theory, prior research, everyday knowledge logic or an interview guide (Schreier, 2012). In this study, structuring the main categories or dimensions of the coding frame was based on the interview guide. Thus, the interview guide formed the deductive framework to building the main categories, which were derived from a structural coding process. The main

categories of the coding frame were then defined, as shown in Table 32 in Appendix B, to provide clarity of these categories as well as the rules, upon which coding of the material is based (Schreier, 2012). Being explicit on the meaning of such categories is a pre-requisite for using the categories consistently and making the analysis reliable (Schreier, 2012).

Likewise, in generating subcategories, a data-driven strategy is adopted, in which subcategories emerge from the material (Elo & Kyngas, 2008; Mayring, 2000; Schreier, 2012). The main categories guide the coding process for the subcategories. Schreier (2012) noted that data-driven strategies are necessary because of the richness of qualitative data and that what lies within the main categories may not be anticipated. Data-driven strategies include: (i) progressively summarising the material; (ii) subsumption; (iii) adapting coding from grounded theory; and (iv) contrasting (Schreier, 2012). For this study, the subsumption strategy was adopted. As the main categories of the coding frame were defined through structural coding, guided by the interview guide and the research question; subsumption involved examining relevant passages in the material to code either as a new category, subcategory or fit into an existing category or subcategory (Mayring 2010; Schreier, 2012). Subsumption is suitable only, if a researcher has decided on the main categories and has some idea of what they are looking for (Schreier, 2012). In this study, clarity of direction of analysis was provided by the research question and the interview guide.

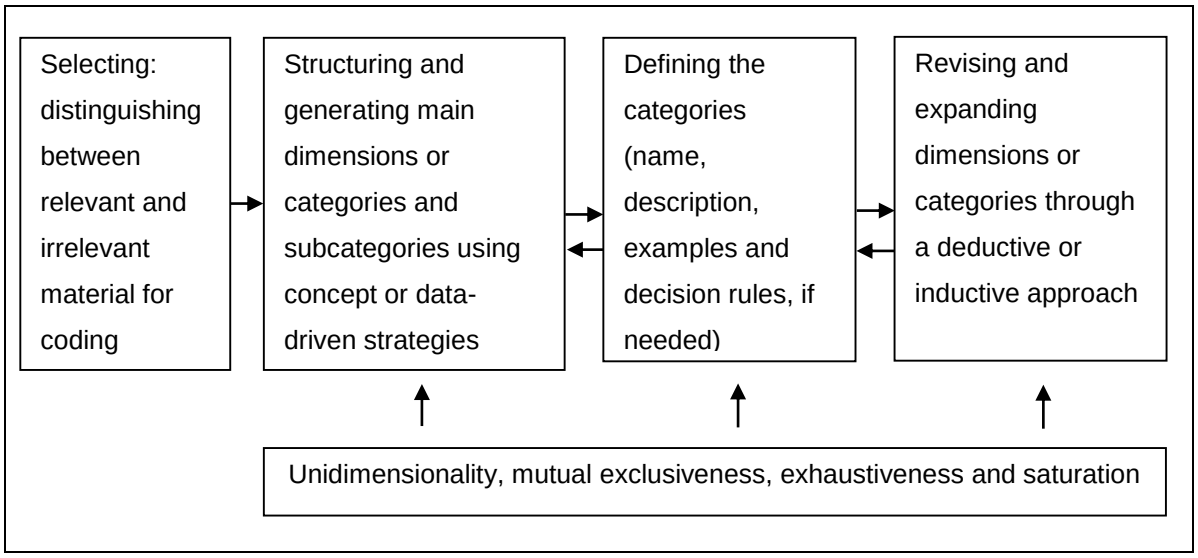
Hence, the adoption of the subsumption strategy in generating subcategories of the coding frame.

Further on, in line with adopted qualitative content analysis procedure (Figure 6), the established coding frame was used in a pilot phase, in which the first 10 interview scripts were coded using the coding frame. The outcome was evaluated and the coding frame modified and expanded, taking into account new insights. The modified coding frame was then used to guide the analysis of the entire material. In this stage, the rest of the interview data was coded accordingly into the main categories and subcategories already defined; and any emerging new categories and subcategories were appropriately accommodated in the process (i.e. subsumption). This process was iteratively undertaken, ensuring that the requirements unidimensionality, mutual exclusiveness, exhaustiveness and saturation were met as shown in Figure 7. This process resulted in the construction of the preliminary and final coding frames as shown in Tables 33 and 34 in Appendix D.

As reflected in the qualitative data analysis procedure adopted for this study, each of the steps undertaken (i.e. building a coding frame and trying it out, evaluating the coding frame and modifying it, main analysis, interpreting and presenting the results) were underpinned by an on-going analytic memoing process. As clarified by Miles et al. (2014), analytic memoing is a useful and powerful sense-making tool, in which data are synthesised into higher levels of

analytic meanings. Through analytic memoing in this study, the author documented his reflections and thoughts about the data, the on-going analysis process and the outcome of coding within the defined coding frame in constant light of the research question. In addition to analytic memoing, the author generated assertions and propositions about the study. An assertion is a "declarative statement of summative synthesis, supported by confirming evidence from the data and revised, when disconfirming evidence or discrepant cases require modification of the assertion" (Miles et al., 2014). On the other hand, a proposition is a conditional statement (Miles et al., 2014). Assertions and propositions were used in this study to summarise and synthesise the outcome of the coding process. Thus, the reflections and thoughts emanating from analytic memoing and assertions and propositions by the author, informed the narrative outcome of the study and are detailed in the next chapters (Research findings; Discussion of research findings; and Conclusions and recommendations).

Figure 7 : Requirements for building a coding frame



Source: Compiled by author, adapted from Schreier (2012)

4.7.3 Integrative data analysis and interpretation

Within mixed methods, the integration serves to describe the extent to which qualitative and quantitative findings cohere (Fetters, Curry, & Creswell, 2013). Various scholars suggest several strategies for integrating qualitative and quantitative findings. Among other suggested approaches to integrating qualitative and quantitative findings are methodological or dialectical synthesis (Coldwell, 1985; 2007), research inference process (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009), merging strategies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Plano Clark, Garret, & Leslie-Pelecky, 2010), and integrative data analysis strategies (Bazeley, 2012).

Within the merging approach, Plano Clark et al. (2010), and Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) suggested strategies, in which the integration within concurrent mixed designs may be undertaken. This includes merging in a discussion,

merging with a matrix, and merging by data transformation. Merging in a discussion involves reporting on quantitative results in the paragraph followed by a corresponding paragraph on qualitative results for corroboration. Alternatively, merging in a discussion involves the description of a quantitative result followed immediately by a supporting qualitative quote within the same paragraph to illustrate the quantitative result. Conversely, though not a common feature in mixed methods studies; merging in discussion may involve the presentation of a qualitative findings, followed by a supporting quantitative result.

Besides merging in a discussion, scholars may merge quantitative and qualitative findings, using visual displays in the form of matrices. The matrix display enables the comparison of thematic or other identified data sets. Lastly, merging by data transformation involves the ‘quantising’ of qualitative data and vice versa to enable comparability of the two data sets for further analysis and interpretation. These merging strategies are not necessarily mutually exclusive. They can be combined in a study to enhance the quality of integration. Plano Clark et al. (2010) provided such a compelling example, in which both merging in a discussion and merging in a matrix were used to enhance the quality of integration.

Further, Bazeley (2012) proposed five integrative data analysis strategies for mixed-data sources: (i) integrating results from analyses of separate data components; (ii) using one form of data to inform the design or analysis of

another; (iii) integrating multiple data components or sources during data analysis; (iv) integration of more than one strategy; and (v) integrating, using methods that are inherently mixed. However, each mixed-methods data analytic strategy is informed by the purpose of the study (Bazeley, 2012). The suggested integration approaches, though varied or similar in some ways; are an essential guidepost in enabling the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings, thus further enhancing cogent conclusions about the phenomena under study.

4.7.3.1 Fetters' approach to integrative analysis and interpretation

Fetters et al. (2013) suggested that integration can occur at three levels within mixed methods: design level (i.e. exploratory or explanatory sequential, convergent and advanced frameworks); methods level (i.e. connecting, building, merging or embedding); and interpreting and reporting level (i.e. narrative, data transformation or joint displays). Integration at the design level involves selecting the appropriate mixed methods research design for the study. For example, in this study, at the design level, a convergent parallel design was adopted for reasons elucidated earlier.

At the method level, integration can occur through connecting, building, merging or embedding. Integration through connecting occurs, when quantitative and qualitative data are linked through a sampling frame. Such a link occurs through a nested sample. Nested sampling is, when

the sample of one method (for example, qualitative) is drawn from the sample of the other method, for example, quantitative sample (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Yin, 2006). For example, interview participants can be selected from participants who responded to the survey. As opined by Fetters et al. (2013), connecting through sampling can occur regardless of whether the design is sequential or convergent. Besides connecting data through a sampling frame, integration can occur through building. Integration through building occurs, when results from one data collection informs the data collection approach of the other procedure; for example, designing a survey instrument based on previously collected qualitative data, which inform hypotheses to be tested.

Further, integration through merging occurs, when qualitative and quantitative databases are brought together for analysis and comparison. Merging would typically occur after the statistical analysis of quantitative data and textual analysis of qualitative data. Lastly, Fetters et al. (2013) noted that integration through embedding occurs, when data collection and analysis are being linked at multiple points. Embedding may involve connecting, building or merging to some degree. Integration at a method level in this study, therefore, was achieved through connecting. While the sample for the quantitative sample was obtained through a stratified sampling technique, the sample for the qualitative study was a nested

sample of the quantitative study. The interview participants were selected from the list of respondents who completed the survey. The detail of the sampling procedure for this study is provided in section 4.5 above.

Besides the integration at design and method levels, Fetters et al. (2013) further proposed that integration can take place at the interpretation and reporting level through the narrative, data transformation or joint displays approaches. The narrative approach involves describing the qualitative and quantitative findings in a single or series of reports. This can occur through a weaving, contiguous or staged approach. The weaving narrative approach involves “writing both qualitative and quantitative findings together on a theme-by-theme or concept-by-concept basis” (Fetters et al., 2013, p.2142). The contiguous narrative approach involves the presentation of findings within a single report; however, the qualitative and quantitative findings are reported in different sections. Lastly, the staged narrative approach, common in multistage mixed method designs, involves the reporting and publishing of results at each stage separately.

In addition to the narrative approach discussed above, integration at the interpretation and reporting level may be done through data transformation and joint displays. Data transformation involves the conversion of one type of data (for example, qualitative) into another form (quantitative) and then integrating the transformed data with the data that

has not been transformed. Further, integrating through joint displays involves bringing data together through a visual display meant to show new insights enabled by such joint displays, i.e. the insights beyond those gained from the separate qualitative and quantitative data.

Consistent with the convergent parallel design adopted for this study, quantitative and qualitative data were analysed independently as explained above and the results then mixed during the overall interpretation. Because of the variety of integration approaches or strategies proposed in the literature, and as illustrated above, this study adopted Fetters et al.'s (2013) approach in the discussion of the findings of the study. This study was predominantly guided by Fetters et al.'s (2013) weaving narrative approach in the interpretation and reporting of the integrated findings. The weaving approach enabled convergence and corroboration of findings; the core purpose for adopting methodological triangulation in this study. The weaving narrative approach, to some degree made use of the merging strategy, in which the quantitative findings were linked to the qualitative findings for corroboration purposes.

4.7.3.2 Methodological or dialectical synthesis

As clarified above, there is no one best strategy of integrating findings from each method in a mixed methods study. Published mixed methods studies in peer-reviewed journals reflect a variety of integration

approaches. This study adopted Fetters et al.'s (2013) approach for reasons clarified above. However, in addition, the methodological or dialectical synthesis approach proposed by Coldwell (1985, 2007) was also adopted as complementary to Fetters et al.'s (2013) strategy.

Coldwell's (1985, 2007) methodological or dialectical synthesis is inspired by Weber's (1978) complimentary notions of 'adequacy on the level of meaning' and 'causal adequacy', postulated as part of the methodological foundations for sociological research. According to Weber (1978), a coherent course of conduct can be interpreted as 'adequate on the level of meaning', if, "according to our habitual modes of thought and feeling, its component parts taken in their mutual relation are recognized to constitute a 'typical' complex of meaning" (p.11). Thus, 'adequacy on the level of meaning' refers "to the content of the relations between the specific context of meaning in which action is embedded, the import that the actor ascribes to this context, the actor's motive and the act itself" (Ekström, 1992, p.111). As further clarified by Roth and Wittich (eds.), 'adequacy on the level of meaning' refers to "a satisfying level of knowledge for the particular purposes of the subjective state of mind of the actor or actors" (Weber, 1978, p.59). Weber (1978) exemplified 'adequacy on the level of meaning, to be what is, according to our current norms of calculation or thinking; the correct solution of an arithmetical problem. On the other hand, 'causal adequacy' refers to the probability

that according to verified generalisations from experience, a certain specific event will always be followed by a certain other specific event (Ekström, 1992, Weber, 1978). Roth and Wittich (eds.) further suggested that causal adequacy is attained through “a satisfactory correspondence between results of observations from the subjective point of view and from the objective; that is, observations of the overt course of action, which can be described without reference to the state of mind of the actor” (Weber, 1978, p.59). Essentially, both ‘adequacy on the level of meaning’ and ‘causal adequacy’ are necessary for sociological explanations to be considered sufficient (Gay, 1978; Weber, 1978).

Though Weber (1978) postulated the concepts of ‘causal adequacy’ and ‘adequacy on the level of meaning’, he did not offer or suggest methodological processes, in which both ‘causal adequacy’ and ‘adequacy on the level of meaning’ can be attained. As observed by Hayes (1985), the difficulty in attaining interpretive explanation that is both meaningfully and causally adequate lies in how this can be done as “Weber leaves the job in an extremely rough-hewn state” (p.3). However, Coldwell (1985, 2007) offered a comprehensive guideline, in which ‘causal adequacy’ and ‘adequacy on the level of meaning’ can be attained in a mixed methods study through the dialectical synthesis approach. While the use of the dialectical synthesis is evidently uncommon in recently

published mixed methods studies, the reasons for its adoption in this study are clarified below.

In the methodological or dialectical synthesis, Coldwell (1985; 2007) suggested how qualitative and quantitative findings can be synthesised to provide explanations of the interrelations between the phenomena that are both causally and meaningfully adequate. Such explanations "must be sufficient, suitable and good enough to satisfy specific requirements at the two methodological levels" (Coldwell, 2007, p.1). The dialectical synthesis is a deliberate attempt to corroborate causal inferential findings on the level of meaning (Coldwell, 2007). In this study, the dialectical synthesis was adopted in an attempt to corroborate quantitative findings on the level of meaning.

Though Coldwell (1985) noted that the dialectical approach is dynamic and continually open to modification and change, its three basic processes are the thesis, antithesis and synthesis.

In Coldwell's (1985; 2007) proposition, the nomothetic or thesis (i.e. quantitative) part of the dialectical model, aims at establishing causal associations between phenomena. Such causal inference analysis can be enabled through the product-moment correlations at different points in time (i.e. test-retest, static, cross-legged and dynamic correlations) and

the frequency-of-change-in-product-moment (FCP) analysis (Coldwell, 1985, 2007). However, “the actual technique of causal inference used in the investigation is of less importance to the proposed method than that nomothetic and idiographic data ultimately be used for mutual corroboration in a dialectic synthesis” Coldwell (1985, p.183). Thus, this being a cross-sectional study, a causal inference analysis as suggested by Coldwell (1985, 2007) was not attempted. As an alternative, static partial correlation, multiple regression and path analyses were undertaken to determine the relationships between variables. The static partial and bivariate correlations taken at a point in time, in this study, determine associations between the variables of interest in this study at a point in time. In addition to partial and bivariate correlation analysis, multiple regression and path analyses were undertaken to assess the direct effects of predictor variables on the dependent variable.

The idiographic or antithesis (qualitative) part of the dialectical model seeks to establish adequacy on the level of meaning. Coldwell’s (1985, 2007) suggestion is that adequacy on the level of meaning can be attempted by using open-ended phenomenal analysis, which is aimed at obtaining spontaneous descriptions of subjective experiences. Such an approach seeks to discover moments common to all individual experiences of the same kind. However, in this study, interview data obtained from specific open-ended questions on each phenomenon was

analysed using Schreier (2012) qualitative content analysis method as detailed in section 4.7.2 above.

The synthesis part of the dialectical model enables the examination of whether the quantitative findings (e.g. correlational, multiple regression and path analysis results) are corroborated by the qualitative findings. The synthesis "aims at finding explanations that are both causally adequate and adequate on the level of meaning" and this is accomplished by combining the quantitative and qualitative findings (Coldwell, 2007, p.5). Thus, drawing on Coldwell's (1985, 2007) suggestions, the synthesis in this study was enabled by means of Chi-square tests between the respondents' high and low scores on each variable (i.e. affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation) on the survey instruments and the corresponding high and low scores on the respondents' awareness or non-awareness of these phenomena in the interview discussions. The high and low scores on the survey instrument are scores, which are one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean score, respectively (Coldwell, 1985, 2007).

With respect to the interview data, the high and low scores were based on Schreier's (2012) qualitative content analysis. First, for each phenomenon, interview responses were reduced into defined categories.

For example, interview responses on affective organisational commitment were categorised, either as an antecedent condition for affective organisational commitment or not. Each statement was coded 1 (high score), if the individual freely expressed their awareness of the phenomena and clearly articulated the perceived antecedent conditions for their affective attachment to the organisation. On the other hand, the low scores were allocated to statements, in which individuals were not clear or aware of the antecedent conditions of their affective attachment to their organisation.

For psychological empowerment, interview responses reflecting the individuals' positive perception of their competence, value congruence with role requirements, and autonomy in decision making within role were coded as 1. Conversely, interview responses reflecting a lack of confidence in one's competence, value incongruence with role requirement, and a lack of autonomy in decision-making within role were coded as 0.

Last, a similar approach was used for the commitment to strategy implementation. The interview responses were categorised into behavioural mechanisms reflecting a concerted effort towards the achievement of the organisation's business strategy or not. Accordingly, interview responses clearly reflecting the respondent's behavioural

demonstration of a concerted effort towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy were coded as 1. Conversely, interview responses devoid of any evidence of concerted effort towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy were coded as 0.

The dialectical synthesis establishes the goodness-of-fit between quantitative and qualitative findings. If, for example, the construct of affective organisational commitment is valid, it would be expected that high scorers on survey instrument would clearly articulate the perceived antecedent conditions for their affective attachment to the organisation when responding to open-ended questions eliciting for the basis of their affective attachment to the organisation. On the other hand, it would be expected that low scorers on the survey instrument would not clearly articulate the basis of their affective attachment to the organisation. Rather, the basis of their attachment to their organisations would reflect antecedent conditions for continuance or normative organisational commitment. Therefore, if the association is discovered, one may prudently draw the following conclusion:

(i) That the construct of affective organisational commitment is meaningful and pertinent to the study participants.

(ii) That the measuring instrument is valid, and the participants' scores reflect real experiences of their affective attachment to the organisation.

Further, in an attempt to verify whether quantitatively determined relationships between the phenomena are valid reflections of real and meaningful associations in the minds of the study participants, consideration was given to the pattern of responses of high scorers on the interview through further exploratory analysis involving the high scores. For example, this was achieved by considering the extent to which high scorers on affective organisational commitment on the survey instrument, associate their affective attachment to the organisation with their commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy (i.e. as reflected in the subjective responses to open-ended questions).

4.8 Validity and reliability

In any research, consideration must not only be given to the findings of the study, but also to the extent to which quality of the study has been enhanced, i.e. rigour of the research (Heale & Twycross, 2015). In quantitative studies, rigour is achieved through the measurement of validity and reliability (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Validity is the extent to which a concept is accurately measured, while reliability is the accuracy of a research instrument as reflected in the consistency of results if the instrument is used in the same situation over repeated occasions (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Heale & Twycross, 2015). For this study, consideration for validity and reliability is based on the data collection instruments and the data collection process as explained below.

4.8.1 Quantitative study

Among other conceptualisations of reliability such as Revelle's β and McDonald's ω_h (Zinbarg, Revelle, Yovel, & Li, 2005), the Cronbach's alpha (α) is a commonly used measure of reliability in social and organisational sciences (Bonett & Wright, 2015). Based on inter-item correlation, coefficient values of 0.7 or 0.75 are often used as minimum acceptable level for a reliability test (Christmann & Van Aelst, 2006). Though the minimum values are regarded as purely intuitive and not based on empirical evidence (Cho & Kim, 2015), they are largely accepted as indications of instrument reliability.

For the quantitative study, the Cronbach's alpha was used as measure of internal consistency for each instrument. As detailed in Appendix A, the choice of using existing instruments for the quantitative study was informed by their proven reliability in several studies across different samples from several geographic areas. Specifically, the Affective Organisational Commitment Scales and the Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire have been used in South African studies, yielding higher levels of Cronbach's alpha of 0.79 (Lumley et al., 2011), 0.77 (Manetje & Martins, 2009) and 0.91 (Stander & Rothmann, 2009), respectively. The results of the calculated alpha, using SPSS, were 0.800 for affective organisational commitment, 0.893 for psychological empowerment, and 0.679 for the commitment to strategy implementation. These results suggest that the instruments are considered reliable.

Since this is a cross-sectional study in which data were obtained from a single source (i.e. middle managers), the threat of common method variance (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) were addressed through several procedures suggested in the literature as detailed in Appendix A. The procedures adopted for this study included randomising the order of items for predictor and criterion variables on the survey questionnaire (Weijters et al., 2009); setting up the survey online by using the Kwiksurvey facility to guarantee anonymity on the part of those completing the survey questionnaire (Podsakoff et al., 2003), and using different scale anchors for predictor and criterion variables in the survey questionnaire (Johnson, Rosen, & Djurdjevic, 2011).

Besides the attempts to ensure that credible data were collected, multiple data analysis methods were adopted for this study as detailed in section 4.7.1 above. These are correlation, multiple regression and observed variable path analyses. These enabled the examination of the consistency of the relationships between the phenomena.

4.8.2 Qualitative study

In qualitative studies, validity and reliability can be achieved by incorporating methodological strategies to ensure trustworthiness of research findings (Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001; Heale & Smith, 2015). To attain a level of credibility of study outcomes for the qualitative study, several procedures were

adopted. First, the interview questionnaire was reviewed by the thesis supervisor, Prof D. Coldwell and the questions were pilot-tested for clarity.

Second, during data analysis, Schreier's (2012) qualitative content analysis method was adopted. While double-coding, as a way improving reliability, was not done as this study was undertaken by the author in his own capacity, Schreier's (2012) guidelines for unidimensionality, mutual exclusiveness, exhaustiveness and saturation were followed to give credibility to the qualitative results. The detailed approach to this method has been adequately clarified above in section 4.7.2 above. This is in line with suggestions in the literature that credibility of study outcomes can be enhanced through a clear and thorough process of data analysis and ensuring that interpretations are consistent and transparent (Whittemore et al., 2001; Heale & Smith, 2015).

Third, rich and thick verbatim descriptions of participants' accounts to support findings are provided for each research outcome. This is detailed in Chapter 5, which deals with the findings of the study. As argued in the literature, providing evidence that supports interpretations enhances the credibility of research outcomes (Whittemore et al., 2001; Heale & Smith, 2015).

Lastly, the author, as an instrument of data collection, has more than twenty years' experience in financial services organisations as a middle manager. He is well-versed with organisational experiences of middle managers, fairly

understood nuances and commonly used business language in financial services environment. This made it easier to map such language to the constructs under study.

4.8.3 Triangulation and dialectical synthesis

In line with ensuring credible study outcomes, data triangulation was applied. Heale and Smith (2015) argue that data triangulation help produce a comprehensive set of findings. As clarified above, this study adopted Fetters et al.'s (2013) and Coldwell's (1985, 2007) dialectical synthesis approaches in the discussion of the findings of the study. Fetters et al.'s (2013) weaving narrative approach enabled the convergence and corroboration of findings. Further, Coldwell's (1985, 2007) dialectical synthesis enabled an explanation of interrelations between the phenomena that are both causally and meaningfully adequate. Thus, qualitative and qualitative findings were integrated and corroborated to achieve credible study outcomes.

4.8.4 Organisational context

When conducting research in organisations, it is essential to consider contextual influence on research outcomes, as it can enhance or threaten the validity of a study's outcome. The influence of context is often unrecognised or underappreciated, yet it can have subtle and powerful effects on research outcomes (John, 2006). While various authors have described context in several ways (Cappelli & Sherer, 1991; Mowday & Sutton, 1993; Johns 2006), the

definition of context adopted for this study was provided by Johns (2006). Johns (2006) defined context as “situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organisational behaviour as well as functional relationships between variables” (p.386).

While many facets of context are offered in the literature, it is generally not possible to study every aspect of context in any given research project. However, “producers and consumers of research can sensitise themselves to how context affects organisational behaviour, whether or not it has been formally measured in a given study” (Johns, 2006, p.388). Johns (2006) suggested two dimensions of context, which are omnibus and discrete. The omnibus context considers who the study participants are, where they are located, when they are studied, and the rationale for their selection for the study. The discrete context considers participants’ task autonomy, uncertainty and accountability; social structure, density and influence; and their physical environment. As suggested by Johns (2006), contextualisation techniques that can illuminate context are research design, collection of qualitative data, measurement and analysis, and reportage. The contextualisation techniques adopted for this study include the use of a mixed methods research design, collection of qualitative data, and the dialectical synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data as explained in detail in sections 4.3, 4.4. 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 above.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed a variety of crucial elements on the research philosophy, triangulation framework, research design and methodology. The pragmatic philosophical approach was adopted as the suitable paradigm for addressing the research question being posed. In addition, the adopted convergent parallel mixed methods research design not only aligns with the pragmatic philosophical paradigm, but also enables comparison and contrasting of quantitative and qualitative findings for corroboration and validation purposes.

Further, the population and samples for the quantitative and qualitative studies were defined within a convergent mixed methods sampling model. The stratified random sampling technique was used in determining the sample for the quantitative study. However, due to volitional participation of participants, a purposeful sample was used to determine the sample for the qualitative study. Furthermore, the methods of data collection were addressed, with particular clarity being given to reasons for the choice of instrument, instrument reliability and how common method variance was addressed for the survey. Further clarity was provided on data analysis methods used for both quantitative and qualitative data and integrated results, in line with the convergent parallel mixed methods research design.

Chapter Five: Research findings

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. Consistent with the convergent parallel mixed-methods design, the quantitative and qualitative research findings are presented separately. The quantitative findings are captured in the descriptive and inferential statistics detailed below. The qualitative findings are captured in the coding frame and the associated narrative. Further, results of the dialectical synthesis are also presented.

5.1 Quantitative study findings

The detailed descriptive statistics provide the basic summaries of measures of central tendency; dispersion of each variable; results for skewness and kurtosis; as well as normality tests of distributions for variables under study. In addition, the results of inferential statistical analysis undertaken are presented below. These include the outcomes of hypothesis tests conducted through partial correlation analysis; multiple regression and path analyses.

5.1.1 Descriptive statistics

Though the detailed descriptive statistics are captured in Appendix B, a brief overview of the descriptive statistical summaries of data collected are presented

below. These include measures of central tendency; dispersion for selected variables; skewness and kurtosis tests; and normality tests.

(i) Measures of central tendency and dispersion

The three commonly used measures of central tendency are mean, median and mode. Based on the data obtained from the 101 respondents, the mean, median, mode, range (i.e. minimum and maximum) and standard deviation of each variable under this study, are shown in Appendix B - Table 25. The mean and median scores for affective organisational commitment are 4.7 and 4.9, respectively. The proximity between the mean and median scores for affective commitment suggest that the distribution for affective commitment may be symmetrical.

Likewise, the mean and median scores for psychological empowerment (5.8; 5.9), and the commitment to strategy implementation (5.6; 5.8), are very close for each variable. This also suggests that the distribution of each of these variables may be symmetrical. Additionally, the minimum and maximum values for each variable are within theoretic minimum and maximum scores of 1 and 7 on the Likert scale used.

(ii) Normality, skewness and kurtosis

To test whether the data collected on variables under a study were normally distributed; and three common and interrelated approaches were used. The results for each method are summarised below.

The histograms and Q-Q plots for affective organisational commitment (Appendix B - Figure 11) and the commitment to strategy implementation (Appendix B -Figure 13) suggest that the distributions are approximately normally distributed. However, the graphical representation for other variables such as psychological empowerment (Appendix - Figure 12) suggest that the distributions deviate from a normal distribution.

Likewise, the appropriate skewness and kurtosis values for each variable are shown in Appendix B - Table 26. The skewness values for affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation are -0.82 and -0.83, respectively. The distribution for affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation are slightly negatively skewed as can be seen from the graphical presentation (Appendix B - Figures 11 and 13). However, psychological empowerment is negatively skewed as reflected in the negative skewness statistic values of -2.17. The negative skewness is visually evident from the graphical presentations (Appendix B - Figures 12).

Further, the results of the test of normality of each variable under this study are shown in Appendix B – Table 28. As can be seen from Appendix B - Table 28, the *p*-values for the Shapiro-Wilk test are less than 0.05 for affective commitment (0.001), psychological empowerment (0.000), and the commitment to strategy implementation (0.001). In these instances, for each of these variables, the null hypothesis is rejected as there is significant statistical evidence to suggest that the distribution for each of these variables deviates from a normal distribution.

Evidently, as can be seen from results presented above on the three approaches, there are areas of concurrence and non-concurrence of results. Predominantly, there is a concurrence of results between graphical and numeric methods. The results from these approaches indicate that collected data for affective commitment and commitment to strategy implementation are approximately normally distributed.

Results from all three methods also suggest that collected data for psychological empowerment deviate from a normal distribution. While departure from normality can have a substantial impact on the results of a study, larger sample sizes reduce effects of non-normality. As detailed in Appendix B, the effect of non-normality in this study is considered negligible due to a large sample. At this level of participation (i.e. 101 respondents), it is envisaged that the effect of non-normality is negligible,

considering that the data for the rest of the other variables are considered approximately normally distributed.

5.1.2 Inferential statistics

In addition to the descriptive statistics presented in Appendix B, the results of inferential statistical analysis carried out for this study are presented below.

5.1.2.1 Correlational results: hypothesis tests

Partial and zero-order / bivariate correlation as well as multiple regression analyses are undertaken to confirm or disconfirm hypothesised relationships between variables of interest in this study. These hypotheses and their premises are clarified earlier in Chapter Three. Partial correlation analysis allows for testing hypothesised relationships between an independent and dependant variable, while other variables such age, level of highest formal qualification, gender and tenure with the organisation are controlled for.

The results for each hypothesis are clarified below.

5.1.2.1.1 Hypothesis 1a

This hypothesis presumed that middle managers, who are emotionally attached to, identify with and desire to continue working for the organisation, are predisposed to exert considerable effort towards the

implementation of their organisation's business strategy. Because they *want to* be part of the organisation, such managers are more likely to exert considerable effort towards implementation of their organisation's business strategy. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis presumed that a positive relationship exists between middle managers' affective commitment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's strategy. The alternative and null hypothesis are thus restated as follows:

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): *There is a positive association between middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy.*

Null hypothesis (H_0): *There is no positive association between middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy.*

Partial correlation analysis was undertaken to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no association between middle managers' affective

commitment and their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's strategy, while controlling for the effects of highest formal qualification attained, age, gender and tenure with the organisation.

The results shown in Table 16 indicate a moderate positive partial correlation (r = 0.492) between middle managers' affective commitment and their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy. Likewise, the results of the zero-order correlation show a moderate but positive correlation (r = 0.493) between middle managers' affective commitment and their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy. Thus, controlling for highest formal qualification, age, gender and tenure with the organisation has no influence on the strength of the relationship between middle managers' affective commitment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy.

The partial correlation results show that the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected as there is significant statistical evidence to suggest that there is a positive association between middle managers' affective commitment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's strategy (r = 0.492, $p < 0.05$). Similarly, the p-value of the zero-order correlation test of 0.000

confirms that there is significant statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis ($r = 0.493$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 16 : Correlation matrix for affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation

Control Variables			Affective Organisational Commitment	Commitment to strategy implementation
No control variables-[a]	Affective Organisational Commitment	Correlation	1.000	0.493
		Significance (1-tailed)	.	0.000
		df	0	90
	Commitment to strategy implementation	Correlation	0.493	1.000
		Significance (1-tailed)	0.000	.
		df	90	0
Formal Qualification, Age, Gender & Tenure	Affective Organisational Commitment	Correlation	1.000	0.492
		Significance (1-tailed)	.	0.000
		df	0	86
	Commitment to strategy implementation	Correlation	0.492	1.000
		Significance (1-tailed)	0.000	.
		df	86	0
a. Zero-order (Pearson) correlations without any control variables				

Source: Compiled by author

5.1.2.1.2 Hypothesis 1b

This hypothesis presumed that middle managers, who perceive to be psychologically empowered, are more likely to be committed to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy. Because they perceive work goals to be aligned to personal beliefs and values (i.e. meaning), have discretion in decision-making (i.e. self-determination),

believe that they possess skills and abilities to perform well in their roles (i.e. competence), and believe that they can influence work strategic and administrative outcomes (i.e. impact), such managers are more likely to be self-motivated to help the organisation achieve its strategic goals. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis presumed that a positive relationship exists between middle managers' psychological empowerment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy. The alternative and null hypothesis are thus restated as follows:

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): *There is a positive association between middle managers' perceived psychological empowerment and their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy.*

Null hypothesis (H_0): *There is no positive association between middle managers' perceived psychological empowerment and their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy.*

Partial correlation analysis was undertaken to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no association between middle managers' psychological empowerment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's strategy, while controlling for highest formal qualification, age, gender and tenure with the organisation. The results shown in Table 17 indicate a strong positive partial correlation (r = 0.574) between middle managers' psychological empowerment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy. Likewise, the results of the zero-order correlations show a strong positive correlation (r = 0.576) between middle managers' psychological empowerment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's strategy. Thus, controlling for formal qualification, age, gender and tenure with the organisation has a negligible influence on the strength of the relationship between middle managers' psychological empowerment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's strategy.

The partial correlation results show that the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected as there is significant statistical evidence to suggest that there is a positive association between middle managers' psychological empowerment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's strategy

(r = 0.574, p < 0.05). Similarly, the p-value of the zero-order correlation test of 0.000 suggests that there is significant statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistically significant positive association between middle managers' psychological empowerment and the extent to which they are committed to the implementation of their organisation's strategy (r = 0.576, p < 0.05).

Table 17 : Correlation matrix for psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation

Control Variables			Psychological Empowerment	Commitment to strategy implementation
No control variables-[a]	Psychological Empowerment	Correlation	1.000	0.576
		Significance (1-tailed)	.	0.000
		df	0	90
	Commitment to strategy implementation	Correlation	0.576	1.000
		Significance (1-tailed)	0.000	.
		df	90	0
Formal Qualification, Age, Gender & Tenure	Psychological Empowerment	Correlation	1.000	0.574
		Significance (1-tailed)	.	0.000
		df	0	86
	Commitment to strategy implementation	Correlation	0.574	1.000
		Significance (1-tailed)	0.000	.
		df	86	0
a. Zero-order (Pearson) correlations without any control variables				

Source: Compiled by author

5.1.2.2 Multiple regression analysis results

Besides the hypotheses tests clarified and tested above, multiple linear regression analysis was undertaken to determine, if affective

organisational commitment and perceived psychological empowerment can predict the commitment to strategy implementation. Affective organisational commitment was paired with psychological empowerment, thus creating a pair of independent variables. This approach sought to determine, if the paired independent variables, optimally predict the dependent variable (i.e. the commitment to strategy implementation).

As required, it is essential to examine, if assumptions for regression analysis are met prior to undertaking the analysis. This includes checks for normality, linearity, multicollinearity and the impact of outliers. Preliminary analyses undertaken indicated that there were no violations of the regression analysis assumptions. As shown in Appendix C - Figure 14, the histograms reflect approximately normal distributions for the dependent variable (i.e. the commitment to strategy implementation). Visually inspecting the normal probability plots in Appendix C - Figure 15, it is evident that the values fall along or are close to the diagonal line with no substantial or systematic departures, which suggests that the residuals are approximately normally distributed (Hair et al., 2010). Further, as can be seen in the scatterplots in Appendix C - Figure 16, the distribution of values around the zero line form a rectangular shape within standardised residuals of -3 to 3, which indicates normality of residuals (Meyers et al., 2006) as well as a linear pattern (Hair et al., 2010). Additionally, removal of outliers from the data set resulted in values forming a rectangular shape

around the zero line in the scatterplots with no outlying cases. Also, both the P-P plots and scatterplots indicate that the variables are linearly related.

In addition to the graphical presentations, the Mahalanobis Distance maximum value is below the critical value of 13.816 as shown in Appendix C - Table 29. Similarly, the Cook's Distance maximum value is less than 1.0 (Appendix C - Table 29), indicating the absence of outliers as well as the absence of the undue influence of outliers on the model to predict the outcome.

Besides checking for normality, linearity and outlier impact, preliminary analysis included checking for multicollinearity. As can be seen from in Appendix C - Table 31, the correlation between affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment is 0.516, which is below 0.700. This suggests that there is no multicollinearity between the independent variables. In addition, as can be seen in Appendix C - Table 30, the Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for the independent variables are above 0.1 and below 10 respectively, indicating the absence of multicollinearity.

The results for multiple regression analysis are presented in the ensuing sections.

In assessing the impact of predictor variables on the dependent variable, the adjusted R-square (R^2) is used. As a modified measure of the coefficients of determination, the adjusted R-square “takes into account the number of independent variables included in the regression equation and the size of the sample size” (Hair et al., 2010, p.156). For this reason, it is the preferred statistic, upon which the analysis in this study is based.

As shown in Table 18 (Model Summary) below, the Adjusted R^2 statistic is 0.374, depicting the amount of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the combination of the two predictor variables. Thus, about 37.4% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the regression model. Though the predictor variables (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) account for 37.4% variance in the dependent variable (i.e. the commitment to strategy implementation), a significant variance of 62.6% in the dependent variable is explained by other factors not captured in the model. However, the model is statistically significant in predicting the dependent variable as reflected by the *p*-value of 0.000 (i.e. which is less than 0.05) as shown in the Table 19 (ANOVA). Further, as reflected in Appendix C - Table 30, the standardised coefficient and *p*-value for affective organisational commitment of 0.268 and 0.007 respectively, indicate that affective organisational commitment makes a statistically significant unique contribution to the model ($p = 0.007$). Further, considering the semi-partial

correlations reflected in Appendix C - Table 30, it is evident that affective organisational commitment uniquely accounts for 5.2% (i.e. the square of the semi-partial correlation of 0.229) of the total variance (i.e. $R^2 = 0.388$) in the commitment to strategy implementation.

Likewise, psychological empowerment, at a standardised coefficient of 0.438 and *p*-value of 0.000, makes a statistically significant unique contribution to the model. Further, as shown in Appendix C - Table 30, psychological empowerment uniquely accounts for 14.1% (i.e. the square of the semi-partial correlation of 0.375) of the total variance (i.e. $R^2 = 0.388$) in the commitment to strategy implementation.

Table 18 : Regression results – Model summary

Model Summary[b]				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.623	0.388	0.374	0.60372

a) Predictors: (Constant), Affective organisational commitment, Psychological empowerment

b) Dependent Variable: Commitment to strategy implementation

Source: Compiled by author

Table 19 : Regression results – ANOVA

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.840	2	10.920	27.747	0.000[b]
	Residual	35.027	89	0.394		
	Total	56.867	91			

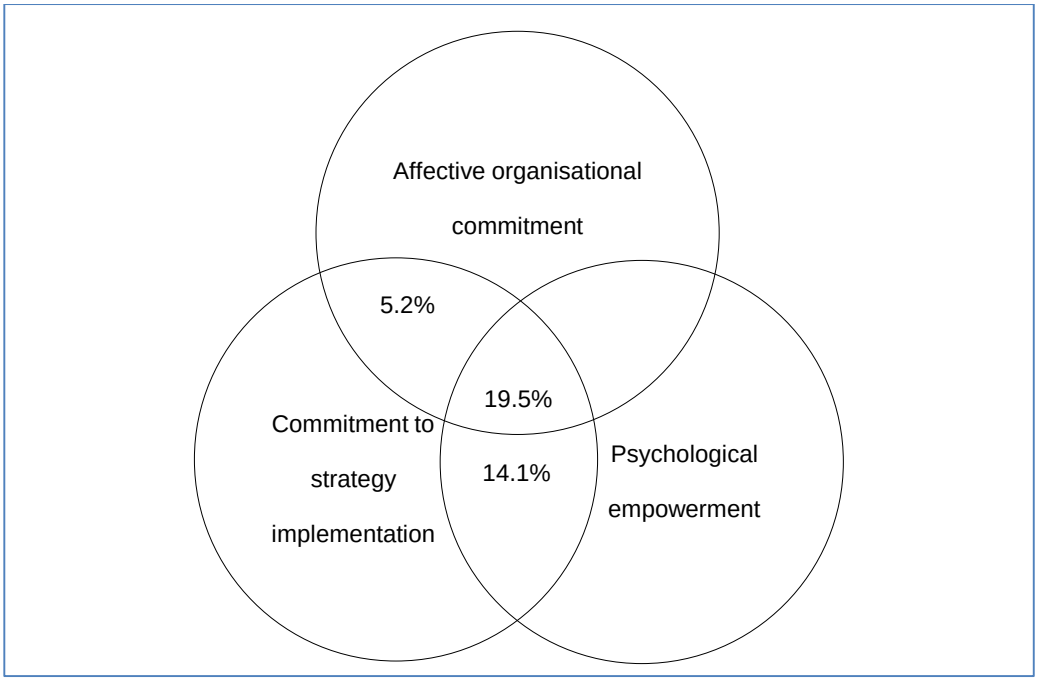
a. Dependent Variable: Commitment to strategy implementation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Affective Organisational Commitment, and Psychological Empowerment

Source: Compiled by author

Though the variance in the dependent variable accounted for both by predictors) in the regression model was 38.8% (using $R^{2)}$, the total variance accounted for uniquely by the predictor variables was 19.3%. The balance of 19.5% reflects the total amount of overlapping predictive work done by both predictor variables as shown below in Figure 8.

Figure 8 : Depiction of common and uniquely explained variance



Source: Compiled by author

In essence, both independent variables (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) are statistically significant in predicting the dependent variable.

5.1.2.3 Path analysis results

Using the multiple regression approach for path analysis as suggested by Meyers et al. (2006), a path model (Figure 9) reflecting the direct effects of managerial psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) on the commitment to strategy implementation was analysed. The equation in the structural model included the direct effects of the two independent variables

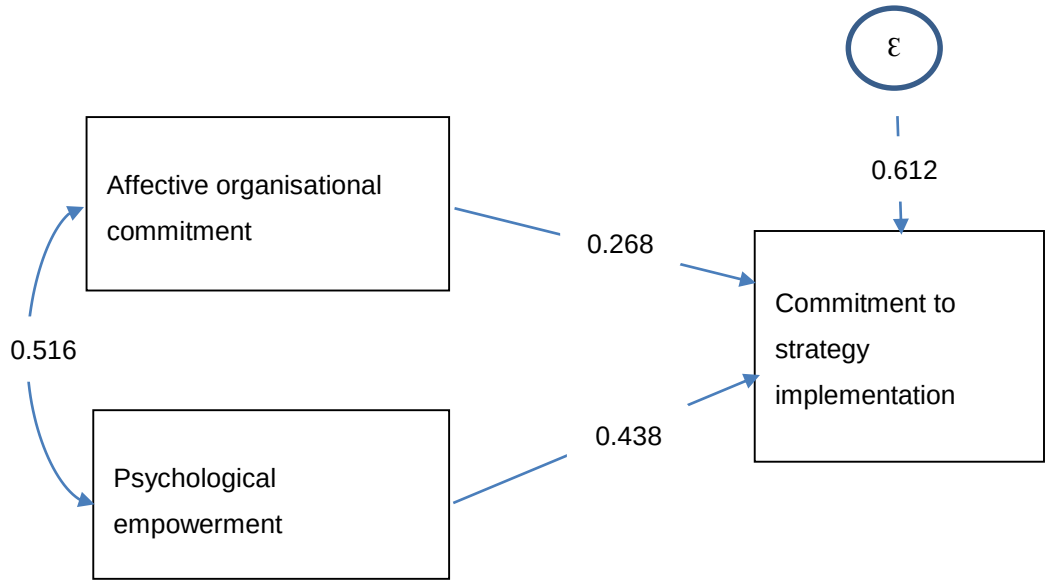
(affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) and one dependent variable (i.e. the commitment to strategy implementation). As shown in Figure 9, the direct effects of the independent variables, are reflected by straight one-directional arrows. As well, the correlation between the independent variables is shown by the double-headed arrow. The results of the structural equation yield a significant R^2 of 0.388, $F(2, 92) = 27.75$, $p < 0.05$. Both paths from affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment achieve statistically significant relationships with the commitment to strategy implementation ($p < 0.05$), supporting the hypothesis that affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment have a direct positive effect on the commitment to strategy implementation. However, as reflected in Figure 9, 61.2% of the variance in the commitment to strategy implementation, depicted by the circle (Kline, 2005), is unexplained by variables specified in the path model as its direct causes (being affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment).

The direct effects are represented by the standardised beta coefficients from the multiple regression analysis (0.268 and 0.438, respectively) as shown in Appendix C - Table 30. Though both independent variables achieve statistically significant relationships with the commitment to strategy implementation ($p < 0.05$), psychological empowerment, with a

path coefficient of 0.438, achieve both practical (standardised coefficient in excess of the 0.3 criterion) and statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). Uniquely accounting for 14.1% of the explained variance in the dependent variable, psychological empowerment is more predictive of the commitment to strategy implementation than affective organisational commitment.

The results of the path analysis suggest that both affective organisational commitment and perceived psychological empowerment directly and positively influence the commitment to strategy implementation. In addition, the results suggest that perceived psychological empowerment has a greater influence on the commitment to strategy implementation than affective organisation commitment.

Figure 9 : Path model of variables under study



Source: Compiled by author

5.2 Qualitative study findings

A detailed presentation of the qualitative coding frame, which encapsulates the findings of the study, is presented below.

5.2.1 The coding frame and qualitative content analysis results

In addressing the research questions raised in Chapter One, the interview data were analysed and the results drawn from the 24 interviews are presented below. As posited by Schreier (2012), results from qualitative content analysis may be presented in either qualitative or quantitative style. In presenting results in qualitative style, a researcher may organise the results section by categories or by cases (Schreier, 2012). Further, within the qualitative style of presentation, among other strategies, a researcher may choose to describe and illustrate

findings, using continuous text. In this study, a qualitative style of presenting results by categories, using continuous text is adopted. As shown in the final coding frame (Appendix D - Table 34), the main categories are explained below, using continuous text. Each category or dimension, as defined in Appendix D - Table 32, is clarified further by illustrating its subsequent subcategory elements as detailed in the final coding frame (Appendix D - Table 34).

Consistent with using continuous text to describe and illustrate findings, selected illustrative quotations from participants are used to bring the interview participant's voice in providing "a rich description" of each category (Tambling & Johnson, 2010, p.325). In line with keeping the respondents' identity anonymous, a code is assigned to each quotation and represents the interview participants' order in the schedule of interviews. For example, IP10 represents the tenth participant in the interviews. The main categories of the coding frame, which in itself forms a key part of the findings, are discussed below.

5.2.1.1 The behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation

As shown in Table 20, the interview participants perceive their commitment to strategy implementation to be encapsulated in their behaviour or effort directed at the achievement of their organisation's strategic goals. In their view, the commitment to strategy implementation is about the behavioural outcomes reflecting an effort towards the

achievement of or contributing to the company's strategy. These perceptions are therefore categorised into themes that reflect similar behaviour or effort. Thus, for the participating middle managers, the commitment to strategy implementation is characterised by (i) living the strategy; (ii) volitional conduct; (iii) high performance culture; (iv) diligence; and (v) accountability and responsibility. Each of these behavioural elements are clarified below.

The predominant perception among the middle managers is that the commitment to strategy implementation is tantamount to living the strategy. For such participants, living the strategy is exemplified by having a vested interest in the success of the company's strategy. This is further characterised by a commitment to the delivery of set goals or targeted results, reviewing progress on strategic goals and providing feedback. Furthermore, a vested interest in the success of the strategy is characterised by diagnosing the pitfalls associated with underachieving the targeted results, providing alternative solutions in the event of obstacles, selecting a business opportunity based on the optimal contribution to the targeted performance, taking off projects unaligned to strategic goals, and ensuring relevance of customer solutions. The following statements exemplify the participants' perspectives on living the strategy:

"What I do, well, I work night and day towards achieving. I mean that is what I…we do, I mean, we also give feedback and report back in terms of reviewing, where we are with our strategy. We do that on our balanced scorecards" (IP2).

"I am results driven, so, you know, I like to achieve the goals that I have set for myself and that the organisation has set" (IP13).

"Well, we have our own financial reports internally, which I ensure that I interrogate every month and understand what's being achieved, and where the revenue has been generated and where we have fallen short. I like to be proactive about solving that faster and coming up with plans, either with additional incentives or rewards or adding more resources, something like that to make sure that it happens" (IP13).

Besides living the strategy, for participants, the commitment to strategy implementation is further characterised by the volitional conduct in their work roles. The participants' volitional conduct includes taking initiative, innovating, and putting in extra effort by going an extra mile and beyond the call of duty. It also involves volitional involvement in other projects. Some of these elements are captured following interviewees' statements:

"I am definitely hands-on, so I get involved, I don't just delegate. I get involved, I work with my team. I come in and do the extra hours, when they do it as well" (IP20).

"The other thing is I get involved in a lot of other projects out of the…, I don't necessarily have to get involved in, so I get involved in a lot of innovative ideas and I try and add value in other areas …" (IP3).

Furthermore, the participants perceive their commitment to strategy implementation to be characterised by a high-performance culture. The high-performance culture is characterised by timely, intentional and quality delivery; a commitment to meeting key milestones and deadlines; and a strict adherence to project deadlines. A high-performance culture is also reflected in the participants' increased productivity, maintenance of high standards and continuous resource skill nourishment. The following comments by interviewees illustrate some aspects of the high-performance culture.

"And also, to make sure the service delivery is top-notch, first class, so that what we promise is what we deliver because that affects overall our business…" (IP2).

"Well, in the first place, I focus on a high-performance culture, in other words, we are achieving, we meet deadlines, we are productive in projects that we take on" (IP9).

"Well, I just ensure that we adhere to our project plan, and that we adhere to the timelines" (IP15).

Though not as prominent as other themes discussed above, fewer participants perceive their commitment to strategy implementation to include diligence in work roles, and being accountable and responsible. Diligence is reflected by participants' thoroughness; focus on putting in appropriate controls, tracking of performance against targets, and doing things properly. The interviewees' statements below highlight examples of diligent activities by participants.

"There has to be a legal basis, on which to do business; okay, where there are regulations, there is legislation and stuff, so for me, what I am doing is part of the foundation of that strategy...It is putting the stuff in place to make sure that can happen from a proper regulatory legislation compliance perspective" (IP5).

"Certainly, wherever I am involved, I try and put myself…and make sure that that is done, carried through to the end of it, and the real thing is to make sure that everything is done properly" (IP8).

"Ja, I think at the moment, for instance, at this stage, it is pretty much focused on cost controlling and keeping the cost down, so we all need to have that in mind the whole time. If you see big invoices coming through, you always just question it and see if it is really necessary expenses" (1P6).

Lastly, the participants note that being accountable and responsible is a consequence of being committed to the implementation of the company's strategy. Such accountability is reflected by participants' efforts towards communicating with stakeholders on the company's strategy, creating a harmonious environment for strategy implementation, documenting and clarifying required deliverables, and motivating staff. Some of these elements are evident in the following interviewees' statements:

"I think, personally, I try and take accountability, I mean, if you are only as good as what you say, and if you don't do what you say, then you sort of…not implementing, so for me it is a personal feeling, that if I have said that this is what I am going to do, then I try and make sure that I deliver on my personal promise to the

organisation. *I hold my standards quite high, my ethics quiet high and that is what I try and deliver, when I am tasked with something* (IP10).

"I have to document everything, including minutes of every meeting that I hold, and unfortunately, this is the part that I don't like, but I have to follow up with people to ensure that it is whatever they have, whatever their deliverables are being delivered (IP14).

Table 20 : Behavioural manifestation of commitment to strategy implementation

Behavioural category	Manifestation / Characteristics of behaviour
Living the strategy	• Committed to deliver the agreed strategic goals • Reviewing progress and providing feedback on strategic goals • Diagnosing the pitfalls associated with underachieved results • Providing alternative solutions in the event of obstacles
Volitional conduct	• Organisational citizenship behaviours ✓ taking initiative, ✓ innovating, and ✓ going an extra mile or beyond the call of duty
High performance culture	• Timely, intentional and quality delivery exemplified by ✓ meeting key milestones and deadlines ✓ strict adherence to project deadlines ✓ increased productivity ✓ maintenance of high standards • Continuous resource skill nourishment

Behavioural category	Manifestation / Characteristics of behaviour
Diligence	• Thoroughness • Focus, and • Tracking performance against set targets
Accountability and responsibility	• Communicating the strategy with stakeholders • Creating a harmonious environment for strategy implementation • Documenting and clarifying required deliverables and motivating staff.

Source: Compiled by author

5.2.1.2 Antecedent conditions for and behavioural outcomes of affective organisational commitment

The antecedent conditions for, and the behavioural outcomes of participants' affective attachment to their organisation (i.e. affective organisational commitment) are presented in the ensuing sections.

5.2.1.2.1 Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment

As shown in Table 21, interview participants perceive their affective attachment to the organisation to be influenced by several attributes: organisational dynamics; role attributes; and personal considerations. The organisational dynamics include the organisational climate (i.e. *"…integrity of people you are working with…" - IP3);* value congruence

("*…the organisation itself has good values" - IP4);* diversity in the organisation, customer value propositions and the organisation's strategic focus *("I think their broader focus in terms of what they want to achieve" - IP24)*. The additional statements below reflect some of these elements.

> *"I think I enjoy the leadership in this company. It is, I think, quite empowering. There is a lot, I mean there is no hierarchy barriers, you are free to talk to anyone, you are free to interact with any member of Exco. You are free to express your views as long as they are constructive"* (IP1).

> *"Look, the values here resonate with me, so overall, I think I fit the company and I also get an opportunity to contribute to its long-term success"* (IP13).

> *"So, they are very keen to make a difference, to demonstrate a difference in their service profile, their product deployment, which then also excites some of us to ensure that we can also grow within that kind of space"* (IP24).

In addition to organisational dynamics, participants noted that their continued affective attachment to the organisation is based on the dynamics of the roles they occupy. Such role dynamics include the ability

to exercise creativity and innovation ("…*I am allowed to exercise my creativity and innovation"- IP14),* flexibility and variety in role, clarity of role, passion for role and responsibilities, job satisfaction and role autonomy, which allows for decision-making within set mandates.

> *"Doing something different, ja, it is a challenge because it is something that we are not used to"* (IP5).

> *"It is, first and foremost, it is a passion for what I do"* (IP11).

> *"It is the freedom to be able to…I think, it is also the position I am in that gives me the flexibility and freedom to come up with the creative ideas as to…we can take this company forward"* (IP22).

Furthermore, at a personal level, participants' affective commitment to their organisation is predominantly determined by the individuals' perceived contribution to their organisation's success, contribution to industry skills development; personal and professional growth, opportunities to learn, accountability and self-belief. The statements below reflect the participants' perceived contribution to their organisation.

> *("…that commitment to see the company grow"- IP11).*

"I also get an opportunity to contribute to its long-term success" - IP13).

"So, if I look at gross profit margins and income growth, we have been able to overachieve on those areas and that to me, frankly means everything" (IP7).

5.2.1.2.2 The behavioural outcomes of affective organisational commitment

As shown in Table 21, interview participants noted that their affective attachment to the organisation is demonstrated through their (i) volitional or discretionary effort; (ii) focus on envisaged strategic outcomes; (iii) diligence; (iv) responsibility; and (v) determination.

Most interviewees point to their volitional or discretionary effort as reflective of their emotional attachment to their organisation. Such volitional or discretionary effort is characterised by exceptional work ethic: extra hours, working overtime or long hours, extra effort, going beyond the call of duty (for example, *"I really work hard. I really will put in extra hours just to reach my goals" - IP15; "I work very hard. I go the extra mile" - IP23*) and giving the best of one's ability. The discretionary effort is also characterised by participants' willingness to try *(for example, "I am always willing to try anything that the client requests…" - IP9)* and advocacy. In advocacy, participants speak well of the company (*for example, "I do*

speak highly about my organisation outside to people that I do meet that might not have anything to do with the organisation" - IP9; "…and I'll not talk ill about the company externally"- IP15). Besides the exceptional work ethic, willingness to try, and advocacy, participants report that they show pride in working for their organisation, and being accessible and available for support after hours (for example, *"… I am available to them at any given time" - IP22*). The additional statements below by the interview participants reflect some of the highlighted elements:

> *"Uh, it is through exceptional work ethic. If that does make sense, so it is about putting in the effort, it is about putting in the work, it is about putting in the hours. Because I believe that if you show commitment to a company and it is not just a straight 08:00 to 16:00 job, it extends past that"* (IP11).

> *"I think the first thing is you need to be proud to work for the company, you need to be an ambassador in a formal and informal setting"* (IP13).

In addition to volitional or discretionary effort, the participants are of the view that their affective commitment to the organisation drives their focus on achieving the desired strategic outcomes or results. The focus on envisaged strategic outcomes is, thus, characterised by a strong focus on

achieving targeted strategic outcomes, meeting deadlines or key milestones, and getting the job done. It is also characterised by a commitment to see the organisation succeed through contributing to the delivery of the strategy, aligning one's effort to the strategic outcome, and making it a personal goal to achieve targeted outcomes.

> *"I think it is just by delivering work to the best of my ability, and yeah, that is basically it, saying we are going to do this and going out and doing it"* (IP5).

> *"Because I am the person that I am and because I believe in what we are doing, I will go beyond what is expected of me in order to achieve my goals and align myself to the strategy*. …*because I am as committed as what I am, I do everything at my best to make sure that it works, and I love seeing results. I am a results-driven person"* (IP20).

Besides the volitional or discretionary effort and the focus on strategic outcomes, participants also report that their emotional attachment to their organisation is reflected in their diligence towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy. Such diligence is characterised by thoroughness or conscientiousness, efficiency in work role, and constant self-reflection on job performance. This is reflected in the statements below:

"So, I believe that as an individual, if you are committed to the organisation, when it comes to the implementation of that strategy, you will scrutinise it carefully, you will make sure that whatever is getting implemented, it is in line with the overall strategy of the organisation with the overall vision of the organisation, and you will make sure that certainly, the output of it would be a positive one" (IP8).

"So, I think and by virtue of the person, who I am, when I do something, I do it properly. I just am that way. I am not going to do a half-hearted job or a piece-meal job. I am going to commit to it, and I will do it, and I will see it through, and I will do it, you know, as best as possible and in the most efficient way..." (IP20).

"…I just come into work every day and do the best that I can do and you know, I think for me, the constant internal reflection…after I have done something…was that the best you could have done?" (IP22).

Further, being responsible is noted as a key positive attribute of being affectively committed to the organisation. The respondents noted that being responsible is characterised by taking initiative, taking responsibility for delivering targeted results (for example, "…*trying to ensure that you*

deliver results and admit to be part of taking the responsibility onto your own shoulders" - *IP1*), providing feedback or communicating progress towards key milestones. In addition, being responsible includes exerting effort on skills development, ensuring alignment to organisational strategy, and attendance.

Because of the strong focus on achieving the desired strategic outcomes, the participants reported being determined to see such outcomes realised. Their determination is characterised by overcoming obstacles and challenges, and a full commitment to the delivery of strategic outcomes (for example, *"I think the more committed you are, the more you are going to implement the strategy"* - IP4).

> *"Delivering it, is making sure that the job is done. I mean, you come into some real issues. In certain instances, things will run perfectly and you can get companies registered within a couple of weeks. Other markets, you battle and you battle and you battle and you can't push the regulators, and so you just keep on chipping away, and it is a case of just making sure that everyone knows exactly, where you are at and what the challenges are and how you are planning to overcome that"* (IP5).

Furthermore, ethical conduct, as an outcome of affective commitment is characterised by honesty, integrity and keeping promises made.

> *"I am honest and I have integrity and I don't just do what is required of me, I do more than that"* (IP23).

While participants note the positive and enabling aspects of being affectively committed to the organisation, evidently there are negative aspects of a lack of commitment to the organisation. Participants note that these are characterised by indifference to the strategy, a lack of commitment to implementing the strategy (for example, *"But if you are not committed, there will be no delivery at the end of the day" - IP2*), lacklustre or constrained effort towards implementation. In addition, a lack of belief in strategy, inadequate comprehension of the strategy, or poor dissemination of the strategy exemplify such lack of commitment to the organisation and consequently, to the implementation of its strategy. Furthermore, such individuals exhibit little or 'under the radar' approach to strategy implementation, judicious execution of minimum requirements, drag their feet on the deliverables, culminating in mediocre job performance. They are not bothered about strategic outcomes, not invested in the delivery of strategic objective, and compromise the delivery of strategy by not providing feedback on strategy progress.

"I think that if you are not committed to the organisation, certainly your commitment to the implementation of the strategy, it is going to show in one way or the other. If you do carry out the implementation, it won't be carried out to the levels that would probably be necessary. Because you are not committed to the organisation, you really don't care what happens tomorrow. You just do whatever is given to you. You would not question, why it is being given in that fashion and why you are doing it that way, and what would be the consequences, you really don't care about that" (IP8).

Table 21 : Antecedents for and outcomes of affective organisational commitment

Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	**Outcomes of affective organisational commitment (i.e. *predominant themes*)**	**Characteristics of the behaviour**
<u>Organisational dynamics</u> ✓ Organisational climate ✓ Sustainable growth ✓ Leadership ✓ Company credibility ✓ Diversity ✓ Customer value propositions	• Volitional or discretionary conduct	✓ Extra hours ✓ Extra effort ✓ Willingness to try ✓ Giving the best of one's ability
	• Focus on envisaged strategic outcomes	✓ Strong focus on achieving strategic outcomes

Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	**Outcomes of affective organisational commitment (i.e. *predominant themes*)**	**Characteristics of the behaviour**
✓ Strategic focus <u>Role attributes</u> ✓ Creativity ✓ Flexibility and variety ✓ Clarity of role ✓ Passion for role ✓ Job satisfaction ✓ Autonomy <u>Personal considerations</u> ✓ Perceived contribution to the organisation's success ✓ Contribution to industry skills development ✓ Personal and professional growth ✓ Accountability		✓ Meeting deadlines
	• Diligence	✓ Thoroughness or conscientiousness ✓ Efficiency in work role ✓ Constant self-reflection on performance
	• Responsibility	✓ Taking initiative ✓ Taking responsibility for delivering targeted results
	• Determination	✓ Overcoming obstacles ✓ Full commitment to the delivery of strategic outcomes ✓ Making it a personal goal to achieve targeted outcomes

Source: Compiled by author

5.2.1.3 The behavioural outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment

Interview participants, who perceive themselves to be psychologically empowered, expressed (i) a significant degree of congruence between their personal values or beliefs and the requirements of the role they occupy; (ii) an acceptable degree of autonomy in decision-making within their role; (iii) self-confidence in their level of competence; and (iv) a degree of influence on organisational outcomes. As shown in Table 22, for most of the interviewees, the perceived level of psychological empowerment is seen to be a driver of effort in their work roles. In their view, the positive behavioural outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment are accountability and responsibility; energised performance; self-belief or self-confidence; and risk taking. These outcomes are seen as essential in enabling participants' commitment to the implementation of strategy. Each of these outcomes is clarified below.

For most participants, who perceive to be psychologically empowered, being accountable and responsible reflects their psychological empowerment. Such accountability and responsibility is characterised by the company's reliance on the incumbents to deliver strategic outcomes, and the participants' autonomy to make goal-directed decisions, which enable the delivery of targeted results. Further, the independence within the role and freedom to choose one's own pathway to fulfilment of

strategic goals energises individuals to perform in their roles. As illustrated below, the interviewees' statements capture the characteristic essence of accountability and responsibility: company reliance on participant (IP5), owning the decision-making (IP2), and goal-directed decision-making (IP21).

> *"So, the company relies on me, and I am autonomous to go out and basically do what needs to be done"* (IP5).

> *"It* (i.e. autonomy for decision-making*) has a great bearing because at least you then feel responsible and accountable, when making your own decisions"* (IP2).

> *"So, there is a level of decision-making, but ja, it does have an impact because whatever decision I make should be towards achieving the goal, towards supporting the business strategy, the company strategy"* (IP21).

In addition, participants, who perceive to be psychologically empowered, feel energised to perform well in their roles. The energised performance is characterised by participants' absolute trust in their ability to perform, keenness to do their jobs to the best of their ability (for example, "*…I can do the job to the best of my ability…" - IP9*), keenness to deliver on

expectations (for example, "*I certainly believe in what I do, and I certainly believe that I can deliver" - IP14),* the belief that targeted strategic goals are realisable, self-confidence in getting things done and seeking to contribute to the company. As illustrated below, the participants' views highlight the impact of perceived psychological empowerment on their ability to perform, the self-confidence in getting the job done.

> *"So, it* (i.e. autonomy in decision-making) *does make my job a lot easier. It takes out a lot of frustration, which in turn, helps me to be committed to get done, what is to be done"* (IP19).

> *"It* (i.e. autonomy for decision-making) *also just gives me a level of confidence to make sure that I can do my job because I am trusted to do these things and I am trusted with millions of Rands, okay…"* (IP20).

Furthermore, psychologically empowered participants point out that they believe in themselves and are self-confident. Such self-belief or self-confidence is evident in their motivation to do more, put in extra effort, and a positive mindset that drives goal achievement. These elements are reflected in the following participants' statements.

"It (i.e. perceived trust in abilities) *tends to motivate me… Obviously to do more and where there is a need to research, I would research and do much more…"* (IP8).

"So, I think that trust (i.e perceived trust in abilities) *for me goes a long way in building confidence in myself on how I can deliver"* (IP1).

Lastly, in risk-taking, psychologically empowered participants are willing to take risk and try out things until they get done. Risk-taking also involves frequently looking for challenges, the freedom for creative thinking, and the freedom to make mistakes and learn from such mistakes. Participants' views expressed below highlight such characteristics of risk-taking: willingness to take risk (IP13), making mistakes and learning from them (IP13 & IP17), and freedom for creative thinking (IP17).

"I think it boils down to my confidence in my own knowledge and experience, and being somebody, who is willing to take a risk and back themselves to achieve something that is possible" (IP13).

"I think every single day here, people make mistakes, but as long as they are making those mistakes and they are learning from them

in an, uhm, attempt to achieve something, which is better than the current result, then I think they should be allowed to do that" (IP13).

"Yes, I have complete freedom. I have a lot of freedom that makes a huge…if you have freedom, you can think creatively, you can try new things, you can make mistakes. That means that you can grow in ways that maybe the strategy hadn't considered, and then you can feed that back and that is my value that I add" (IP17).

While the above reflect the positive outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment, there are negative effects of perceived lack of empowerment noted by participants, which can affect participants' commitment to the implementation of their organisation's strategy. The negative outcome of perceived lack of psychological empowerment highlighted by participants is the constrained ability to perform and deliver on strategic outcomes. This is characterised by limited autonomy for decision-making or operating within limited mandates, a lack of trust or doubt in own abilities, incongruent value alignment, managerial interference, and frustrations due to having to refer decisions.

The consequences of the constrained ability to perform is exemplified by limited or even failure of implementation, erosion of self-belief, stagnation in role, and reduced commitment to the company. The additional

consequences include slow implementation created by bottlenecks for decision approvals, and where commitment to strategy implementation is hindered.

> *"I suppose, if you don't believe in what you do, and you don't trust yourself, then you won't deliver on it because you will constantly be second-guessing yourself"* (IP23).

Table 22 : Antecedents and outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment

Antecedent conditions for perceived psychological empowerment	**Outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment (*Predominant themes*)**	**Characteristics of the behaviour**
• Congruence between their personal values or beliefs and the requirements of the role they occupy • Acceptable degree of autonomy in decision-making within their role	• Accountability and responsibility	✓ Belief that company relies on individual to deliver on strategic initiatives ✓ Goal-directed decision-making ✓ Choosing own pathway to

Antecedent conditions for perceived psychological empowerment	**Outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment (*Predominant themes*)**	**Characteristics of the behaviour**
• Self-confidence in the level of competence • Perceived contribution to organisational outcomes		deliver on strategic goal.
	• Energised performance	✓ Keenness to do the job to the best of one's ability. ✓ Keenness to deliver on expectations ✓ Belief that the strategic goals are realisable ✓ Seeking to contribute to the company
	• Self-belief or self-confidence	✓ Motivate to do more, put in extra effort ✓ A positive mindset that drives goal achievement

Antecedent conditions for perceived psychological empowerment	Outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment (*Predominant themes*)	Characteristics of the behaviour
		✓ Self-confidence in getting things done
	• Risk taking	✓ Self-confidence in getting things done ✓ Freedom for creative thinking. ✓ Freedom to make mistakes and learn from such mistakes

Source: Compiled by author

5.2.1.4 Middle management's roles in strategy implementation

The findings shown in Appendix D – Table 34, suggest that middle managers play significant roles in the strategy implementation process. Participants report a direct and indirect involvement in the strategy implementation process through a variety of roles. These roles include sense-giving, articulating and communicating the strategy, championing the execution of the strategy, and implementing the strategy.

Through sense-giving, middle managers reportedly contextualise strategic goals within the business area through tactical planning, drawing up implementation road maps, and ensuring departmental alignment to the organisational strategy. Additionally, middle managers have to ensure that departments are aligned with the requirements or needs of the target markets. The essence of the sense-giving role is captured by the following interviewees' comments:

> *"..the rest of us, in terms of middle management, we are more involved in execution of the strategy or developing action plans, tactical plans on how that broader strategy is going to be*" (IP1).

> *"So, we have drawn up a strategy map of how we are going to do that, and…place, and keep people in key roles to make sure we enhance and streamline our businesses"* (IP10).

> *"I certainly play a part, obviously, my area is a support function, so our strategy that we develop to reach our targets. I need to make sure that my area is aligned to that strategy, so that we can attain those goals"* (IP20).

Likewise, in articulating and communicating the strategy, participants report being involved in *"cascading"* (IP2) or *"filtering" (*IP6) the strategy

down the organisation. In articulating the strategy, middle managers clarify strategic objectives, facilitate employee buy-in and engagement, and communicate with relevant internal and external stakeholders. As part of the internal and external communication process, some participants are involved in the design of an appropriate communications strategy. In addition, middle managers are tasked with driving the "*cultural alignment process*" (IP18) in line with new strategic imperatives. As illustrated below, the following interviewees' comments capture the essence of the articulation and communication role played by such participants.

> *"Well, the role is that I have to make sure that whatever strategic direction we have agreed on at the top of the company, have to be cascaded down to my operational level"* (IP2).

> *"I think, employee engagement is at the core, in essence of the strategy implementation because the people need to implement the strategy at the end of the day. So, if you don't have buy-in from the people, you already lost the game before you even start" (IP18).*

> *"I get involved in communication; so, whatever the strategy is, it has got to be communicated to the business and I get involved in that very heavily"* (IP23).

Besides sense-giving and communicating the strategy to internal and external stakeholders, participants indicate that they are responsible for championing the execution of strategy. This role includes capacity-building in terms of resources, performance contracting and management of subordinate staff, and incentive and reward design. In addition, participants highlight the importance of advisory and support roles such as legal, compliance and human resources in guiding core business units in the implementation process. The following interviewees' statements highlight the championing roles played by such participants.

> *"Well, the first thing is to recruit the right people into the right roles"* (IP13).

> *"So, that comes back to performance agreements to make sure that there is a contribution in some way or other towards the strategy"* (IP2).

> *"So, from an organisational perspective, we assist business in terms of recruiting resources for the business. It is on-boarding of employees, it is training and development, it is looking at succession planning. It is looking at reward and remuneration, performance management and then organisational change transformation"* (IP4).

"So, from our side here, from specifically more of a legal compliance, it is actually looking at what are the requirements to actually set up those offices and to actually get those offices registered with the requisite authority" (IP5).

"I then also need to design their key performance indicators and how they are going to be measured. I am also responsible for defining the compensation plans, the incentives and rewards for the people that are involved; the tools and techniques that we use to measure their performance, their actual performance against the budget" (IP13).

In addition to sense-giving, articulating and communicating the strategy, and championing implementation activities, participants are involved in implementing the strategy. This role includes driving the delivery of set targets, seeking new opportunities for growth, and evaluating business opportunities. In addition, implementing the strategy involves driving innovative processes, operational excellence, and streamlining operations in accordance with the requirements of the strategy. Furthermore, this role entails participants' involvement in or leading new projects, tracking progress towards the strategy, and providing feedback to various stakeholders. Some of the highlighted elements of this role are captured in the following interviewees' statements:

"Firstly, it is the growth, we have got growth targets, we need to grow our business, so you have to look at sources of growth, new opportunities, and we go out to identify new clients" (IP1).

"The main strategy is ensuring our clients' success, and the three pillars that sort of support this strategy are innovative processes, performance culture, and, uhm, those are two of those and that is where I see myself, or my input lies quite strongly, especially on the innovative processes, with the business intelligence aspect of my position" (IP9).

*"So, my hands are basically on the ball, when coming to implementing and driving the projects. I am responsible for reporting back to the clients as well as internally" (*IP14).

"Quite a number of elements. I get involved with projects such as we are re-launching or launching a brand-new internet site, and I am project-leading that, so not only the connectivity and the physical elements of it from an IT perspective..." (IP23).

5.2.1.5 Middle management's motives for implementing strategy

In addition to their affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment, interview participants report that they are motivated by several factors to implement their organisation's strategy. As shown in Appendix D – Table 34, these include perceived outcomes, reward and recognition, role dynamics, organisational climate, and personal interests or goals.

Perceived outcomes reported by participants include: achieving the targeted results (i.e. "*seeing the results of the strategies*" - IP20), sustainable growth of the organisation emanating from attainment of strategic goals (i.e. "*see the company growing and be sustainable*" - IP6), and stable and continued employment. Some of these outcomes are evident in the following interviewees' statements:

> *"And then, seeing the fruits of what you are trying to put down on paper come to fruition are the real motivating factors"* (IP10).

> *"I am quite a security conscious type of person, so I like the idea of stable employment and I like the idea that company strategies, you know, speak to that personal concern that I have with them, that we will be around for many years to come and we have been around for many years in the past"* (IP7).

Besides the perceived outcomes highlighted above, participants are also motivated by potential financial rewards such as *"performance bonuses"* (IP7), and *"small profit share" (IP9)*, and other forms of recognition (i.e. *"people complimenting and saying you worked very hard"* - IP1, *"acknowledgement"* - IP23, and *"those little emotive things that are more meaningful than the big grand thing"* - IP23) and client feedback. Some of these elements are evident in the following interviewees' statements:

> *"..because I know, if the company's results look good, I will benefit financially from that through my bonus at the end of the year and through a small profit share"* (IP9).

> *"...I keep my job and secondly, hopefully, we get a reasonable bonus at the end of the year for the effort we have put in. So, you know it is a financial thing and I think that is what most of us are here for, you know, to get some kind of job satisfaction as well"* (IP19).

> *"For me, I think it is firstly at least being recognised as part of the company. I mean, the fact that you're remunerated according to what you give in the organisation, and it is just the love for the job, I guess, passion for what I do"* (IP17).

"I mean, you even get people complimenting and saying you worked hard, I mean, that compliment itself goes a long way. It's recognition, that kind of recognition" (IP1).

In addition to perceived outcomes and recognition, participants highlight the impact of role dynamics as a significant motive for implementing the organisation's strategy. The role dynamics noted by participants include passion for the role they occupy, an evolving role with challenging and new tasks, job satisfaction, satisfactory work–life balance, facilitating innovation and client engagement. For example, from a client engagement perspective, negotiating and clinching deals, providing client solutions and accomplishing favourable client experience are perceived as significant motivating factors in driving the implementation of a client strategy. The statements below highlight some of the elements of the role dynamics by the participants:

"Personally, what motivates me is, I think, I enjoy dealing with clients. From the time, I moved from process underwriting and I found it fulfilling dealing with external clients, you know negotiating and reaching a deal and providing a solution to a client" (IP1).

"I would say that I get a lot of satisfaction out of my job" (IP3).

"I think for me personally, it is something challenging. I mean challenging, learning something new" (IP4).

"I am naturally self-motivated, so I love what I do in terms of the role that I play in the organisation" (IP14).

Further, participants indicate that they are driven by their organisational climate to implement their organisation's strategy. Elements of their organisational climate highlighted include inspirational leadership and support, team support, engagement, participative decision-making, long-term focus, constant need for change, freedom for tactical planning and incentivising behaviour, and clarity of direction. The statements below highlight some of the elements of the organisational climate, which participants consider to be a motive for implementing their organisation's strategy:

"What motivates me is being part of the strategic decision-making process, I guess. I mean, just being part of it is motivation enough to make sure that, I mean, we…at least you're recognised as part of this" (IP2).

"The other thing that motivates me is a belief in my company and a belief in what we are doing and to me that comes from the CEO downwards" (IP3).

"Well, engagement, where we engage each other and we discuss issues that certainly motivates me" (IP8).

Lastly, participants indicate that they are driven by personal interests or goals to implement their organisation's strategy. Such personal considerations include personal worth (i.e. the perceived contribution to the organisation's profitability, growth and sustainability), professional growth, belief in strategy, opportunity to learn or gain new knowledge, a sense of ownership and responsibility, commitment to the organisation, excitement about change, and their passion to achieve results. Some of these elements are captured in the interviewees' statements below:

"Ag, I think eventually…firstly, you want to see the company growing and be sustainable. We all need to contribute to that" (IP6).

"I mean, what else can I say, it is passion, it is commitment and passion towards achievement of that strategy" (IP2).

"I think, it's for me personally, it is the challenge, so I think I try to make sure that I try to learn as much as possible, so, strategy is something, which gives me an opportunity to grow" (IP10).

"I think it is a commitment to the company, and it is a commitment to seeing the company grow. Uhm, I don't think you would have been with the company for so long, if you didn't believe in what they have done" (*IP11).*

"I can't give you one solid answer, but I can tell you, I am motivated by achieving things" (IP23).

5.3 Dialectical synthesis outcomes

As clarified in section 4.7.3.2 of the previous chapter, three basic processes to the dialectical method are the thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The results of the thesis part of the model are captured in inferential statistics clarified in section 5.1 above (i.e. correlational, multiple regression and path analyses results). The outcome of the antithesis is captured in the qualitative findings presented in section 5.2 above.

The synthesis part of the dialectical model seeks to establish the goodness-of-fit between quantitative and qualitative findings, as well as ascertain, whether the quantitatively determined relationships between variables are valid at the level of

meaning. The synthesis was enabled by means of Chi-square tests between respondents' high and low scores on the affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation survey instruments and their experience or non-experience of these phenomena, respectively (as captured in their high and low scores from interview responses assessed through Schreier's (2012) qualitative content analysis). The Chi-square tests for correspondence between high and low scores on the affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation survey instruments and the presence or absence of subjective awareness of each of these phenomena, respectively, are clarified below.

Chi-square test for correspondence between high and low scores on affective organisational commitment

The alternative hypothesis presumed that there is an association between the findings on affective organisational commitment (high and low scores) as measured by the survey instrument and the respective experience of the phenomenon as captured in respondents' high and low scores from interview responses assessed through Schreier's (2012) qualitative content analysis. This presumed that the respondents who scored high on the survey instrument, would clearly express the antecedent conditions for their affective attachment to the organisation. The alternative and null hypothesis are thus stated as follows:

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): *The quantitative and qualitative findings on affective organisational commitment are associated.*

Null hypothesis (H_0): *The quantitative and qualitative findings on affective organisational commitment are not associated.*

The Chi-square test results shown in Table 23 indicate a significant association between quantitative and qualitative findings on affective organisational commitment ($p < 0.05$). That is, there is a significant association between the findings on affective organisational commitment as measured by the survey instrument and the findings on affective organisational commitment based on interview responses. These results suggest that the affective organisational commitment construct appears to be valid at both the quantitative and qualitative levels of analyses. The construct of affective organisational commitment appears to be valid in so far as it is subjectively meaningful and salient to interview participants.

Chi-square test for correspondence between high and low scores on psychological empowerment

The alternative hypothesis presumed that there is an association between the findings on psychological empowerment (high and low scores) as measured by

the survey instrument and the respective experience of the phenomenon as captured in respondents' high and low scores from interview responses assessed through Schreier's (2012) qualitative content analysis. This presumed that the respondents who scored high on the survey instrument, would clearly express their perception or experience of psychological empowerment. The alternative and null hypothesis are thus stated as follows:

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): *The quantitative and qualitative findings on psychological empowerment are associated.*

Null hypothesis (H_0): *The quantitative and qualitative findings on affective organisational commitment are not associated.*

The Chi-squared test results shown in Table 23 indicate a significant association between quantitative findings and qualitative findings on psychological empowerment ($p < 0.05$). That is, there is a significant association between the findings on psychological empowerment as measured by the survey instrument and the findings on psychological empowerment based on interview responses. These results suggest that the psychological empowerment construct appears to be valid at both the quantitative and qualitative levels of analyses. The construct of psychological empowerment appears to be valid in so far as it is subjectively meaningful and salient to interview participants.

Chi-square test for correspondence between high and low score on the commitment to strategy implementation

The alternative hypothesis presumed that there is an association between the findings on the commitment to strategy implementation (high and low scores) as measured by the survey instrument and the respective experience of the phenomenon as captured in respondents' high and low scores from interview responses assessed through Schreier's (2012) qualitative content analysis. This presumed that the respondents, who scored high on the survey instrument, would clearly express any perceived behaviour that reflects concerted effort towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy. The alternative and null hypothesis are thus stated as follows:

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): *The quantitative and qualitative findings on the commitment strategy implementation are associated.*

Null hypothesis (H_0): *The quantitative and qualitative findings on the commitment strategy implementation are not associated.*

The Chi-square test results shown in Table 23 indicate a significant association between quantitative findings and qualitative findings on the commitment to strategy implementation ($p < 0.05$). That it, there is a significant association between the findings on the commitment to strategy implementation as

measured by the survey instrument and the findings on the commitment to strategy implementation based on interview responses. These results suggest that the commitment to strategy implementation construct appears to be valid at both the quantitative and qualitative levels of analyses.

To ascertain whether the quantitatively determined relationships between the constructs were valid at the level of meaning (i.e. valid at the qualitative level), as part of the dialectical synthesis, further exploratory analysis involving the high scores was undertaken. Consistent with the dialectical synthesis, consideration was given to the pattern of responses of high scorers on the interview questions (Appendix D: Tables 36 – 37). To test whether high scorers on affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation subjectively associate their affective attachment to the organisation with their commitment to strategy implementation, a further analysis was undertaken. In total 19 respondents scored high on both affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation (about 19% of the total sample). As shown in Appendix D -Table 33, the analysis showed that 16 of the 19 respondents (84%) subjectively associate their affective attachment to the organisation with their commitment to implement the organisation's strategy. This finding provides support to the hypothesis that high scorers on both affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation would subjectively associate the two. Further, it is evident in the participants' views that, because of their affective attachment to the organisation, they engage

in volitional and discretionary conduct such as "*really working hard*", "*putting in extra hours*" and "*going the extra mile*" to ensure the attainment of strategic outcomes. Overall, the general view of participants is that due to their affective attachment to the organisation, they engage in strategy implementation-supportive behaviours such as volitional conduct, determination and results-orientation. As already clarified above, this outcome corroborates the quantitative findings, which suggest that affective organisational commitment has a direct effect on the commitment to strategy implementation.

Likewise, further analysis of high scorers on psychological empowerment and high scorers on the commitment to strategy implementation (21 respondents) shows that 71% (i.e. 15) of these respondents subjectively associate their perceived psychological empowerment with their commitment to implement their organisation's strategy. This is evident in the participants' views that, because of their perceived psychological empowerment, they are accountable and feel that it is their responsibility to drive the implementation of their organisation's strategic decisions. Because they perceive to be psychologically empowered, respondents indicate that they are accountable and responsible, energised to perform, prepared to take risk and are self-confident to deliver on organisational goals. The subjective association between perceived psychological empowerment corroborates the quantitative findings, which suggest that psychological empowerment has a direct effect on the commitment to strategy implementation.

Table 23 : Dialectical synthesis – Chi-square tests

	Hypotheses: H_A: The quantitative and qualitative findings are associated H_0: The quantitative and qualitative findings are not associated.				Decision
		High Scores	Low Scores	P-Value (α =0.05)	
Affective Commitment	Survey responses	15	16	0.035	Reject H_0
	Interview responses	19	6		
Psychological Empowerment	Survey responses	14	10	0.023	Reject H_0
	Interview responses	21	3		
Commitment to strategy implementation	Survey responses	13	15	0.002	Reject H_0
	Interview responses	21	3		
	Comments: the chi-square tests indicate that in each case (i.e. for each variable above), there is a significant association between the findings of the quantitatively measured variable and the findings of the qualitatively measured variable, indicating that the construct appear to be valid at both the quantitative and qualitative levels of analysis.				

Source: Compiled by author

Overall, the findings of the dialectical synthesis suggest that the constructs under study (affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment, and commitment to strategy implementation) are all subjectively meaningful and that quantitatively and qualitatively generated data correspond with each other. Quantitatively derived relationships are not only supported by subjective associations at a qualitative level, they are also supported by the behavioural mechanisms that underpin the positively determined relationships.

5.4 Chapter Summary

Guided by the data analysis methods clarified in Chapter Four, research findings for the study were presented. The presentation encapsulated findings from the quantitative and qualitative studies, as well as the outcome of the dialectical synthesis. Inferential statistics detailed the results of hypothesis tests through correlation, multiple regression and path analyses. The quantitative results suggest that affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment have a direct effect on the commitment to strategy implementation. The dialectical synthesis ascertained that the quantitatively determined relationships between constructs are valid at the level of meaning (i.e. valid at the qualitative level). Thus, the qualitative results, corroborating the quantitative findings, encapsulate the behavioural mechanism underpinning the quantitatively determined relationships.

Chapter Six: Discussion of research findings

6.0 Introduction

The primary purpose of this study was to discover, whether one's affective attachment to an organisation and perceived psychological empowerment influence their commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy. The focus on the commitment to strategy implementation was founded on the argument that a lack middle management's commitment to strategy implementation results in serious implementation problems (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994). Further, the focus on the influence of managerial psychological states (affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) on the commitment to strategy implementation was in response to Wooldridge et al.'s (2008) call for future research to broaden the investigation into the psychological foundations of middle management behaviour. Therefore, underpinning the discussion and interpretation of findings in this chapter is the substantive proposition that an individual may exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisation's business strategy because of a genuine affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment.

In the main, the discussion attempts to clarify the nature of the hypothesised relationships as well as the underlying behavioural mechanisms underpinning

the hypothesised relationships, which is the core focus of the study. The hypotheses and research questions, clarified in Chapter One, guide the discussion and interpretation of findings.

In the preceding chapter, in line with the adopted convergent parallel mixed-methods research design, findings of quantitative and qualitative analyses are separately presented. Within the convergent parallel mixed methods research design, quantitative and qualitative findings are compared or related to provide an overall interpretation of findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). For example, Voorhees et al. (2006) and Mathwick et al. (2008) adopted this approach, in which the quantitative and qualitative findings are integrated in the discussion of findings. This approach is adopted for this study.

As clarified in Chapter Four (section 4.7.3), the discussions and interpretation of the integrated findings was guided by Fetters et al.'s (2013) narrative approach. Fetters et al. (2013) postulated that integration during interpretation and reporting level can take three approaches: narrative, data transformation, and joint displays. Within the narrative approach, in which quantitative and qualitative findings are described in a single or series of reports, researchers may choose from three approaches: weaving, contiguous and staged approach. The weaving approach involves "writing both qualitative and quantitative findings together on a theme-by-theme or concept-by-concept basis" (Fetters et al., 2013, p.2142). Thus, the weaving narrative integration approach guides the theme-by-theme

discussion of findings in the ensuing sections. In the main, where appropriate and applicable, the discussion of each theme considers the extent to which quantitative findings are corroborated by qualitative findings. The dialectical synthesis enabled the verification of the extent to which quantitatively derived relationships between the phenomena, are valid reflections of real and meaningful associations in the minds of the study participants.

Prior to delving into the discussion of the findings on the hypothesised relationships, the general meaning of the phenomena being studied as perceived by the study participants is clarified. The commitment to strategy implementation construct, as a key dependent variable in this study, is clarified upfront to highlight the fact that the construct appears to be valid at both the quantitative and qualitative levels of analyses. The discussion on the role of middle managers in strategy implementation sets the context, in which the hypothesised relationships are to be understood. The discussion on the findings on the hypothesised relationships, the core focus of this study, follows on from the clarification of the role middle managers play in the implementation of strategy. Ultimately, additional peripheral outcomes of the study are discussed.

6.1 The general meaning of the commitment to strategy implementation

The commitment to strategy implementation, as a key dependent variable of this study, warrants a brief discussion on how interview participants perceived it. First, the dialectical synthesis enabled through the Chi-square test confirmed that

there is a statistically significant association between the findings on the commitment to strategy implementation as measured by the survey instrument and the findings on the commitment to strategy implementation based on interview responses. This finding suggests that the commitment to strategy implementation construct appears to be valid at both the quantitative and qualitative levels of analyses.

Second, the qualitative findings offer an interesting dimension on how the commitment to strategy implementation is perceived. While prior studies highlighted the importance of the commitment to strategy implementation in the failure of strategies (Ayande et al., 2012; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a; Guth & MacMillan, 1986), nothing much is offered in the literature in terms of clarity on the behavioural characteristics that constitute the commitment to strategy implementation. Even though Parnell (2008) defined commitment to strategy implementation as “the degree to which managers are determined to see the strategy effectively implemented, ultimately becoming part of the organisation” (p.1280), he did not offer clarity on what behavioural characteristics constitute the determination to see the strategy effectively implemented.

Interestingly, the findings of the qualitative study pinpoint the behavioural outcomes that exemplify the commitment to strategy implementation. These behavioural attributes have been grouped into themes that characterise similar behaviour or effort towards the achievement of, or contributing towards, the

implementation of the organisation's business strategy. The strategy implementation-supportive behaviours are (i) living the strategy; (ii) volitional or discretionary conduct; (iii) high performance culture; (iv) diligence in work roles; and (v) accountability and responsibility. Essentially, these behavioural outcomes highlight a myriad of ways, in which the commitment to strategy implementation is perceived. However, considering that most responses were skewed towards three characteristics (i.e. living the strategy, volitional or discretionary conduct and high performance culture), it can be construed that these elements therefore form the core behavioural characteristics of the commitment to strategy implementation.

Juxtaposing this study's findings with the elements of the Strategic Diffusion Scales, the behavioural characterisation of the commitment to strategy implementation brings depth and richness, in which this phenomenon may be construed. More importantly, each of these behavioural elements offers an alternative lens, through which the commitment to strategy implementation may be examined. Perceiving the commitment to strategy implementation in behavioural terms suggests that in the participants' mind, their commitment to strategy implementation is evidently observable in efforts directed at contributing to the achievement of the organisation's strategic goals or priorities. For example, it would be quite possible to assess, whether one is living the organisation's strategy or not by considering the extent to which study participants are focused on delivering set goals, tracking progress on strategy

milestones, and diagnosing the pitfalls associated with underachieving the key milestones. The same can be said of the volitional or discretionary conduct. Individuals' commitment to strategy implementation can be seen in participants' taking of initiatives, innovating and putting in extra effort by going an extra mile and beyond the call of duty. Further, the commitment to strategy implementation is evident in timely, intentional and quality delivery; strict adherence to project deadlines, increased productivity, maintenance of high standards and continuous resource skill nourishment.

The above behavioural outcomes reflect Meyer and Herscovitch's (2001) view that commitment is an obliging force that gives direction to behaviour. Hence, the commitment to strategy implementation is reflected in behaviours that are consistent with the successful implementation of strategy, i.e. living the strategy, volitional or discretionary conduct, and a high-performance culture.

6.2 Middle management's role in strategy implementation

Arguably, middle managers play significant roles in the implementation of organisational strategies (Floyd & Wooldridge 1997; Salih & Doll, 2013; Smith et al., 2010). As this study focused on middle managers, it is essential to clarify the perceived influence they have in the strategy implementation process. Therefore, clarifying the role that middle managers play in the strategy implementation process provides a substantial anchor, upon which the findings on the hypothesised relationships in this study can be understood.

Studies that have taken a middle management perspective have made significant contributions to research in strategy by highlighting the strategic roles middle managers play in the strategy process (Wooldridge et al., 2008). Specifically, the middle management's influence in strategy implementation is widely acknowledged in the extant literature. Such influence comes from the various strategic roles that middle managers play in the execution of strategy. The identified strategic roles within the extant literature include facilitating organisational adaptability and implementing the deliberate strategy (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1997), sense-making (Balogun, 2003; Rouleau, 2005; Weick et al., 2005) and sense-giving (Rouleau, 2005; Smith et al., 2010). The efforts made by middle managers within these roles reinforce their legitimacy, clarify expectations, enhance motivation and ultimately, impact successful change efforts as well as firm performance (Smith et al., 2010).

The findings of this study are consistent with the view that middle managers play a strategic role in the implementation of the organisation's business strategy. The identified roles that middle managers play in the implementation of business strategy are sense-giving, articulating and communicating the strategy, championing the execution of strategy, and implementing the strategy.

Through sense-giving, middle managers reportedly contextualise strategic goals within their business areas through tactical planning, drawing up implementation road maps, and ensuring departmental alignment to the organisation's business

strategy. They ensure that their departments are aligned to the requirements or needs of the targeted markets. Likewise, the sense-giving role is eminently espoused in the literature. Through sense-giving, middle managers influence others on how to construct meaning of the strategy (Smith et al., 2010). It is an essential and influential process, through which "strategic change is framed and disseminated to an organisation's constituents" (Fiss & Zajac, 2006, p.1173). Smith et al. (2010) noted that through everyday sense-giving, managers can influence how employees view the organisation and its values. Similarly, Fiss and Zajac (2006) highlighted in their study how sense-giving via framing and decoupling was used in the symbolic management of strategic change.

Besides sense-giving, middle managers' strategic influence involves *"cascading"* or *"filtering"* the strategy down the organisation through articulating and communicating the strategy. In articulating and communicating the strategy, middle managers clarify strategic objectives, facilitate employee buy-in and engagement, and communicate with relevant internal and external stakeholders. Middle managers also drive the "*cultural alignment process*" in line with new strategic imperatives. Such influence is aimed at shaping the organisation's readiness for implementation. In similar vein, Katoma and Ungerer (2011) noted that middle managers' influence, through communicating about the strategy in a local authority environment, is a key enabler in the execution of strategy.

In addition to sense-giving, and articulating and communicating the strategy to internal and external stakeholders, middle managers influence the implementation process through championing the execution of strategy. This involves bringing in the required resources, translating the strategic objectives into the individual's performance targets, and managing performance of subordinate staff. It also involves the design of an incentive and rewards structure aligned to the desired performance. Such kind of influence is inherent in middle management's roles such as facilitating organisational adaptability and implementing deliberate strategy as noted by Floyd and Wooldridge (1992b).

Lastly, middle managers play a key role in implementing the strategy. As evident in the findings, this role involves driving the delivery of set targets, and seeking and evaluating new business opportunities for growth. It also involves driving innovative processes and operational excellence, and streamlining operations in accordance with the requirements of the strategy. Furthermore, this role entails participants' involvement in or leading new projects, tracking progress towards the strategy, and providing feedback to various stakeholders.

Thus, the findings on the strategic roles played by managers suggest that middle management's influence is essential for the successful implementation of business strategy. As facilitators (Katoma & Ungerer, 2011), middle management's strategic influence facilitates organisational adaptability and the successful implementation of deliberate strategy (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992b).

6.3 The direct effects of managerial psychological states on the commitment to strategy implementation

Floyd and Wooldridge (1994) posited that middle management's lack of commitment to the implementation of an organisation's strategy may result in serious implementation problems. Consequently, prior studies have suggested potential antecedent conditions for middle managers' commitment to the implementation of an organisation's strategy. The suggested antecedent conditions include self-interest (Guth & MacMillan, 1986), managerial perceptions, i.e. perceived ability, perceived probability of success, perceived consistency between personal goals and strategic change (Judge & Stahl, 1995); participative strategic decision-making (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013; Brenes, Mena, & Molina, 2008; Dooley et al., 2000; Kohtamäki et al., 2012); strategic consensus (Dooley et al., 2000; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a; Kellermanns et al., 2011); strategic knowledge and perceived organisational trust (Gagnon et al., 2008); and middle managers' perception of senior management support for the strategy (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013). However, the psychological foundations of middle managers' behaviour, as antecedent conditions for their commitment to strategy has rarely been researched (Wooldridge et al., 2008). Thus, this study examined, quantitatively and qualitatively, the direct effects of middle management's psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) on the commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy. The results of the study, as summed up in Appendix E – Table 38, are discussed in detail below.

6.3.1 The direct effects of affective organisational commitment on the commitment to strategy implementation

As postulated by Pituch and Stevens (2016), the three conditions necessary to infer causality are association, isolation and temporal precedence. This being a non-experimental and cross-sectional study, causal inference analysis, a bane of controversy in social sciences, was not attempted. Coldwell (2007) posited that “even the most elaborate and rigorous new approaches fall short of causal explanations” (p.3). It is not the purpose of this study to wallow into that controversy, however, an attempt is made to clarify the meaning of quantitatively derived relationships at a qualitative level. This is accomplished through the dialectical synthesis as elaborately explained in the previous chapter. Because the dialectical approach is dynamic and continually open to modification and change (Coldwell, 1985), the synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings undertaken in this study provides a basis for explanations that are adequate on the level of meaning.

The dialectical synthesis offers the verification of the extent to which quantitatively derived relationships between the phenomena are valid reflections of real and meaningful associations in the minds of the study participants. As ascertained through the synthesis part of the dialectical model, the Chi-square test results indicate a significant association between the quantitative and qualitative findings on affective organisational commitment, thus suggesting that

the affective organisational commitment construct appears to be valid at both the quantitative and qualitative levels of analyses.

The findings from the thesis part of the dialectical model (i.e. quantitative findings), as encapsulated in the partial correlation, multiple regression and path analysis results, reveal the relationships presumed in the study. The correlation results provide some clarity on the nature of relationships between variables. As noted by Miller et al. (2002), correlation results inform us of the direction of association (positive or negative), whether the relationship is statistically significant (as determined by p-value against the significance level of testing), and the strength of the association (as reflected by the level of the correlation coefficient). The partial correlation results, therefore, show a moderate positive partial correlation between affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation. In other words, this outcome suggests that individuals who are affectively attached to their organisation are more likely to be committed to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy.

Further, multiple regression analysis, essential in determining (i) the total proportion of criterion variance explained by the predictor variables, and (ii) the relative importance of each predictor variable (Kline, 2005), was undertaken. The multiple regression analysis results reveal that affective organisational commitment makes a statistically significant unique contribution to the prediction of the commitment to strategy implementation.

In addition, path analysis, which enables the assessment of the direct effects of independent variables on the dependent variable (Alwin & Hauser, 1975; Duncan, 1966; Kline, 2005) was undertaken. The direct effect reflects “how much change in a consequent variable is induced by a given shift in an antecedent variable, irrespective of the mechanisms, by which the change may occur” (Alwin & Hauser, 1975, p.39). Likewise, the results from path analysis show that the path from affective organisational commitment achieved a statistically significant relationship with the commitment to strategy implementation, thus supporting the hypothesis that affective organisational commitment has a direct positive effect on the commitment to strategy implementation. In sum, the quantitative findings suggest that individuals, who are emotionally attached to, identify with and desire to continue working for their organisation (i.e. affectively attached to their organisation), are more likely to exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisation’s business strategy.

The quantitatively derived relationships (through correlation, multiple regression and path analyses clarified above) are further corroborated by the synthetic findings that show that interview respondents subjectively associate their affective attachment to the organisation with their commitment to implement their organisation’s business strategy. This outcome suggests that the quantitatively determined relationships between variables are valid at the level of meaning (i.e. qualitative level).

Further, the behavioural mechanisms underpinning the quantitatively determined relationships are captured in the antithetic (qualitative) findings, which provide insights into the respondents' subjective association of their affective attachment to the organisation with the commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy. Corroboratively, the antithetic (qualitative) findings show that respondents, who are affectively attached to their organisation, exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisation's strategy. Because of their genuine affective attachment to the organisation, they engage in volitional or discretionary effort and are focused on the delivery of the anticipated strategic outcomes. In addition, they are diligent in their work roles, take responsibility for strategic outcomes and are determined to achieve set strategic milestones. Such individuals want to make meaningful contributions to their organisation. The engagement in strategy implementation-supportive behaviours is consistent with Barton and Ambrosini's (2013) assertion that a commitment to strategy "may be manifested in terms of a heightened sense of ownership of a strategy" (p.726). Thus, individuals, who are affectively committed to their organisations are likely to take ownership of their organisation's strategy and, are bound to contribute to its successful execution. The volitional effort, focus on and responsibility for strategic outcomes, diligence and determination to achieve set strategic milestones suggest a behavioural manifestation of a heightened ownership of strategy. Thus, the findings of this study provide evidence that suggests that individuals' affective attachment to their

organisations may positively influence their efforts towards the implementation of their organisations' strategy.

As noted by Pinder (1998), effort is recognised as a consequence and a primary indicator of motivation. The findings of the current study suggest that middle managers' affective organisational commitment is a source of motivation towards the implementation of the organisation's strategy. The exertion of effort is reflected in middle management's strategy implementation-supportive behaviours such as volitional conduct, focus on envisaged strategic outcomes, diligence and determination. This is consistent with prior studies, which suggest that affectively committed individuals experience more autonomous forms of regulation (Gagné et al., 2008; Galletta et al., 2011; Meyer et al., 2004). Likewise, research outcomes in the study by Meyer et al. (2012) suggest that an affective commitment-dominant profile is positively associated with the satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. As the findings show, affective commitment to the organisation engenders strategy implementation-supportive behaviours, which are deliberate and intentional. Thus, middle managers' influence on the execution of the organisation strategy is more likely to be impacted by their affective commitment to the organisation.

The findings of this study, though not directly corroborated by the outcomes of prior studies, appear to be in line with other studies suggesting that affective organisational commitment has an impact on both individual and organisational

outcomes. The general impact of affective organisational commitment within organisations and its motivational prospects is widely acknowledged in the extant literature. For example, Gellatly et al. (2006) argued that employees with a strong affective attachment to their organisation will persist with extra effort in their job, volunteer to do additional tasks, and help others. Their strong belief in and acceptance of organisational goals and the desire to maintain organisational membership drives their willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation (Lee et al., 2010). Further, Mowday et al. (1977) posited that organisational commitment, as an attitudinal perspective, connotes an active involvement in the organisation, through which individuals are willing to make a meaningful contribution.

While the findings point predominantly to positive effects of affective organisational commitment on the commitment to strategy implementation, there are evidently negative aspects. The qualitative findings indicate that a lack of affective commitment to the organisation may impede or curtail the commitment to strategy implementation through indifference to the strategy; lacklustre or mediocre effort towards implementation, lack of belief in the strategy; inadequate comprehension of the strategy, and poor dissemination of the strategy. Individuals lacking in affective commitment to the organisation may exhibit little or ‘under-the-radar’ effort to strategy implementation by showing judicious execution of the minimum requirements on the job. These outcomes suggest that while affective organisational commitment has a positive impact on the

commitment strategy implementation, a lack of affective commitment may have detrimental effects on the implementation of strategy.

6.3.2 The direct effect of perceived psychological empowerment on the commitment to strategy implementation

The findings from the thesis part of the dialectical model (i.e. quantitative findings), as encapsulated in the partial correlation, multiple regression and path analysis results, reveal the relationship between psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation, which was presumed in the study. The partial correlation results show a moderate positive partial correlation between psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation. Further, the multiple regression analysis results reveal that psychological empowerment makes a statistically significant unique contribution to the prediction of the commitment to strategy implementation. Psychological empowerment was found to be more predictive of the commitment to strategy implementation than affective organisational commitment.

Likewise, path analysis findings show that the path from psychological empowerment achieved both practical (standardised coefficient in excess of the 0.300 criterion) and statistical significance, thus supporting the hypothesis that psychological empowerment has a direct positive effect on the commitment to strategy implementation. Further, it is evident from path coefficients that the direct effect of perceived psychological empowerment is greater than that of the

affective attachment to the organisation. In sum, the quantitative findings suggest that individuals, who perceive work goals to be aligned to personal beliefs and values (i.e. meaning); have discretion in decision-making (i.e. self-determination); believe that they possess skills and abilities to perform well in their roles (i.e. competence); and believe that they can influence work strategic and administrative outcomes (i.e. impact), are predisposed to exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisation's business strategy.

As ascertained through the synthesis part of the dialectical model, the Chi-square test results indicate a significant association between quantitative and qualitative findings on psychological empowerment. This suggests that the psychological empowerment construct appears to be valid at both the quantitative and qualitative levels of analyses. This outcome suggests that the quantitatively determined relationships between psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation, are valid at the level of meaning (i.e. at the qualitative level). This is evident in the synthetic findings, in which respondents subjectively associate their perceived psychological empowerment with their commitment to implement their organisation's strategy, an outcome that corroborates the quantitative findings.

Further, the behavioural mechanisms underpinning the quantitatively determined relationships are captured in the antithetic (qualitative) findings, which provide insights into the respondents' subjective association of their psychological

empowerment with their commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy. Corroboratively, the antithetic (qualitative) findings show that middle managers who perceive to be psychologically-empowered will exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisation's strategy. This is reflected in their strategy implementation-supportive behaviours such as taking accountability and responsibility for strategic outcomes, energised to perform, and risk-taking.

The findings of this study, though not directly corroborated by the outcomes of prior studies, appear to be in line with studies suggesting that psychological empowerment influences both individual and organisational outcomes. While prior studies highlight the impact of psychological empowerment in general on individual and organisation outcomes, the findings of this study established a positive direct link between psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation. This finding is consistent with several studies that suggest that psychological empowerment has an effect of individual outcomes. Arguably, employees who perceive to be psychologically empowered, are intent on fulfilling or exceeding their work-role expectations, and will engage in innovative work behaviours (Spreitzer, 1995; Seibert et al., 2011; Sangar & Rangnekar, 2014). As good organisational citizens, they would demonstrate persistence and resourcefulness in accomplishing difficult work assignments (Seibert et al., 2011). Further, as argued by Thomas and Velthouse (1990), psychological empowerment energises and sustains an individual's behaviours

such as focused effort, flexibility in task accomplishment, initiation of new tasks in light of problems or opportunities, and resiliency to obstacles.

While the above findings reflect the positive outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment, there are negative aspects of perceived lack of psychological empowerment. The perceived lack of psychological empowerment emanates from limited autonomy for decision-making, self-doubt in own abilities, incongruent value alignment, and managerial interference. The perceived lack of psychological empowerment results in constrained ability to perform. The consequences of the constrained ability to perform are exemplified by limited or even failure of implementation, erosion of self-belief; stagnation in the role, and a lack of commitment to the company. Additional consequences include slow implementation created by bottlenecks for decision approvals. These consequences can hinder the commitment to strategy implementation

6.4 Additional peripheral outcomes of the study

In the main, this study sought to establish how middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and psychological empowerment influence their commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy. As explained above, the findings of the study suggest that affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment potentially can stimulate the exertion of considerable efforts towards the implementation of the organisation's strategy by middle managers. However, there are additional findings, which merit further

discussions, as these findings create context, for which the overall outcomes of this study can be understood. These additional outcomes are discussed in the ensuing sections.

6.4.1 The antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment

While the main focus of this study was to explore effect of affective organisational commitment on the commitment to strategy implementation, it was essential to clarify the perceived antecedent conditions for the participants' affective attachment to their organisation. The affective organisational commitment, as a key independent variable of this study, warrants further discussion on how interview participants perceived it. The findings of the dialectical synthesis suggest that there is a significant association between the findings on affective organisational commitment as measured by the survey instrument and the findings based on interview responses. This suggests that affective organisational commitment appears to be valid at both the quantitative and qualitative levels of analysis.

A variety of studies have highlighted numerous factors as antecedents of individuals' affective attachment to their organisations. These include job challenge, role clarity, goal difficulty, management receptiveness, organisational dependability, personal importance, participation, equity and peer cohesion (Allen & Meyer, 1990b); corporate culture (Rashid, Sambasivan, & Johari, 2003); employee trust in the firm, employee satisfaction and relational norms (Martin,

2008); transformational leadership (Bučiūnienė & Škudienė, 2008; Lee, 2005), organisational socialisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990a); job satisfaction (Fu et al., 2009; Lumley et al., 2011), and perceived organisational support (Fu et al., 2009). Similarly, this study suggests that participants' affective attachment to their organisation is based on several attributes. These are organisational dynamics, role attributes and personal considerations. The organisational dynamics include the organisational climate, sustainable growth, organisational leadership, company credibility, diversity in the organisation, organisation's customer value propositions and the organisation's strategic focus.

In addition, the role attributes include the ability to exercise creativity and innovation; flexibility and variety in one's role, clarity of role; passion for role and responsibilities; job satisfaction and autonomy for decision-making. Furthermore, personal considerations include one's perceived contribution to the organisation's success; contribution to industry skills development; personal and professional growth; opportunities to learn, and accountability. These antecedent conditions capture the essence, which participants are emotionally attached to, identify with, and desire to continue working for their organisation.

Juxtaposing this study's outcome with what is published in the extant literature, it is quite clear that this study's outcomes are largely consistent with the outcomes of prior studies. However, there are a few exceptions. The additional antecedents suggested by this study that are not commonly highlighted in the

extant literature include organisational growth, diversity in the organisation, the organisation's customer value propositions, the organisation's strategic focus; autonomy for decision-making, flexibility and variety in role; passion for role; perceived contribution to their organisation's success, and personal and professional growth. Thus, this study suggests additional variables that may be considered as antecedents of affective organisational commitment.

6.4.2 The motive to implement business strategy

In the main, this study sought to explore the relationship between antecedent conditions of middle management's involvement in strategy implementation (i.e. the psychological foundations of middle managers' behaviour) and the intermediate individual outcomes (i.e. the commitment to strategy implementation). As discussed above, the findings of the study suggest that managerial psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) have a direct positive effect on stimulating the exertion of considerable efforts towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy. However, peripheral data obtained during interviews suggest that besides the organisational member's affective attachment to their organisation and perceived level of psychological empowerment, there are other possible stimulants of organisational members' effort to implement their organisation's strategy. This outcome corroborates the quantitative findings. As evident in the multiple regression and path analyses results, there is a significant unexplained variance in the dependent variable (i.e. the commitment to strategy

implementation). Though the predictor variables (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) account for 37.4% variance (based on the adjusted R^2) in the dependent variable (i.e. the commitment to strategy implementation), a significant variance of 62.6% in the dependent variable is explained by other factors not captured in the regression model. Similarly, the path analyses show that 61.2% of the variance (based on the R^2) in the commitment to strategy implementation, is unexplained by the variables specified in the path model as its direct causes. This variance is what is termed the error or disturbance and is commonly presented by circles or ellipses in path diagrams (Kline, 2005; Meyers et al., 2005). As noted by Kline (2005), disturbances represent variance in the dependent variable unexplained by the variables specified as its direct causes. Thus, disturbances represent all causes of an dependent variable that are omitted from the structural model (Kline (2005). Indeed, besides affective organisational commitment and the perceived psychological empowerment, there other factors that will affect one's commitment to the implementation of their organisation's strategy.

Because the interviews elicited the respondents' views on their motives for committing to the implementation of their organisation's strategy, the outcome of the analysis of such views suggest that the unexplained variance in the commitment to strategy implementation highlighted in the regression and path analysis, may lie in the following factors: (i) perceived outcomes, (ii) reward and

recognition, (iii) role dynamics, (iii) organisational climate, and (iv) personal interests and goals.

These research findings suggest that there are intrinsic and extrinsic motives that regulate middle managers' behaviour towards achievement or non-achievement of organisational strategy. Extrinsic motives are based on a perceived contingency such as reward or undesirable consequence (external motive); anxiety or guilt (introjected motive); personal goals (identified motive) or identity, personal values and interests (integrated motives) (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Sheldon et al., 2003). Intrinsic motives are based on an individual's interest in an activity (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Evidently, the research findings point to a variety of motives for implementing strategy: external (perceived outcomes; financial reward), identified (personal interests; recognition), integrated (organisational climate), and intrinsic (role dynamics).

The motivation behind the perceived outcomes include "*seeing the results of the strategies*", sustainable growth of the organisation, and stable and continued employment. Likewise, the motivation behind reward and recognition is the potential for *"performance bonuses"* and profit share, compliments and acknowledgements. Within role dynamics, the motivation is driven by a passion for the role, challenging and new tasks, job satisfaction, and facilitating innovation. Further, elements of organisational climate, which drive behaviour, include inspirational leadership and support, team support, participative

decision-making, long-term focus, constant need for change, freedom for tactical planning and incentivised behaviour, and clarity of direction. Lastly, the personal interest to implement the strategy derives from a sense of personal worth (i.e. perceived contribution to the organisation's profitability, growth and sustainability), professional growth, belief in strategy, opportunity to learn or gain new knowledge, a sense of ownership and responsibility, commitment to the organisation, excitement about change, and the passion to achieve targeted results.

Thus, these factors, potentially, represent some causes of the dependent variable that are omitted from the constructed path model for this study. Though the above factors were determined via the interview data, no additional quantitative data was observed on them, rendering it impossible to bring these factors into the structural model. However, these factors present an opportunity to build an expanded path model for the commitment to strategy implementation in future studies. Such expanded model may allow for some of the factors to be tested for their mediation impact.

6.4.3 Self-determination theory

As argued by Smith (2010), motivation theories may help explain strategy implementation. Specifically, Meyer et al. (2004) argued that embedding commitment within a general motivation framework can help explain how commitment exerts influence on employee behaviour. In this regard, the positive

relationship established between affective organisational commitment and commitment to strategy implementation, and associated mechanism underpinning the relationship, suggest that indeed, affective organisational commitment is potentially a source of motivation for individuals to exert considerable efforts towards the implementation of the organisation's strategy. Because autonomous motivation is related to affective organisational commitment (Gagné et al., 2008; Galletta et al., 2011), and the fact that commitment in turn contributes to motivated and intentional behaviour, the study findings are consistent with this view as highlighted in both quantitative and qualitative outcomes. In essence, affective organisational commitment contributes to psychological needs' satisfaction and enhances employees' internalisation of extrinsic motivation. The desire to live the organisational strategy and the determination to ensure its delivery suggests that such efforts are largely driven by fully autonomous motivation, i.e. identified or integrated.

Likewise, psychological empowerment is a source of autonomous motivation in that employees, who feel psychologically empowered, have internalised the values associated with engagement in autonomous, self-determined activities and are more likely to engage in challenging extra-role behaviours (Raub & Robert, 2010). The positive relationship established between psychological empowerment and commitment to strategy implementation, as well as associated mechanism underpinning the relationship suggest that indeed, psychological empowerment is a source of motivation for individuals to engage

in extra-role behaviours directed at the implementation of the organisation's strategy. Thus, psychological empowerment contributes to psychological needs satisfaction and enhances employees' autonomous motivation to take full accountability and responsibility for the delivery of the strategy.

6.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed in detail the findings presented in Chapter Five. The discussion was guided by a weaving narrative integration approach in the interpretation and reporting of research findings. The weaving and dialectical synthesis approaches enabled convergence and corroboration of findings between quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

Guided by findings presented in Chapter Five, this chapter firstly discussed in detail middle management's strategic influence imperative; an essential contextual basis of this study. This aspect dealt with how middle managers influence the execution process (i.e. strategic influence).

Further, the chapter clarified how quantitative and qualitative findings addressed key propositions linked to the primary research question. The discussions centred on the role of managerial psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) in strategy implementation. More importantly, while quantitative findings clarified the nature of the hypothesised relationships, the behavioural mechanisms underlying these

hypothesised relationships were illuminated by qualitative findings, which provided insights on how the relationships manifested. Furthermore, the outcomes were positioned within a body of the existing literature, where possible, to highlight concurrences or non-concurrences with outcomes of prior research. Ultimately, these discussions informed the basis for the conclusion and recommendations addressed in the following chapter.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions and recommendations

7.0 Introduction

This study set out to explore the role of managerial psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) in the commitment to strategy implementation. As a final chapter of the thesis, this chapter therefore captures the conclusions and recommendations emanating from the findings and the discussions thereof presented in Chapters Five and Six. This chapter provides an overview of the key arguments of the study, the extent to which study findings address the research questions and the implications of the study. Ultimately, recommendations for further research are provided and the concluding remarks draw the study to a close.

7.1 Overview of key arguments of the study

While strategy implementation is a source of competitive advantage (Lippitt, 2007; Olson et al., 2005) and a driver of organisational performance outcomes (Jooste & Fourie, 2009; Markides, 2004; Noble & Mokwa, 1999; Pindelski & Mrowka, 2011), failure to implement the chosen strategy often has severe consequences for an organisation. Such consequences include the (i) erosion of shareholder value through a drop in share prices for a listed entity; (ii) increased costs of borrowing due to the drop in an entity's credit rating; and (iii) exploitation

of an organisation's apparent weaknesses by competitors, resulting in its collapse or takeover by such competitors (Eicher, 2006). Strategies may fail because of poor formulation (Markides, 1999; Rumelt, 2011) or unpredictable changes in the external business environment (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). However, ineffective execution of strategy is arguably the most significant factor in failure of strategies (Mankins & Steele, 2005; Noble, 1999, Neilson et al., 2008; Speculand, 2009).

Efforts by scholars have predominantly focused on exploring the barriers or obstacles to strategy implementation. Several barriers to strategy implementation highlighted in the extant literature are associated with middle managers' involvement in the implementation process (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a, 1992b, 1994; 1997; Guth & MacMillan, 1986; Salih & Doll, 2013). In particular, middle management's lack of commitment to strategy implementation is considered a significant contributor to the failure of strategies (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994; Noble, 1999; Parnell, 2008; Parnell, Carraher, & Holt, 2002,). As opined by Floyd and Wooldridge (1994), "Strategies that lack middle management's commitment to strategy implementation suffer serious implementation problems" (p.49). A lack of commitment to an organisation's strategy may lead to counterproductive efforts such as redirecting the strategy, delaying its implementation; reducing the quality of implementation and even sabotaging the strategy (Guth & MacMillan, 1986). In addition, the lack of commitment to a strategy may result in half-hearted actions and effort (Floyd &

Wooldridge, 1992b), and may trigger resistance to strategic change (Ayande, Sabourin, & Sefa, 2012). Therefore, securing middle managers' commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy is an essential step towards the successful delivery of the organisation's business strategy.

While securing middle managers' commitment to the implementation of strategy is essential for the delivery of an organisation's business strategy, few empirical studies shed light on the antecedent conditions for managerial commitment to the implementation of strategy. Specifically, as noted by Wooldridge et al. (2008), there is evidently a lack of empirical attention given to the impact of psychological foundations of middle management behaviour in strategy implementation. Especially missing within the strategy implementation research is the direct link between the antecedent conditions for middle managers' involvement in strategy implementation (for example, the psychological foundation of middle management behaviour) and the intermediate outcome (for example, the commitment to strategy implementation). Because of the lack of empirical attention given to the direct link between middle managers' psychological states (for example, affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) and their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy, this study set out to explore this link. Exploring this gap is important because the value created during strategy implementation is due to the voluntary, self-motivated actions of the individual employee, who is committed to the delivery of the strategy (Smith, 2010).

The focus on the influence of affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment is based on their impact on individual and organisational outcomes. Suggestions in the literature point to employee empowerment and organisational commitment as an essential driver for organisational effectiveness, efficiency and performance (Martin, 2008; Zeffane & Al Zaroomi, 2012*),* engagement in creative and innovative behaviours (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) and the exertion of considerable effort towards goal achievement (Lee et al., 2010). In this light, the study set out to investigate how middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) influence their commitment to strategy execution, using a convergent parallel mixed methods research design.

The review of extant literature highlighted the methodological pluralism associated with research in strategy implementation. Multiple perspectives (for example, structural, behavioural or interpersonal process, individual-level process, and strategy-as-practice); theories (for example, resources-based, contingency, institutional, and expectancy theory of motivation) and methods (quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods) are a common feature of research in strategy implementation. Methodological pluralism informed the positioning of the study within the individual-level process perspective, the adoption of the self-determination theory framework and the use of the mixed-methods research design (i.e. methodological triangulation) for this study. Though not as prevalent as quantitative or qualitative methods in strategy implementation research, the

use of mixed methods for this study was in response to a call for its application in management research (Cameron, 2011; Molina-Azorin, 2011) as well as its adequacy in addressing the study's research questions. Thus, a convergent parallel mixed methods research design allowed for the convergence and corroboration of quantitative and qualitative findings.

To investigate the participants' views on the impact of their psychological states on strategy implementation, a survey questionnaire was completed by participants, constituting a random stratified sample. Interviews were also conducted with participants purposively selected from a nested sample. The data set for each study were analysed separately. Partial correlation, multiple regression and path analyses were undertaken to test defined hypotheses. Qualitative content analysis was undertaken for interview data. The findings from each study were converged in the discussion and interpretation of the results, using a weaving narrative integration approach and dialectical synthesis. However, some findings were not converged to serve the purpose of creating context to the study.

The findings indicate that middle management's strategic influence is characterised by the role they play in the implementation process. In sum, the quantitative findings confirmed that affective organisational commitment and perceived psychological empowerment have a direct positive effect on the commitment to strategy implementation. These outcomes were corroborated by

the synthetic findings which revealed that interview respondents subjectively associated their affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment with their commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy. The corroboration of quantitative findings by qualitative findings suggests that the quantitatively determined relationships between variables (e.g., through correlation, multiple regression and path analyses), are valid at the level of meaning (i.e. qualitative level).

Furthermore, the behavioural mechanisms underpinning the quantitatively determined relationships are captured in the antithetic (qualitative) findings, which provide insights into the respondents' perceived influence of their affective attachment to the organisation and its consequent impact on their commitment to implement their organisation's business strategy. Because of their genuine affective attachment to the organisation, they engage in volitional or discretionary effort and are focused on the delivery of the anticipated outcomes. In addition, they are diligent in their work roles, take responsibility for strategic outcomes and are determined to achieve set strategic milestones.

Likewise, the qualitative findings show that middle managers who perceive to be psychologically empowered will exert considerable effort toward the implementation of their organisation's strategy. This is reflected in their strategy implementation-supportive behaviours such as taking accountability and responsibility for strategic outcomes, energised to perform, and risk-taking.

In essence, the findings suggest that managerial psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) are, potentially, sources of identified motivation for the commitment to strategy implementation, as they both stimulate the exertion of considerable effort towards the implementation of strategy by middle managers. Additional peripheral outcomes highlight the behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation; the antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment, and additional motives for middle managers to implement their organisation's strategy.

7.2 Review of research questions

In the introductory chapter (i.e. Chapter One), the problem was clarified and the subsequent purpose of the study was provided, i.e. to investigate the role of middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment on the commitment to strategy implementation. In line with this purpose, the study set out to test the general hypothesis that middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment will influence their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy, guided by the primary research question restated below:

How do middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment influence their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business strategy?

To address the above primary research question, appropriate research questions were clarified upfront and these questions set the parameters, in which the investigation was undertaken. The questions are restated below. The answers to these questions help reveal the outcomes of this study.

Research question 1

What strategic roles do middle managers play in the implementation of an organisation's business-level strategy?

Findings from the qualitative study indicate that the source of middle management's strategic influence is essentially the roles they play in the strategy implementation process. These roles are sense-giving, articulating and communicating the strategy, championing the execution of strategy, and implementing the strategy.

Sense-giving is an essential influence process, through which "strategic change is framed and disseminated to an organisation's constituents" (Fiss & Zajac, 2006). Through sense-giving, middle managers reportedly contextualise strategic goals within their business areas through tactical planning, drawing up

implementation road maps, and ensuring departmental alignment to the organisational strategy. Besides sense-giving, middle managers are responsible for articulating and communicating the strategy to the rest of the organisation. In articulating and communicating the strategy, middle managers clarify strategic objectives, facilitate employee buy-in and engagement, and communicate with relevant internal and external stakeholders.

In addition to sense-giving, and articulating and communicating the strategy to internal and external stakeholders, middle managers influence the implementation process through championing the execution of strategy. This involves bringing in the required resources, translating the strategic objectives into the individual's performance targets, and managing performance of subordinate staff. It also involves the design of an incentive and rewards structure aligned to desired performance. Lastly, middle managers play a key role in implementing the strategy. This role involves driving the delivery of set targets, and seeking and evaluating new business opportunities for growth. It also involves driving innovative processes and operational excellence, and streamlining operations in accordance with the requirements of the strategy. The role also entails participants' involvement in or leading new projects, tracking progress towards the strategy, and providing feedback to various stakeholders.

The influence of middle managers within these roles derives from the strategic activities they are engaged in. These activities, as highlighted above for each

role will shape the organisation's readiness, preparedness and engagement in the delivery of strategy.

Research question 2

Do middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) influence their commitment to the implementation of an organisation's business-level strategy?

The above question was dealt with in two aspects. First, the study sought to establish the nature of the relationships between middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) and the commitment to strategy implementation. This aspect was established through the testing of formulated hypotheses, using correlation, multiple regression and path analyses. The support for the hypothesised positive relationships, and the corroboration of such relationships at a qualitative level (through the dialectical synthesis), suggest that both affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment have a direct positive influence on the commitment to strategy implementation.

The direct positive influence of affective organisational commitment on the commitment to strategy implementation is evident in insights emerging from qualitative findings. Qualitative findings show that affectively committed individuals are prone to exerting discretionary effort, are diligent, responsible,

determined, and focused on envisaged strategic outcomes. The strategy implementation-supportive behaviours deriving from the genuine affective attachment to the organisation (i.e. volitional or discretionary effort, diligence, responsibility, determination and focus on envisaged strategic outcomes) reflect the motivational prospects of affective organisational commitment. The study outcomes are consistent with the view that employees with a strong affective attachment to their organisation are intent on staying and persist with extra effort on the job, volunteering to do additional tasks, and helping others (Gellatly et al., 2006). Their strong belief in and acceptance of organisational goals, and the desire to maintain organisational membership, drive their willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation (Lee et al., 2010).

While the findings point predominantly to positive effects of affective organisational commitment on the commitment to strategy implementation, there are evidently negative aspects. The qualitative findings indicate that a lack of affective commitment to the organisation may impede or curtail commitment to strategy implementation through indifference to the strategy, lacklustre or mediocre effort towards implementation, lack of belief in the strategy, and poor dissemination of the strategy. Individuals lacking in affective commitment to the organisation may exhibit little or 'under-the-radar' effort towards strategy implementation by showing judicious execution of the minimum requirements on the job.

The support for the hypothesised positive relationship between middle managers' psychological empowerment and their commitment to strategy implementation (Hypothesis 1b) suggests that middle managers, who perceive to be psychologically empowered, are predisposed to engage in strategy implementation-supportive behaviours. In addition, the multiple regression analysis suggests that perceived psychological empowerment potentially predicts their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's strategy.

Similarly, the direct positive influence of psychological empowerment on the commitment to strategy is evident in insights emerging from qualitative findings. Qualitative findings show that psychologically empowered individuals are accountable, responsible, energised to perform, take risk and are self-confident. The strategy implementation-supportive behaviours deriving from the perceived psychological empowerment (i.e. accountability, responsibility, energised performance, risk taking and self-confidence) suggest the motivational prospects of psychological empowerment. The findings are consistent with the view that psychological empowerment, as a source of motivation, drives persistence and resourcefulness in accomplishing difficult work assignment (Seibert et al., 2011), energises and sustains focused effort, flexibility in task accomplishment, initiation of new tasks in light of problems or opportunities, and resiliency to obstacles (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

While the findings show the positive outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment, there are negative aspects of perceived lack of psychological empowerment highlighted by interview participants. The perceived lack of psychological empowerment emanates from limited autonomy for decision-making, self-doubt in own abilities, incongruent value alignment, and managerial interference. The perceived lack of empowerment results in constrained ability to perform, which is exemplified by limited or even failure to implement strategy; erosion of self-belief, stagnation in role, and the lack of commitment to the company.

Additional peripheral outcomes of this study

While the above findings capture the essence of what the study set out to explore, there are additional peripheral outcomes which warrant some mention. The findings of the qualitative study suggest that the level of commitment to strategy implementation manifests itself in specific proactive behaviours that characterise effort towards the achievement of, or making a contribution to the company's strategy. The proactive behaviours are (i) living the organisational strategy; (ii) volitional or discretionary conduct; (iii) high performance culture; (iv) diligence in work roles; and (v) accountability and responsibility. Essentially, these behavioural outcomes highlight a myriad of ways, in which the commitment to strategy implementation is perceived.

In addition, the qualitative study highlighted a variety of motives that drive middle managers to implement their organisation's strategy. These motives can be mapped onto Gagné and Deci's (2005) controlled-to-autonomous continuum. The motives include: external (perceived outcomes; financial reward), identified (personal interests; recognition), integrated (organisational climate), and intrinsic (role dynamics). The 'perceived outcomes' motive includes *"seeing the results of the strategies*", sustainable growth of the organisation, and stable and continued employment. The 'reward and recognition' motive is the potential for *"performance bonuses"* and profit share, compliments and acknowledgements. From a role perspective, the motivation to implement the strategy is driven by a passion for the role, challenging and new tasks; job satisfaction, and facilitating innovation. Further, elements of the organisational climate, which drives behaviour, include inspirational leadership, participative decision-making; freedom for tactical planning and incentivising behaviour; and clarity of direction. Last, the personal interest to implement the strategy is derived from a sense of personal worth (i.e. perceived contribution to the organisation's profitability, growth and sustainability); professional growth, belief in strategy; opportunity to learn or gain new knowledge, a sense of ownership and responsibility; excitement about change, and the passion to achieve targeted results.

The findings of this study suggest that participants' affective attachment to their organisation is based on several attributes, which include organisational dynamics, role attributes and personal considerations. The organisational

dynamics include the organisational climate, sustainable growth, organisational leadership; company credibility, diversity in the organisation, organisation's customer value propositions; and the organisation's strategic focus. In addition, the role attributes include the ability to exercise creativity and innovation, flexibility and variety in role; clarity of role, passion for role and responsibilities; job satisfaction and autonomy for decision-making. Furthermore, personal considerations include the perceived contribution to the organisation's success, contribution to industry skills development; personal and professional growth, opportunities to learn; and accountability These antecedent conditions capture the bases, which participants are emotionally attached to, identify with, and desire to continue working for their organisation.

Comparing these outcomes with what is published in the extant literature, it is clear that this study's outcomes are largely consistent with the outcomes of prior studies. In the main, the categories of the antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment are consistent with prior studies. However, there are a few exceptions as illustrated by the additional antecedents suggested by this study that are not commonly highlighted in the extant literature. These include organisational growth, diversity in the organisation, the organisation's customer value propositions; the organisation's strategic focus, autonomy for decision-making, flexibility and variety in role; passion for role, perceived contribution to the organisation's success, and personal and professional growth.

7.3 Implication for the study

The aim of the study was to explore the influence of middle managers' psychological states on their commitment to the implementation of strategy. The outcomes of this study have several implications for theory, practice and methods in strategy implementation research. From a theoretical perspective, the implications for self-determination theory and associated contribution to knowledge are addressed. Besides the contribution to knowledge, the implication of research findings on practice is clarified below. Furthermore, the methodological contribution emanating from this study is also clarified.

7.3.1 Contribution to knowledge and theory

From a theoretical standpoint, this study extends the literature on strategy implementation using self-determination theory by examining the effects of managerial psychological states, as sources of autonomous motivation, on the commitment to strategy implementation. The use of the self-determination theoretical framework highlighted the utility of the self-determination theory in strategy implementation research, in line with Smith's (2009; 2010) assertion that motivation theories can provide useful insights into the strategy implementation phenomenon.

This study offers a few contributions to the literature on middle management's involvement in strategy implementation. First, as summarised in Figure 10, which is a constellation of the study findings, this study showed that middle managers'

affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment influence their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's business-level strategy. In addition, the study uncovered middle managers' implementation-supportive behaviours derived from the genuine affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment. The strategy implementation-supportive behaviours deriving from the genuine affective attachment to the organisation (i.e. volitional or discretionary effort, diligence, responsibility, determination, and focus on envisaged strategic outcomes) suggest the motivational prospects of affective organisational commitment. Similarly, the strategy implementation-supportive behaviours derived from the perceived psychological empowerment (i.e. accountability and responsibility, energised performance, risk taking and self-confidence) suggest the motivational prospects of psychological empowerment.

The findings suggest that affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment, as potential sources of identified motivation, can stimulate organisational members to engage in strategy implementation-supportive behaviours. As postulated by Pinder (1998), effort is recognised as a consequence and a primary indicator of motivation. The volitional exertion of effort, reflected in middle management's strategy implementation-supportive behaviours derived from a genuine affective attachment to the organisation and the perceived psychological empowerment, is reflective of motivated behaviour. This outcome is consistent with prior studies, which suggest that affectively

committed and psychologically empowered individuals experience more autonomous forms of regulation (Gagné et al., 2008; Galletta et al., 2011; Meyer et al., 2004; Raub & Robert, 2010).

The study addressed a gap identified in the extant literature by highlighting the motivational prospects of middle managers' affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment in the commitment to strategy implementation. Arguably, the commitment to strategy implementation serves to direct efforts toward the accomplishment of set strategic initiatives (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a) and the successful implementation of strategic decisions (Dooley, Fryxell, & Judge, 2000). Thus, the study points to the fact that securing middle managers' commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy is an essential step towards the successful delivery of an organisation's business strategy.

The support for the hypothesised positive relationships, and the corroboration of such relationships at a qualitative level (via the dialectical synthesis), suggest that both affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment have a direct positive influence on the commitment to strategy implementation. The dialectical synthesis not only confirmed that quantitatively derived relationships between the phenomena were valid reflections of real and meaningful associations in the minds of the study participants, it also provided an indication that the constructs under study (affective organisational

commitment, psychological empowerment, and the commitment to strategy implementation) appear to be valid at both levels of analyses.

In sum, the findings suggest that affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment, as sources of identified motivation, potentially can motivate middle managers to exert considerable effort toward the implementation of the organisation's strategy. That is, individuals who are affectively attached to the organisation and who perceive to be psychologically empowered are predisposed to engage in strategy implementation-supportive behaviour.

Second, the study highlighted the behavioural characteristics, through which the commitment to strategy implementation is perceived. This outcome suggests that the commitment to strategy implementation is behaviourally determinable. These characteristics may help define a robust behaviourally-oriented instrument in measuring the commitment to strategy implementation. Specifically, items on such instrument may be based on the perceived behavioural attributes of the commitment to strategy implementation: living the strategy, volitional conduct and high-performance culture.

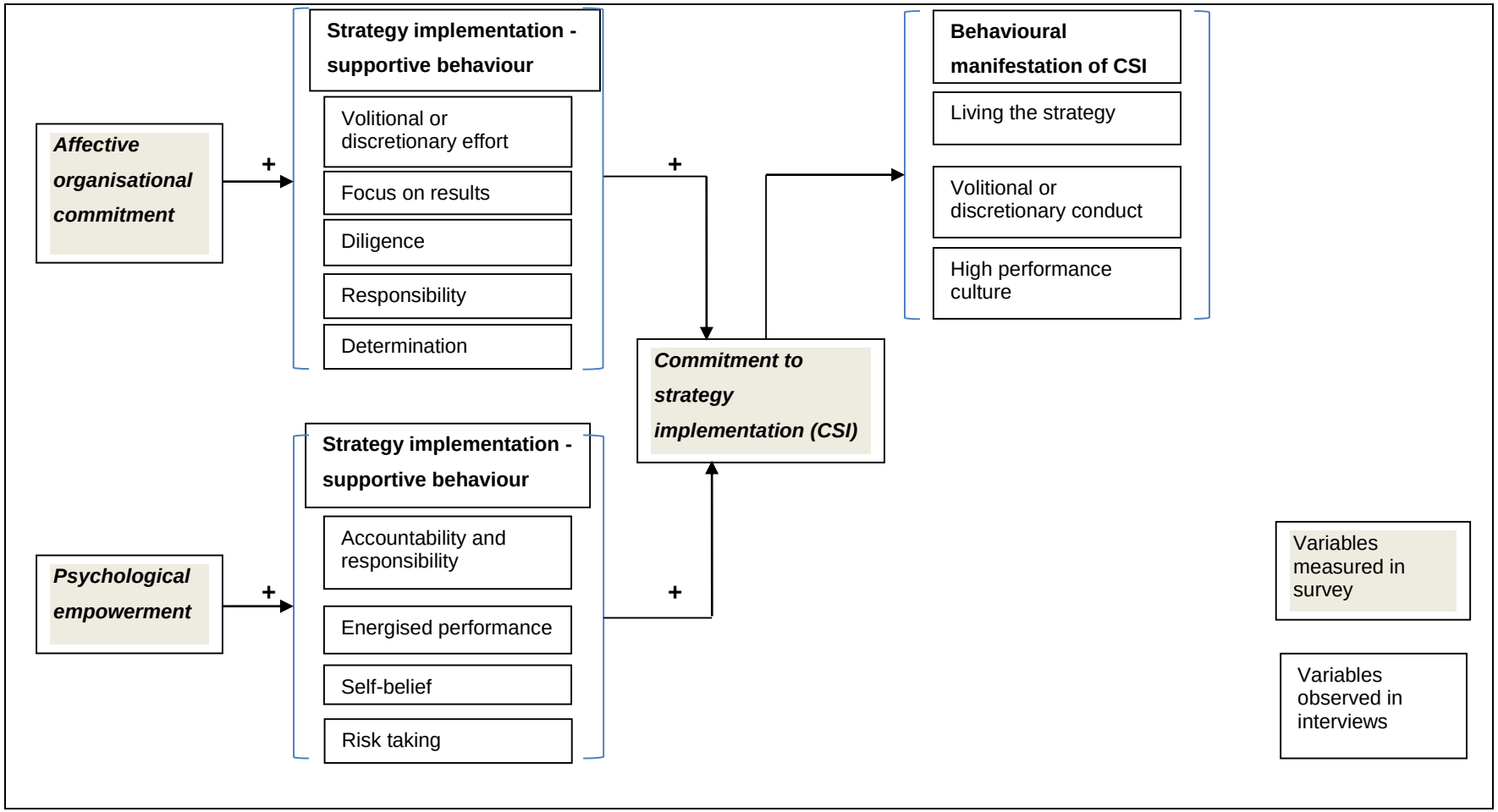
Third, the study further showed that middle management's strategic influence in the implementation process emanates from the strategic roles they play (i.e. strategy implementation role and the embedded praxis in the roles). The study confirmed middle management's roles in the implementation of business strategy

to be: sense-giving, articulating and communicating the strategy, championing the execution of strategy, and implementing the strategy. Thus, middle management's strategic influence confirms the human agency in the enactment of strategy as espoused in the strategy-as-practice perspective (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; Jansen Van Rensburg at al., 2014). While the study sought to highlight the primacy of the psychological foundations of middle management's behaviour in the implementation of the business-level strategy, further insights suggest that there are other motives driving middle managers to implement their organisation's strategy, namely: perceived outcomes, personal interests, organisational climate and role dynamics. Though these aspects have not been examined deeply in this study, they seem to suggest that besides middle managers' affective attachment to the organisation and perceived psychological empowerment, potentially, there are further factors, which can influence middle management's commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business strategy.

Therefore, the study outcomes point to the fact that psychological foundations of middle management's behaviour (for example, affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) can energise and sustain self-endorsed behaviour enacted for a particular purpose (for example, the achievement of organisation' business strategy). Cumulatively, the insights emerging from this study may influence the development of a more comprehensive conceptual model to guide future research on the effects of

antecedent conditions of middle management involvement in strategy implementation on both intermediate outcomes and economic performance, in line with Wooldridge et al.'s (2008) proposition.

Figure 10 : Conceptual model of affective organisation commitment, psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation



Source: Compiled by author, adapted from Gardner (2012)

7.3.2 Practical contribution

This study has important implications for management practices. The research outcomes will enable organisations to consider appropriate interventions, from a human resources perspective, to ensure commitment to the implementation of the organisations' business-level strategies as clarified below.

This study clarified the strategic roles that middle managers play in the strategy implementation process. Not only are these roles confirmed in the study, but most importantly, the details of what each role entails are clarified. For senior organisational leaders to provide the required executive leadership support, it is essential that they understand what each role entails and how each role can enhance or impede the execution of strategy. A deeper understanding of the strategic roles played by middle managers in the strategy implementation process will enable senior organisational leaders with the knowledge obtained from the findings of the study to influence middle managers in the enactment of their strategic roles.

The findings of the study suggest that middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment), have a direct positive influence on their commitment to strategy implementation. The direct positive influence is reflected in the volitional strategy implementation-supportive behaviours derived from the affective attachment to the organisation. Evidently, because of their genuine affective attachment to the organisation,

individuals will engage in volitional or discretionary effort that is focused on the delivery of the anticipated strategic outcomes. In addition, they are diligent in their work roles, take responsibility for strategic outcomes and are determined to achieve set strategic milestones, and such individuals want to make meaningful contributions to their organisation. Therefore, the extent to which a middle manager is affectively attached to their organisation, will determine their commitment to the successful execution of their organisation's business-level strategy.

Considering the motivational prospects of affective organisational commitment, senior or management must pay particular attention to how they can influence antecedent conditions that shape middle managers' affective commitment to the organisation. Efforts aimed at heightening individual's affective attachment to the organisation would have implications for stimulating the strategy implementation-supportive behaviours. As clarified below, the additional findings of this study highlight the antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment. Top management may consider such conditions, among others, in their efforts to influence employees' affective attachment to the organisation.

Study findings suggest the antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment to include organisational, role and personal attributes. Organisational elements, which senior management should seek to influence, include the organisational climate through empowering leadership practices,

entrenchment of ethical conduct, and clarity of organisation's strategy. From a role perspective, the focus should be on enabling the exercising of creativity, innovation and autonomy in decision-making.

Besides seeking to influence the lack of affective organisational commitment, there is also a need to focus on sustaining the positive attributes of affective organisation commitment. Because individuals affectively committed to their organisation are prone to engage in strategy implementation-supportive behaviours (i.e. volitional effort, focus on results, diligence, responsibility and determination), senior management need to find strategies to sustain such positive behavioural outcomes.

The results of the study also suggest that psychological empowerment, has a direct positive influence on the commitment to strategy implementation. The direct positive influence is reflected in the volitional strategy implementation-supportive behaviours deriving from perceived psychological empowerment. This is reflected in their strategy implementation-supportive behaviours such as taking accountability and responsibility for strategic outcomes, energised to perform, and risk-taking. Thus, psychological empowerment, as a source of identified motivation, has implications for the successful execution of a business strategy.

Considering the direct positive influence psychological empowerment on the commitment, senior management need to pay particular attention to sources of perceived lack of psychological empowerment. As highlighted in the study, these include: limited autonomy for decision-making or operating within limited mandates, self-doubt in own abilities; incongruent value alignment, and managerial interference. Furthermore, attention needs to be paid to the effects of the perceived lack of empowerment. These include: limited or failure of implementation of strategy, erosion of self-belief; stagnation in role, and slow implementation created by bottlenecks for decision approvals. These consequences can hinder the successful implementation of an organisation's business strategy. Therefore, senior management need to focus on addressing any perceived counterproductive elements.

7.3.3 Methodological contribution

The use of convergent parallel mixed methods for this study was in response to a call for the application of mixed methods in management research (Cameron, 2011; Molina-Azorin, 2011). Despite the challenges and complexity associated with mixed methods, the mixed methods research design not only enabled the investigation of the nature of relationships among the variables of interest in the study, it also facilitated a deeper understanding of the nature of mechanisms underpinning the hypothesised relationships, thus yielding the construction of a robust conceptual model as reflected in Figure 10. For example, without the qualitative component of this study, it would not have been possible to explore

the underlying behavioural mechanisms underpinning the hypothesised relationship.

In addition, the dialectical synthesis adopted in this study enabled an explanation of the interrelations between the phenomena that are meaningfully adequate (Coldwell, 1985; 2007). The dialectical synthesis enabled the verification of the extent to which quantitatively derived relationships between the phenomena, were valid reflections of real and meaningful associations in the minds of the study participants. The support for the hypothesised positive relationships was verifiable at qualitative level of analysis through further exploratory analysis of high and low scores. This approach led to the findings, in which interview participants subjectively associated the phenomena. Methodologically, the dialectical synthesis not only enabled the corroboration of quantitative findings with qualitative outcomes, it also provided an indication that the constructs under study (affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment, and the commitment to strategy implementation) appear to be valid at both levels of analyses. Though the dialectical synthesis is not the only strategy for integrating mixed methods findings, its application in this study provide guidance on how the credibility of integrated findings can be enhanced.

Mixed methods contribute to methodological breadth in strategy implementation research. Specifically, the use of a cross-sectional convergent parallel mixed methods approach in investigating the role of middle managers' psychological

states in the commitment to strategy implementation contributes a methodological dimension to the individual-level process perspective of strategy implementation research. Likewise, the use of mixed methods within a self-determination theoretical framework contributes a methodological dimension to a theoretical domain, in which empirical studies are predominantly quantitative. While the quantitative study confirmed the existence and nature of hypothesised relationships, the qualitative findings enabled the illumination of the mechanisms underpinning the hypothesised relationships. Therefore, the use of mixed methods can enrich the inquiry into management research.

7.4 Limitations of the study

As Cooper and Schindler (2003) posited, all research studies have limitations. Hence, clarifying the study limitations enables the reader to have a better appreciation of the context, in which the study was conceived and conducted. Because this study was based on volitional participation by organisations and their members, this has implications on the sample size. Not only is the sample size restricted as detailed in Chapter Four, also the variety in participating organisations is limited as organisations opted not to participate. For instance, of the 20 organisations approached to participate in this study, only 7 agreed to do so. Further, 1 of the 7 organisations that had agreed to participate withdrew its participation during the data collection phase as it had entered the busiest period of its business cycle. Despite this challenge, an adequate sample of 101 participants was achieved, which enabled the testing of presumed hypotheses

using correlation, multiple regression and path analyses. As illustrated in Chapter Four, the sample is considered adequate as it is line with various researchers' prescription on adequate samples for organisational studies (Bailey, 1987; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007; Saunders et al., 2009).

While the appropriate sampling techniques were utilised for the quantitative study, resulting in the random stratified sample of 174 and 101 responding to the survey questionnaire, the preferred stratified random and nested sample for the qualitative study was not achieved due to a limited number of individuals agreeing to be interviewed. This resulted in the interviewing of all individuals who agreed to be interviewed. However, while the preferred stratified sample size of 30 was not achieved, the final qualitative sample of 24 participants was considered adequate in the light of the suggested sample sizes for qualitative studies by Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007).

Additionally, the focus of the study was restricted to organisations based in Johannesburg, whose members were accessible to interviews. As a self-funding and part-time student, who is permanently employed, the author's limited time and costs associated with travelling constrained the consideration of organisations outside of the Johannesburg area. Besides location limitations, this study is restricted to financial services organisations that agreed to participate in the study. Though other non-financial organisations were requested to participate, it is purely coincidental that only financial services organisations

agreed to participate in the study. Since the study is conceived and conducted in a challenging practical world, the author had to cope with such practical realities. Despite these challenges, adequate and credible data was obtained, which enabled the completion of this study.

The study focused on the role played by middle managers in strategy implementation. Structural hierarchies tend to skew the identity of the middle manager. Organisations with flatter structures seemed to identify participants easily. Those with pronounced hierarchies restricted the identity of middle managers to the 1st and 2nd levels below top or executive management in line with Dutton and Ashford's (1993) definition of the middle manager. This practical reality enabled the identification of the participants for this study. In this regard, the study outcomes are considered as credible views of middle management.

Rather than creating new instruments, existing and publicly available data collection instruments for affective organisational commitment, psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation were used in the collection of data in this study. These instruments were adopted without amendment for this study, based on their proven reliability in other territories as detailed in Appendix A. The affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment instruments have been applied to samples from South Africa, yielding high reliability scores (Lumley et al., 2011; Manetje & Martins, 2009; Stander & Rothmann, 2009; 2010). The adoption of existing

instruments was informed by the fact that targeted middle managers have a high level of English proficiency. In addition, as clarified in Chapter Five, the instruments have been checked for their reliability and achieved acceptable levels of reliability.

As this study is cross-sectional, issues or questions emerging during the data analysis were not verifiable with the participants. This limited further clarification of issues that emerged at data analysis stage. While a longitudinal study could have enhanced the testing of hypotheses at different stages and provide a better understanding of the hypothesised relationships in the light of unstatic variables, the cross-sectional study outcomes pave the way for the testing of such outcomes in a future longitudinal study. Therefore, the outcomes of this cross-sectional study may inform hypotheses of a future longitudinal study.

Further, regarding the analysis of qualitative data, double-coding as suggested as one way of improving reliability (Schreier, 2012) has not been undertaken. As this study is undertaken by the author in his own capacity, double-coding was not possible. However, Schreier's (2012) suggested guidelines for qualitative content analysis, such as unidimensionality, mutual exclusiveness, exhaustiveness and saturation, were followed to give credibility to the outcomes of this study.

Though the study provides outcomes from a rigorous research process, the results may not be generalised outside of the research context. The study is

limited to financial services organisations that agreed to participate in the study. Therefore, the outcomes may not be generalised outside of this context.

The application of self-determination theory sought to explain the impact of affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment, as sources of autonomous motivation, on the commitment to strategy implementation. However, controlled sources of motivation, which are not part of this study, may not be ignored.

7.5 Suggestions for future research

Like in any cross-sectional study, issues, themes or questions that emerged during data analysis phase were not verifiable with the study participants or with the collection of additional data. This limited further clarification of issues that emerged at data analysis stage. While a longitudinal study would have enhanced the testing of hypotheses at different stages and provided a better understanding of the hypothesised relationships in the light of unstatic variables, at least the cross-sectional study outcomes pave the way for the testing of such outcomes in a future longitudinal study. Therefore, the outcomes of this cross-sectional study may inform the focus of future research in a longitudinal design.

Though the study provides outcomes from a rigorous research process, the results may not be generalised outside of the research context. The study is

limited to the financial services organisations, that agreed to participate in the study. However, future research may focus on a diversity of organisations.

As highlighted above, one of the key contributions to knowledge from this study is the clarification of the behavioural characteristics, through which the commitment to strategy implementation is perceived. Therefore, a robust instrument on measuring commitment to strategy implementation may be based on these characteristics. Such an approach will offer an enriched perspective on the commitment to strategy implementation. In this regard, the behavioural outcomes of the commitment to strategy implementation offer an insightful lens, through which this phenomenon may be perceived and researched in future.

With regard to the quantitative study, data were collected from the same source (i.e. the middle manager). Though several techniques in the study were employed to deal with the effects of common method variance, a future study can consider obtaining data from both middle managers (i.e. for the independent variables) and top management (i.e. for the dependent variable).

The study outcomes show a number of factors indicated as antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment (i.e. organisational, role and personal characteristics). Where these are different from antecedents or from correlates of affective organisational commitment pinpointed in the literature (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002), further research may focus on

testing, whether these additional factors are indeed antecedents or correlates of affective organisational commitment.

7.6 Concluding remarks

The mixed methods approach adopted in this study not only enabled the investigation of the nature of relationships between managerial psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) and the commitment to strategy implementation; it also facilitated the exploration of the underlying mechanisms, through which the relationships manifest.

The study confirmed the crucial roles that middle managers play in the implementation of business strategy, thus highlighting areas, through which the successful implementation of strategy may be curtailed or enhanced. In addition, a key conclusion that can be drawn from the findings of the study is that affective commitment and perceived psychological empowerment, potentially, as sources of identified motivation, can motivate middle managers to exert considerable efforts towards the implementation of the organisation's strategy. Because of their strong belief in, and acceptance of, the organisational goals, and their willingness to make a meaningful contribution to their organisation; affectively committed individuals are predisposed to engage in efforts directed towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy. Likewise, middle managers, who

perceive themselves to be psychologically empowered, are predisposed to exert considerable effort towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy.

Lastly, the study highlights that besides affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment that energise individuals toward the implementation of the organisation's strategy, there are other factors that drive middle managers to implement their organisations' business strategy.

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Appendix A – Instrument reliability

As shown in Table 24 below, the choice of using existing instruments was informed by their proven reliability in several studies across different samples from a number of geographic areas. For example, the Organisational Commitment Scales were applied on samples from Canada (Cho, Laschinger, & Wong, 2006; Gellatly et al., 2006), Australia (Joiner & Bakalis, 2006), Pakistan (Tayyab, 2007); China (Peterson & Xing, 2007), Spain (Martin, 2008), Iran (Dehkordi, Kamrani, Ardestani, & Abdolmanafi, 2011); Malaysia (Ismail, Mohamed, Sulaiman, Mohamad, & Yusuf, 2011) and South Africa (Lumley et al., 2011; Manetje & Martins, 2009).

Likewise, the Strategic Diffusion Scales were also applied on samples from the United States (Parnell et al., 2002), Mexico and Peru (Parnell, 2008), while the Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire was applied on samples from the United States (Spreitzer, 1995; 1996), Australia (Carless, 2004), South Africa (Stander & Rothmann, 2009; 2010), Iran (Dehkordi et al., 2011) and India (Sharma & Kaur, 2011).

Besides the pervasive use of the adopted questionnaires, they were considered reliable as indicated by the Cronbach's alpha level for each of the studies shown in Table 24 below. Among other conceptualisations of reliability such as Revelle's β and McDonald's ω_h (Zinbarg, Revelle, Yovel, & Li, 2005), the Cronbach's alpha (α) is a commonly used measure of reliability in social and organisational sciences (Bonett & Wright, 2015). It is based on inter-item correlation and the range for the coefficient is -1 to +1, with a calculated score in the upper part of the range being considered an

indicator of higher reliability for the instruments. Values of 0.7 or 0.75 are often used a minimum acceptable value for a reliability test (Christmann & Van Aelst, 2006). Such minimum values are regarded as purely intuitive and not based on empirical research (Cho & Kim, 2015) and no universally acceptable minimum reliable value exists (Bonett & Wright, 2015). However, these values are largely accepted as indications of instrument reliability.

Table 24 : Instrument reliability in prior studies

Variable	**Instrument adopted without amendment**	**Instrument reliability (prior use in literature) - (Cronbach's alpha)**
Affective organisational commitment	Affective Commitment Scales, i.e. 8-item questionnaire (Meyer & Allen, 1997) Scored on a 7-point Likert type scale: 1 - strongly disagree, 7 -strongly agree	Lumley et al. (2011): 0.79 Manetje & Martins (2009): 0.77 Meyer et al. (2012): 0.87 Dehkordi et al. (2011): 0.80
Psychological empowerment	Psychological Empowerment Questionnaire – PEQ, i.e. 12-item questionnaire, (Spreitzer, 1995) Scored on a 7-point Likert type scale : 1 - strongly disagree, 7 - strongly agree	Martin & Bush (2006) : 0.95 Stander & Rothmann (2009): 0.91 Dehkordi et al. (2011) : 0.88 Jha (2011) : 0.72/0.62

Variable	Instrument adopted without amendment	Instrument reliability (prior use in literature) - (Cronbach's alpha)
Commitment to strategy implementation	Strategic Diffusion Scales - Commitment to strategy implementation: 6 items * (Parnell et al., 2002)	Parnell et al. (2002): 0.84 Parnell (2008) – 2 samples, • Mexico: 0.701 • Peru: 0.740

Compiled by author

Since this is a cross-sectional study and data were obtained from a single source (i.e. middle managers), it is prone to the effects of common method variance (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Defined as a "systematic variance resulting from the method used to collect data (e.g. a self-report survey)" (Simmering, Fuller, Richardson, Ocal, & Atinc, 2015, p.473), common method variance may either inflate or attenuate relationships among variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012; Spector & Brannick, 2010; Schaller, Patil, & Malhotra, 2015). This may lead to incorrect conclusions being drawn from correlations between variables under study (Podsakoff et al., 2012; Schaller et al., 2015). Among other potential sources of common method bias such as item characteristics and context, and measurement context (Doty & Glick, 1998; Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012; Weijters, Geuens, & Schillewaert, 2009), the use of self-report surveys is arguably the biggest concern (Spector & Brannick, 2010).

In view of the threat of common method variance to studies, various procedural and statistical remedies are suggested in the literature (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012; Schaller, 2015; Simmering et al., 2015). Some of the suggested procedural remedies include: (i) obtaining measures of predictor and criterion variables from separate sources; (ii) temporal, proximal or psychological separation between predictor and criterion variables; (iii) eliminating common scale properties for predictor and criterion variables; (iv) eliminating ambiguity in scale items; and (v) balancing positive and negative items (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012). Each one of these procedural remedies is a way of controlling different sources of method bias. For example, the proximal separation (i.e. creating a physical distance between measures or randomisation of items within the survey) reduces the salience of linkage between the predictor and criterion variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012; Weijters et al., 2009,). Thus, procedurally, the possible effects of common method variance can be addressed by randomising the order of items for predictor and criterion variables in the survey (Weijters et al., 2009; Chang, van Witteloostuijn, & Eden, 2010), protecting respondents' anonymity (Podsakoff et al., 2003) and using different response formats for the predictor and criterion measures (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Johnson, Rosen, & Djurdjevic, 2011).

In this study, items on the survey questionnaire were randomised, using Microsoft Excel. Randomising the order of items on the survey questionnaire reduces consistency motif, item priming effects, common scale anchors and social desirability (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Weijters et al, 2009). Besides creating a random order of item on the survey

questionnaire, setting up the survey online by using the Kwiksurvey facility guaranteed anonymity on the part of those completing the survey questionnaire. Protecting the anonymity of respondents reduces their evaluation apprehension, thus making them "less likely to edit their responses to be more socially desirable, lenient, acquiescent and consistent with how they think the researcher wants them to respond" (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p.888).

Furthermore, different scale anchors were used for predictor and criterion variables in the survey questionnaire. For the affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment variables, the following scale anchors were used:

- 1- Strongly disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Somewhat disagree
- 4- Neither agree nor disagree
- 5- Somewhat agree
- 6- Agree
- 7- Strongly agree.

However, different scales' anchors were used for items dealing with the commitment to strategy implementation.

The scales anchors were:

- 1- This statement is entirely false
- 2- This statement is false

- 3- This statement is somewhat false
- 4- This statement is neither true nor false
- 5- This statement is somewhat true
- 6- This statement is true
- 7- This statement is entirely true.

Similar to randomisation of survey items and protecting anonymity of respondents, using a different response format for predictor and criterion variables reduces consistency motif, item priming effects, common scale anchors and social desirability (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Johnson et al., 2011).

Appendix B – Descriptive statistics

A descriptive statistical summary provides a preliminary step in the understanding of the data collected (Cooper & Schindler, 2003) as well as enabling one to describe and compare variables numerically (Saunders et al., 2009). Thus, descriptive statistical summaries of data collected are presented below. These include measures of central tendency; dispersion for selected variables; skewness and kurtosis tests; and normality tests.

(i) Measures of central tendency and dispersion

A measure of central location or tendency describes some aspect of the distribution of a variable under study (Albright et al., 2006). It is a central point, around which data revolve (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). It is a single value that provides some general impression of values that are common, central or average (Saunders et al., 2009). The three commonly used measures of central tendency are mean, median and mode (Albright et al., 2006; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Saunders et al., 2009).

On the other hand, a measure of dispersion or variability describes how data values for a variable are dispersed around a measure of central location or tendency (Saunders et al., 2009). Such commonly used measures include the variance and standard deviation (Albright et al., 2006; Saunders et al., 2009).

Consequently, for this study, measures of central tendency and dispersion are determined for the following variables as shown in Table 25:

- Affective organisational commitment
- Psychological empowerment
- Commitment to strategy implementation.

The scores obtained from the 101 respondents are used in determining the mean, median, mode, range (i.e. minimum and maximum) and standard deviation of each variable, which are shown in Table 25. While the mean represents the average of all scores on each variable (Saunders et al., 2009), the median and mode represents the midpoint of the distribution (Cooper & Schindler, 2003), and the most frequently occurring score (Saunders et al., 2009), respectively. The standard deviation reflects the distance of the mean from the individual scores (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

The mean and median scores for affective organisational commitment are 4.7 and 4.9, respectively. The proximity between the mean and median scores for affective commitment may be an indication that the distribution for affective commitment may be symmetrical.

Likewise, the mean and median scores for psychological empowerment (5.8; 5.9), and the commitment to strategy implementation (5.6; 5.8), are very close for each variable. This also indicates that the distribution of each of these

variables may be symmetrical. Additionally, the minimum and maximum values for each variable are within theoretic minimum and maximum scores of 1 and 7 on the Likert scale used.

Table 25 : Measures of central tendency and dispersion

		Affective Organisational Commitment	Psychological Empowerment	Commitment to strategy implementation
N	Valid	101	101	101
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		4.72	5.80	5.59
Median		4.88	5.92	5.75
Mode		4.38	6.17	6.00
Std. Deviation		1.03	0.87	0.83
Minimum		1.50	1.25	3.25
Maximum		6.63	7.00	7.00

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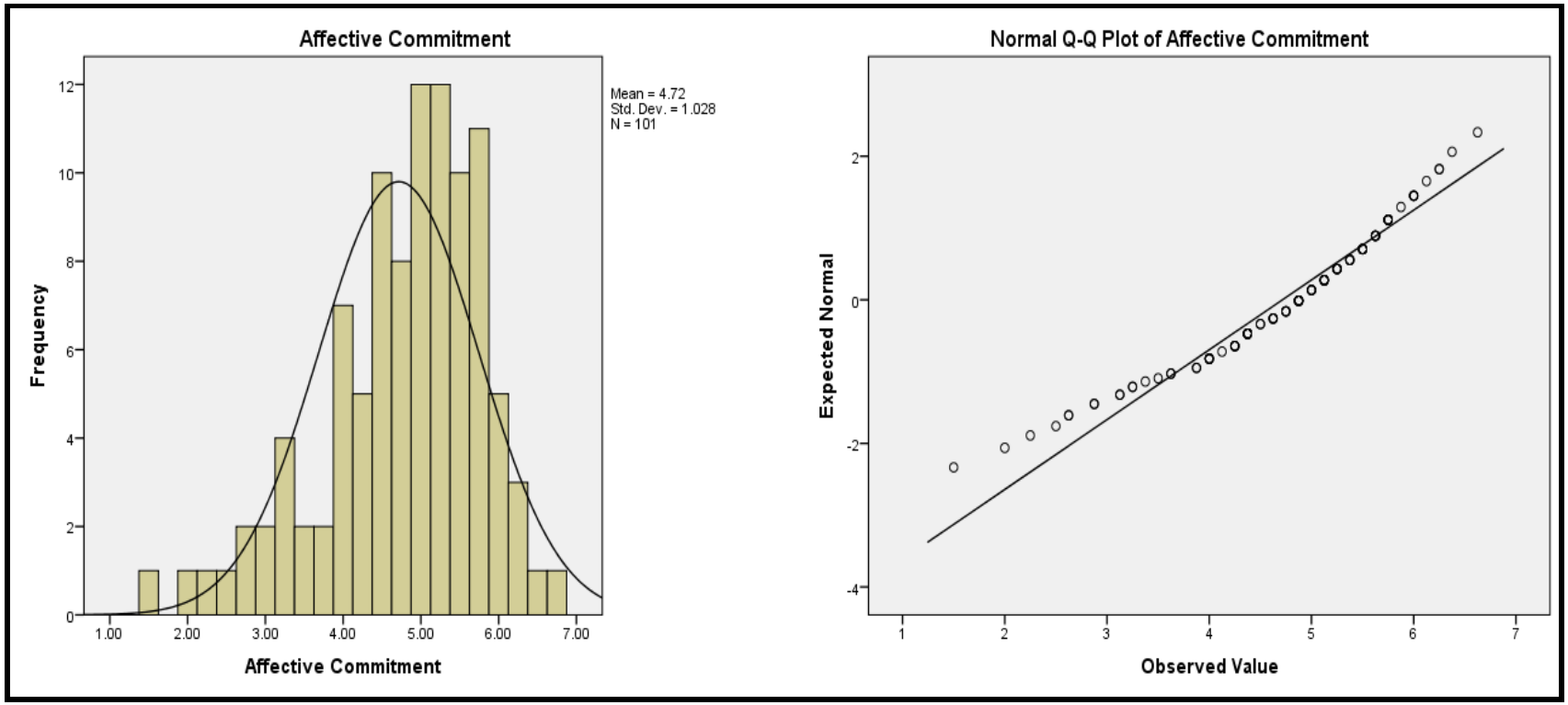
(ii) Normality, skewness and kurtosis

Data collected on variables under a study may not be normally distributed. A normal distribution is a “special form of the symmetric distribution, in which the numerical data for a variable can be plotted as a bell-shaped curve” (Saunders et al., 2009, p.596). As argued by Hair et al. (2010), the “starting point for understanding the nature of any variable is to characterise the shape of its distribution” (p.38). The distribution for the data of a variable is essential for the

kind of analysis that the data may be subjected to: parametric or nonparametric (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Saunders et al., 2009). Parametric analysis usually assumes a normal distribution of data (Razali & Wah, 2011).

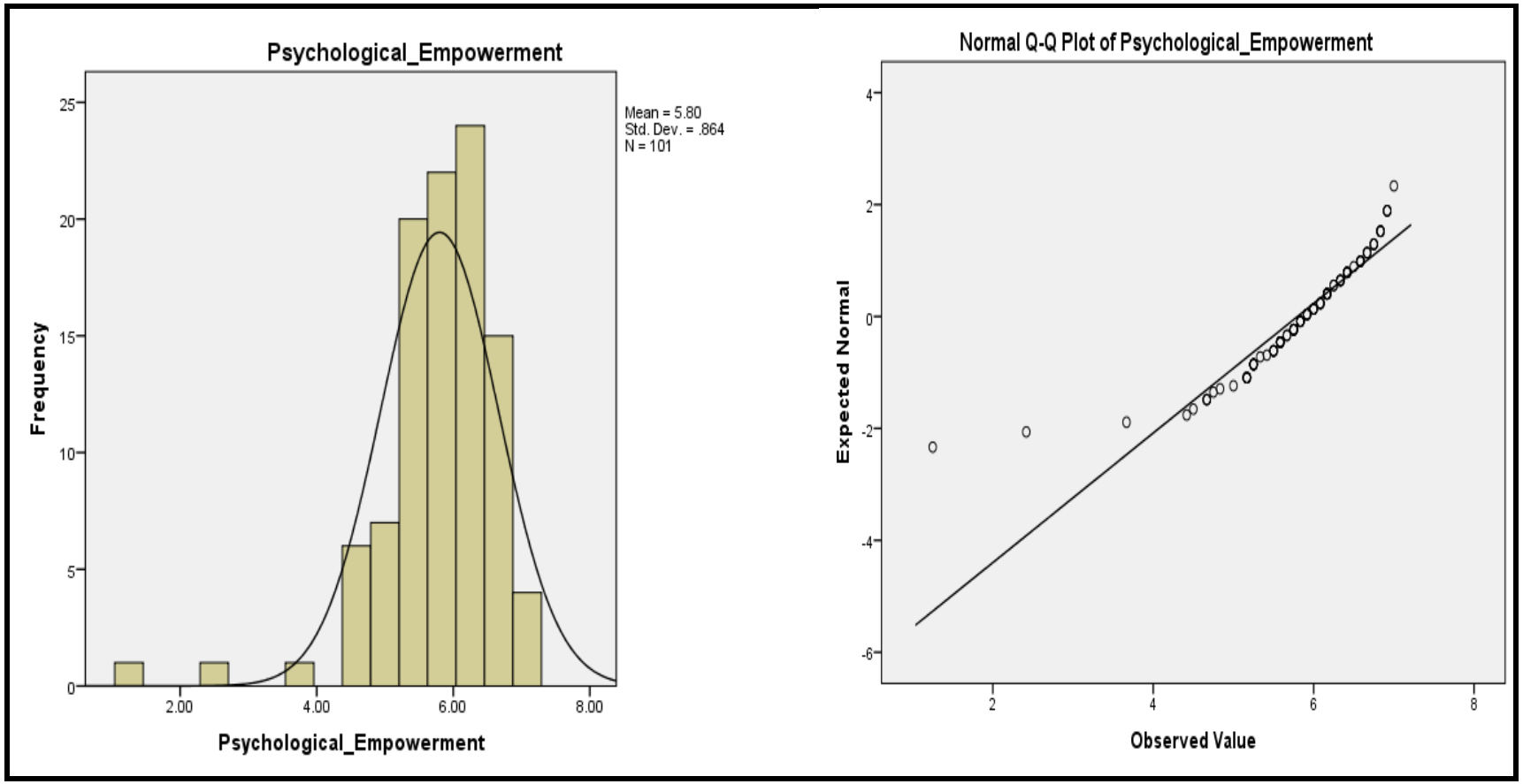
In this study, normality of distribution for data for each variable was determined by using three common interrelated approaches: graphical methods, numerical methods and normality tests (Razali & Wah, 2011). The graphical methods include presenting data for each variable, using a graph such as a histogram with normal curve superimposed on it, normal quantile-quantile plot (i.e. Q-Q plot), box-plot and stem-and-leaf plot (Razali & Wah, 2011). The common graphical methods generally used are histograms and Q-Q plots (Razali & Wah, 2011). For this study, histograms with a normal curve superimposed and Q-Q plots are used to present the distribution of each variable as shown in Figures 11 to 13. Visually, the histograms and Q-Q plots for affective organisational commitment (Figure 11) and the commitment to strategy implementation (Figure 13) suggest that the distributions are approximately normally distributed. However, the graphical representation for other variables such as psychological empowerment (Figure 12) suggest that the distributions deviate from a normal distribution.

Figure 11 : Normality and skewness for affective organisational commitment



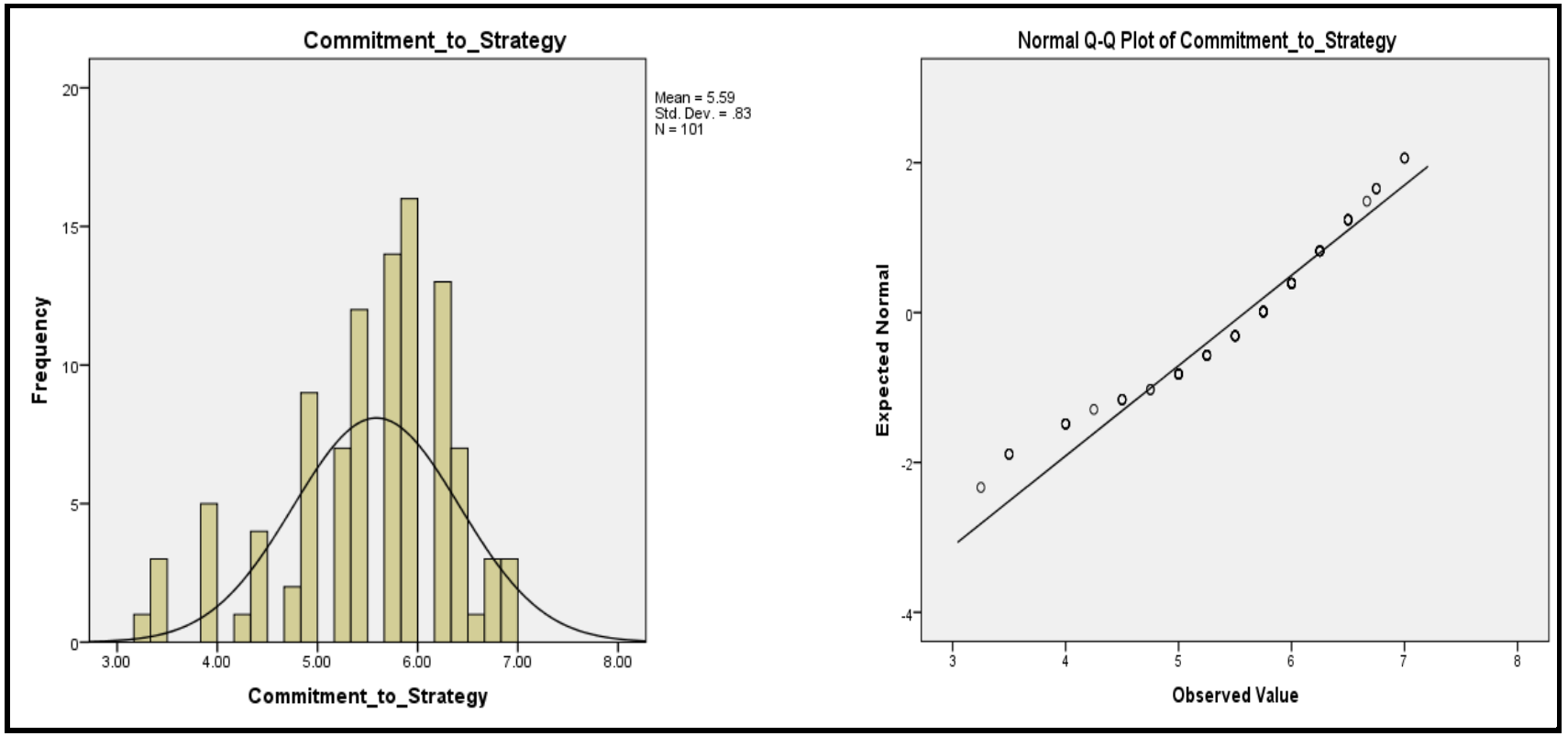
Compiled by author

Figure 12 : Normality and skewness for psychological empowerment



Compiled by author

Figure 13 : Normality and skewness for the commitment to strategy implementation



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Besides the graphical methods discussed above, the numerical methods for determining normality are skewness and kurtosis indices (Razali & Wah, 2011). In this study, skewness and kurtosis coefficients for each variable are determined. The skewness and kurtosis measures determine the shape of the distribution of data. While skewness measures a distribution's deviation from symmetry, kurtosis is a distribution's peakedness or flatness (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Skewness can either be negative or positive. Positive skewness is when the peak of a distribution lies to the left of the midpoint, while negative skewness is when the peak of the distribution lies to the right of the midpoint (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

Further, peakedness or flatness (i.e. kurtosis) of distribution can either be leptokurtic or platykurtic. While a leptokurtic distribution is usually peaked or pointy, a platykurtic distribution is unusually flat (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

Likewise, the appropriate skewness and kurtosis values for each variable are shown in Table 26. The skewness values for affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation are -0.82 and -0.83, respectively. The distribution for affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation are slightly negatively skewed as can be seen from the graphical presentation (Figures 11 and 13). However, psychological empowerment is negatively skewed as reflected in the negative

skewness statistic values of -2.17. The negative skewness is visually evident from the graphical presentations (Figures 12).

Given that skewness values for the variables are not equal to zero, it is necessary to consider some attributes of these values to infer, which variables would be considered approximately normally distributed. However, there is no consensus on the acceptable range of skewness statistic for distributions to be considered approximately normally distributed (Meyers et al., 2006). Suggestions indicate that skewness values outside the range of -1 to +1 indicate substantially skewed distributions (Hair et al., 2010), implying that those within the -1 to +1 are considered approximately normally distributed. Therefore, taking into consideration Hair et al.'s (2010) suggestion, the calculated skewness statistic values for affective organisational commitment (-0.82), and the commitment to strategy implementation (-0.83) indicate that the data for these variables are approximately normally distributed. The skewness statistic value for psychological empowerment (-2.17) is outside the -1 to +1 range, and indicate a substantially skewed distribution (Hair et al., 2010).

In addition to considering skewness statistics values as a way of determining normality of distributions, Hair et al. (2010) suggested that consideration should be given to the skewness z–value (i.e. skewness statistic divided by its standard error) of each variable. The parameters are that at a 5% significance level, the skewness z-value should be within a range of -1.96 to +1.96 for normal

distributions. As shown in Table 27, the skewness *z*-values for the variables: affective organisational commitment (-3.42), commitment to strategy implementation (-3.45), and psychological empowerment (-9.04), are outside of the range, suggesting that the data for these variables may not be normally distributed.

Besides skewness, the kurtosis measure is another numerical method for determining normality of distributions. The kurtosis results for each variable are shown in Table 26. Positive kurtosis values for affective organisational commitment (0.52), psychological empowerment (8.61), and the commitment to strategy implementation (0.41) reflect leptokurtic distributions for these variables. This is also visually evident in the graphical representation of these variables (Figures 11, 12 and 13).

Unlike skewness, there is not much offered in the literature on a suggested range of kurtosis statistic values that indicate normality of distributions. However, DeCarlo (1997) argued that a “normal distribution has a kurtosis of 3” (p.292). In this instance, none of the variables would be considered approximately normally distributed.

Similar to skewness, Hair et al. (2010) suggested that additional consideration should be given to the kurtosis *z*–value (i.e. kurtosis statistic divided by its standard error) of each variable to determine normality of distributions. The

parameters are that at a 5% significance level, the kurtosis z-value should be within a range of -1.96 to +1.96 for normal distributions. As shown in Table 27 below, the kurtosis z-values for affective organisational commitment (1.08) and commitment to strategy implementation (0.85) are within the suggested range for a normal distribution. The kurtosis z-values for psychological empowerment (17.94) is outside of the range. This suggests that the data for this variable may not be normally distributed.

Table 26 : Skewness and kurtosis statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	**Skewness**		**Kurtosis**	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Affective Org. Commitment	101	4.72	1.03	-0.82	0.24	0.52	0.48
Psychological Empowerment	101	5.80	0.86	-2.17	0.24	8.61	0.48
Commitment to strategy impl.	101	5.59	0.83	-0.83	0.24	0.41	0.48

Compiled by author

Table 27 : Skewness and kurtosis z – values

	Skewness			**Kurtosis**		
	Statistic	Std. Error	*z*- value*	Statistic	Std. Error	*z*- value**
Affective Commitment	-0.82	0.24	-3.42	0.52	0.48	1.08
Psychological Empowerment	-2.17	0.24	-9.04	8.61	0.48	17.94
Commitment to strategy impl.	-0.83	0.24	-3.45	0.41	0.48	0.85
* *z*-value is skewness statistic divided by skewness standard error (Hair et al., 2010)						
** *z*-value is kurtosis statistic divided by kurtosis standard error (Hair et al., 2010)						

Compiled by author

In addition to graphical and numerical methods discussed above, a test of normality is undertaken below for each variable to determine, whether data for each variable in this study is normally distributed. The normality test for each variable is premised on the following hypothesis:

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): The distribution is non-normal.
Null hypothesis (H_0): The distribution is normal.

At a 5% level of significance testing ($\alpha = 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected in instances, where the *p*-value for the distribution for each variable is less than 0.05 (i.e. $p < 0.05$), and it can be concluded that there is significant statistical evidence to suggest that the distribution differs from a normal one, thus accepting the alternative hypothesis. Conversely, if the null hypothesis is not rejected (i.e. *p*-value is above 0.05), it can be concluded that there is not enough statistical evidence to suggest that the distribution differs from a normal one.

While there are various tests that can be undertaken for normality tests such as Shapiro-Wilk, Cramer-von Mises, Anderson-Darling, Lilliefors and Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012; Razali & Wah, 2011), the commonly applied ones and available in SPSS are the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. However, even with Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, the Shapiro-Wilk test is considered the most powerful test of normality (Razali &

Wah, 2011). Therefore, the results for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests are shown in Table 28.

As can be seen from Table 28, the *p*-values for the Shapiro-Wilk test are less than 0.05 for affective commitment (0.001), psychological empowerment (0.000), and the commitment to strategy implementation (0.001). In these instances, for each of these variables, the null hypothesis is rejected as there is significant statistical evidence to suggest that the distribution for each of these variables deviates from a normal distribution.

Table 28 : Tests of normality of distributions

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig (*p*-value).	Statistic	df	Sig (*p*-value).
Affective Commitment	0.106	101	0.007	0.954	101	0.001
Psychological Empowerment	0.123	101	0.001	0.841	101	0.000
Commitment to strategy implementation	0.142	101	0.000	0.939	101	0.000
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

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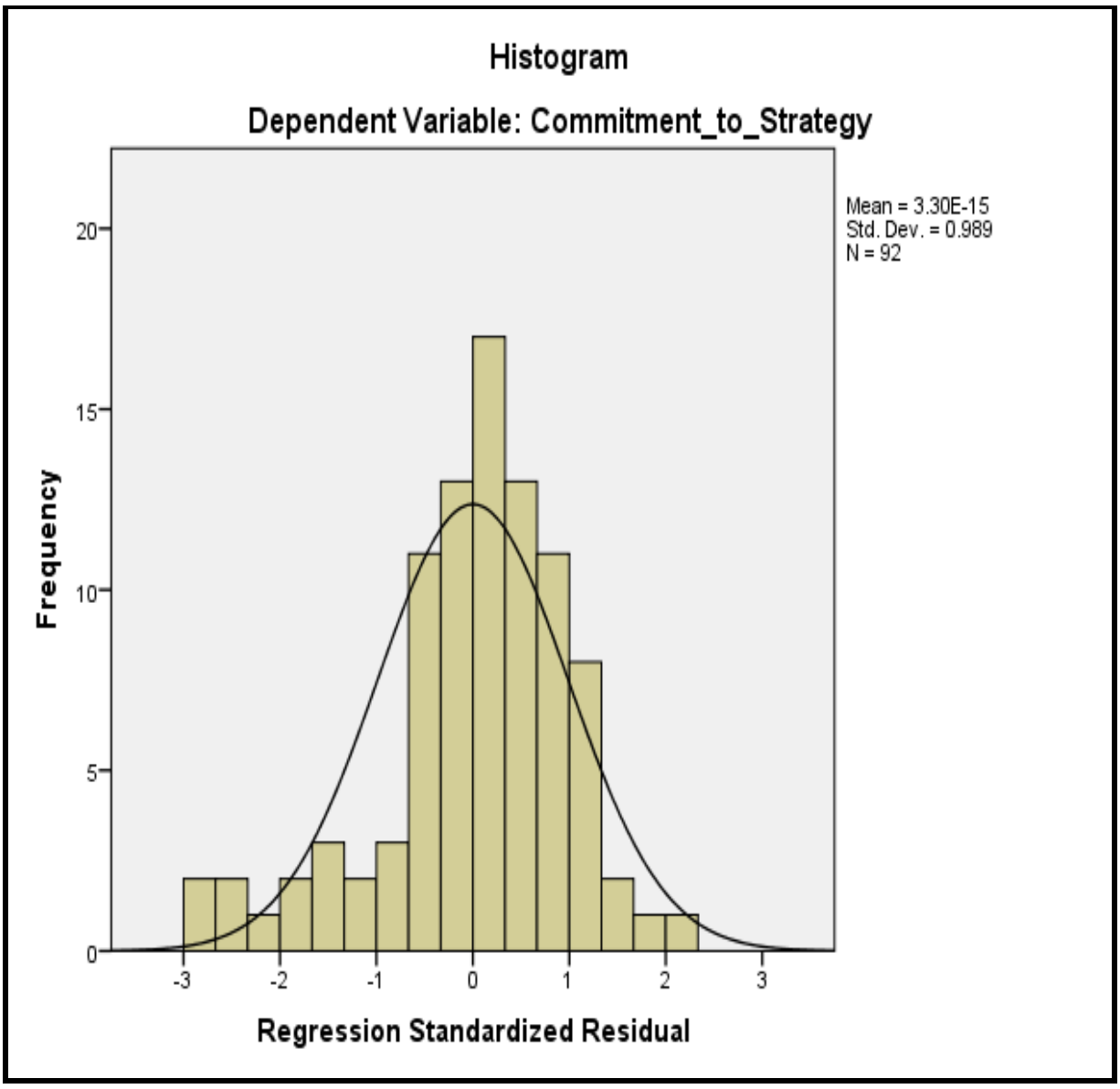
As determining normality of distributions constitutes interrelated approaches, i.e. graphical (histograms and Q-Q plots, numerical (skewness and kurtosis) and tests of normality, an overall view on normality therefore considers all these aspects. Evidently, as can be seen from results presented above on these approaches, there are areas of concurrence and non-concurrence of results.

Predominantly, there is a concurrence of results between graphical and numeric methods. The results from these approaches indicate that collected data for affective commitment and commitment to strategy implementation are approximately normally distributed.

Results from all three methods also point to the fact that collected data for psychological empowerment probably deviates from a normal distribution. While departure from normality can substantially impact results of a study, Hair et al. (2010) argued that “larger sample sizes reduce effects of non-normality” (p.72). In smaller sample sizes such as 35 or lower, results can substantially be impacted by non-normality; yet, in larger samples of 200 or more, effects of non-normality may be negligible (Hair et al., 2010). By implication, the effect of non-normality in this study with a sample of 101 is considered negligible. Therefore, in this study, the non-normality of the indicated variable (i.e. psychological empowerment) is ignored due to the sample size of 101 participants. At this level of participation (i.e. 101 respondents), it is envisaged that the effect of non-normality will be negligible, taking into account that the data for the rest of the other variables are considered approximately normally distributed.

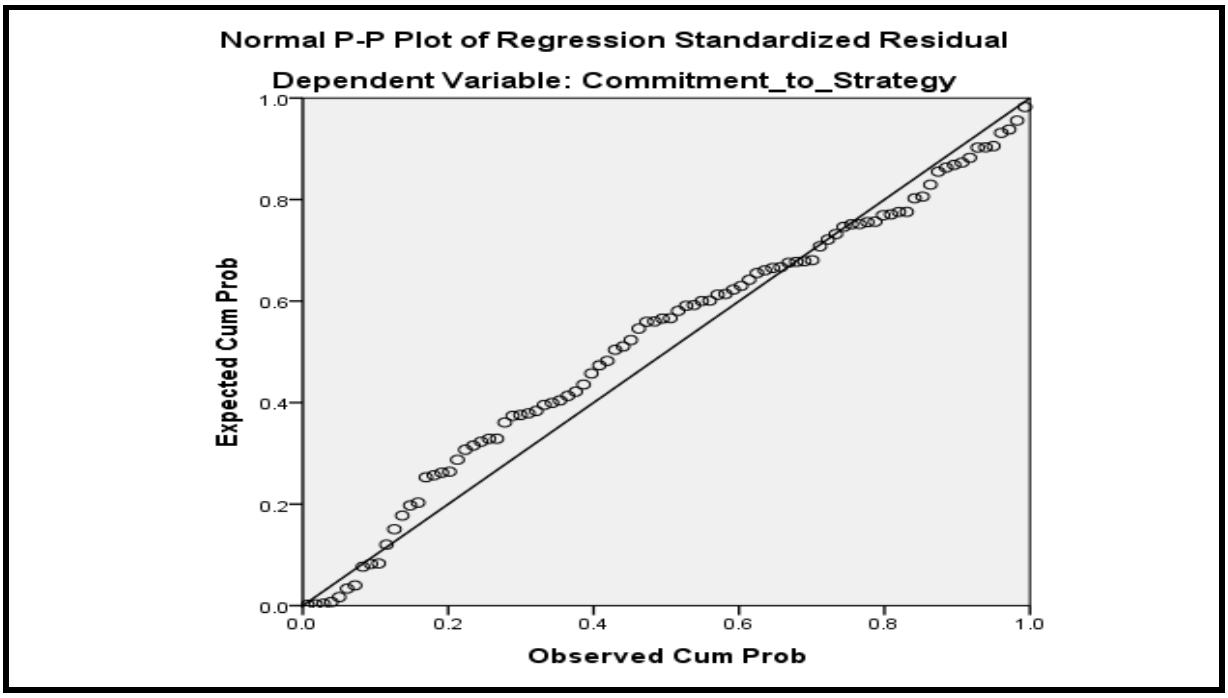
Appendix C – Regression analysis results

Figure 14 : Histograms for the commitment to strategy implementation



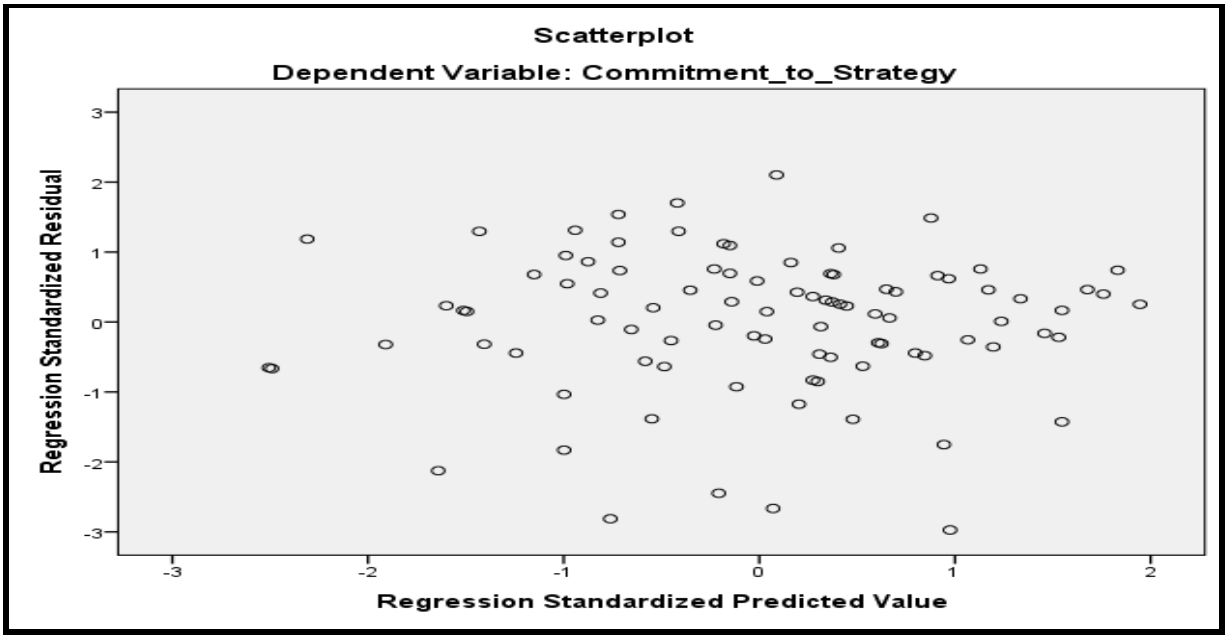
Compiled by author

Figure 15 : P-P Plot for the commitment to strategy implementation



Compiled by author

Figure 16 : Scatterplot for the commitment for strategy implementation



Compiled by author

Table 29 : Residuals statistics for the commitment to strategy implementation

Residuals Statistics[a]					
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	4.4097	6.5909	5.6377	0.48990	92
Std. Predicted Value	-2.507	1.946	0.000	1.000	92
Standard Error of Predicted Value	0.066	0.190	0.109	0.032	92
Adjusted Predicted Value	4.4453	6.5813	5.6370	.48894	92
Residual	-1.86541	1.31909	0.00000	.62041	92
Std. Residual	-2.974	2.103	0.000	0.989	92
Stud. Residual	-3.017	2.171	0.001	1.004	92
Deleted Residual	-1.92034	1.40672	0.00072	.63990	92
Stud. Deleted Residual	-3.166	2.219	-0.005	1.022	92
Mahalanobis Distance	0.007	7.376[b]	1.978	1.772	92
Cook's Distance	0.000	0.121[c]	0.011	0.020	92
Centered Leverage Value	0.000	0.081	0.022	0.019	92

a. Dependent Variable: Commitment to strategy implementation.

b. Maximum Mahalanobis of 7.376 is below 13.816 (i.e. Chi Square critical value for 2 independent variables).

c. Maximum Cook's Distance of 0.121 is below 1.000 indicating the absence of undue influence of outliers on the model.

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Table 30 : Regression results - Coefficients

Coefficients[a]													
		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.176	0.648		1.817	0.073	-0.110	2.463					
	Affective Commitment	0.223	0.081	0.268	2.757	0.007	0.062	0.384	0.493	0.281	0.229	0.734	1.362
	Psychological Empowerment	0.576	0.128	0.438	4.508	0.000	0.322	0.830	0.576	0.431	0.375	0.734	1.362
a. Dependent Variable: Commitment to strategy implementation													

Compiled by author

Table 31 : Zero-order correlation between predictor variables

		Affective Organisational Commitment	Psychological Empowerment
Affective Organisational Commitment	Pearson Correlation	1.000	0.516**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.	0.000
	N	92	92
Psychological Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	0.516**	1.000
	Significance (2-tailed)	0.000	.
	N	92	92
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Appendix D – Qualitative results tables

Table 32 : Definitions of preliminary categories/dimensions

Definitions Table	
Main category/ dimension	**Definition**
Role in strategy implementation	***Description*:** A unit of coding belongs to this category, if an interviewee expresses an opinion on any form of action, activity, responsibility or undertaking, in which they are engaged or involved in the strategy implementation process. ***Example*:** *"So we have drawn up a strategy map of how we are going to do that, and place, and keep people in key roles to make sure we enhance and streamline our businesses"* (IP10).
Motive for implementing strategy	***Description:*** A unit of coding belongs to this category, if an interviewee expresses an opinion on any form of motive or reason that drives them to implement their organisation's strategy. ***Example*:** *"I am quite a security conscious type of person, so I like the idea of stable employment and I like the idea that company strategies, you know, speak to that personal concern that I have with them, that we will be around for many years to come and we have been around for many years in the past"* (IP7).

Definitions Table	
Main category/ dimension	**Definition**
Behavioural manifestation the commitment to strategy implementation	***Description:*** A unit of coding belongs to this category, if an interviewee expresses an opinion on any form of behaviour, action, activity or effort that is reflective of their commitment to the implementation of their organisation's strategy, ***Example***: *"Well, in the first place, I focus on a high-performance culture, in other words, we are achieving, we meet deadlines, we are productive in projects that we take on"* (IP9).
Antecedent conditions of affective organisational commitment	***Description:*** A unit of coding belongs to this category, if an interviewee expresses an opinion on the basis of their affective attachment to their organisation ***Example***: *"I think I enjoy the leadership in this company. It is, I think, quite empowering. There is a lot, I mean there is no hierarchy barriers, you are free to talk to anyone. You are free to interact with any member of Exco. You are free to express your views, as long as they are constructive"* (IP1)

Definitions Table	
Main category/ dimension	**Definition**
Behavioural outcomes of affective organisational commitment	***Description:*** A unit of coding belongs to this category, if an interviewee expresses an opinion on any form of behaviour, action, activity, undertaking or effort reflective of the demonstration of their affective commitment to their organisation. ***Example***: *"Because I am the person that I am and because I believe in what we are doing, I will go beyond what is expected of me in order to achieve my goals and align myself to the strategy because I am as committed as what I am, I do everything at my best to make sure that it works, and I love seeing results. I am a results-driven person"* (IP20)
Behavioural outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment	***Description:*** A unit of coding belongs to this category, if an interviewee expresses an opinion on any form of behaviour, action, activity, undertaking or effort reflective of their perceived psychological empowerment. ***Example*****:** *"I suppose if you don't believe in what you do, and you don't trust yourself, then you won't deliver on it because you will constantly be second guessing yourself"* (IP23).

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Table 33 : Preliminary coding frame

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Role in strategy implementation	➢ Sense-giving (11)	✓ Contextualising strategic goals within business area ✓ Tactical planning – drawing up an implementation road map / operationalising strategy ✓ Tactical planning for goal alignment ✓ Department alignment to organisational strategy ✓ Aligning client strategy with line of business strategy ✓ Aligning with market needs / nuances / requirements
	➢ Articulating and communicating (9)	✓ Cascading down the strategy ✓ Filtering strategy down ✓ Internal and external communication ✓ Dissemination / communication to the rest of the team ✓ Feeding down the strategic objectives ✓ Clarification of strategic goals ✓ Stakeholder engagement ✓ Facilitative employee buy-in

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Role in strategy implementation	➢ Articulating and communicating (9)	✓ Cultural alignment / acculturation ✓ Designing a communication strategy
	➢ Championing the execution of strategy (13)	✓ Capacity building (resourcing) ✓ Performance contracting / Performance management ✓ Performance metric design ✓ Incentive reward and design ✓ Advisory and support
	➢ Implementing the strategy (15)	✓ Driving the delivery of set targets and tracking progress ✓ Seeking new growth opportunities / new business ✓ Business opportunity evaluation ✓ Driving organisational growth ✓ Operational excellence ✓ Driving innovative processes ✓ Streamlining operations ✓ Leading new projects/ Involvement in projects

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Motive for strategy implementation	➢ Perceived/envisaged outcomes (15)	✓ Achieving targeted results / seeing the end result ✓ Sustainable company growth ✓ Stable and continued employment ✓ Fear of being blamed for poor results ✓ Progress towards attainment of strategic goals ✓ Individual and team effort outcomes
	➢ Reward and recognition (7)	✓ Financial reward (bonuses, salary increase) ✓ Recognition and acknowledgement (compliments, promotions) ✓ Client feedback (internal and external)
	➢ Role dynamics (10)	✓ Passion for role ✓ Role evolution, challenging / newness of tasks ✓ Job satisfaction ✓ Flexibility in role: satisfactory work–life balance ✓ Client engagement (negotiating and deal conclusion)

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Motive for strategy implementation		✓ Facilitating innovation
	➢ Organisational climate (9)	✓ Inspiring leadership ✓ Team support ✓ Participative decision-making ✓ Goal orientation / focus ✓ Involvement in the big picture ✓ Long-term focus ✓ Constant need for change ✓ Tenure with organisation ✓ Freedom for tactical planning and incentivising behaviour ✓ Clarity of direction
	➢ Personal interests / goals (15)	✓ Personal worth ✓ Professional growth ✓ Opportunity to learn / new knowledge ✓ Sense of ownership and responsibility ✓ Commitment to the organisation

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Motive for strategy implementation	➢ Personal interests / goals (15)	✓ Excitement about change ✓ Contributing to organisational profitability, growth, sustainability and strategy ✓ Passion to achieve results ✓ Growth opportunities ✓ Learning from implementation process ✓ Belief in what the company does / belief in organisational strategy ✓ Stakeholder engagement ✓ Making things materialise
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	➢ Diligence (5)	✓ Thoroughness ✓ Putting appropriate controls ✓ Tracking performance against target ✓ Doing things properly

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation		
	➢ Volitional conduct (10)	✓ Taking initiative ✓ Innovating ✓ Extra effort ✓ Going the extra mile ✓ Going beyond the call of duty / Long hours ✓ Volitional involvement in other projects
	➢ High-performance culture (timely, intentional and quality delivery) (8)	✓ Meeting key milestones or deadlines ✓ Adherence to project deadlines ✓ Increased productivity ✓ Maintaining high standards ✓ Delivering on set target ✓ Stretching people ✓ Driving staff too hard ✓ Resource skill nourishment / training and development ✓ Desire to achieve set goals and target

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation		
	➢ Living the strategy (16)	✓ Vested interest in strategy success ✓ Feedback and report / Reviewing progress on strategic goals ✓ Laying down the foundations of the strategy (i.e. legal basis of entry into new markets) ✓ Committed to delivery of set goals ✓ Strategy alignment at departmental level ✓ Focus on achieving targeted results ✓ Creating deep client relationships ✓ Diagnosing pitfalls in underachieving targeted results ✓ Suggesting alternative solutions in the event of obstacles ✓ Enabling implementation ✓ Aligning action, deeds and behaviour to strategic goals ✓ Selecting business opportunity based on optimal contribution to targeted performance ✓ Taking off projects unaligned to strategic goals ✓ Focus on driving department goals

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation		✓ Ensuring relevance of customer solutions
	➢ Accountability / responsibility (2)	✓ Communicating with stakeholders ✓ Creating a harmonious environment for implementation ✓ Documenting deliverables ✓ Clarifying required deliverables ✓ Motivating staff
Antecedent conditions of affective organisational commitment	➢ Organisational attributes (13)	✓ Organisational culture / climate (empowering leadership, freedom of expression, ethical conduct / integrity of colleagues), empowering leadership, value congruence, family environment) ✓ Sustainable and growing company / organisational success ✓ Belief in management team ✓ Company credibility ✓ Diversity in organisation ✓ Belief in organisation's customer value proposition ✓ Organisational focus / strategic goals

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Antecedent conditions of affective organisational commitment		
	➢ Role attributes (9)	✓ Exercising creativity and innovation / Innovative ideas ✓ Variety in role ✓ Flexibility / Role autonomy (decision-making within set mandates) ✓ Clarity of role / Passion for role / responsibilities ✓ Job satisfaction
	➢ Personal attributes (5)	✓ Contribution to company's success ✓ Contribution to industry skills' development ✓ Personal and professional growth ✓ Opportunities to learn ✓ Accountability ✓ Self-belief

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural outcomes of affective organisational commitment	➢ Volitional effort (16)	✓ Self-motivation/ self-drive - Exceptional work ethic ✓ Extra hours / working overtime/ long hours ✓ Extra effort / going beyond call of duty ✓ Willingness to try ✓ Advocacy – speaking well of the company ✓ Showing pride for working for the organisation ✓ Giving the best of one's ability ✓ Accessibility and availability for support or afterhours
	➢ Diligence (11)	✓ Thoroughness ✓ Sourcing market intelligence ✓ Professionalism ✓ Efficiency / Urgency ✓ Prioritisation / Effective performance management ✓ Holding up company standard ✓ Constant self-reflection on job performance

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural outcomes of affective organisational commitment		✓ Application of knowledge gained
	➢ Responsibility (10)	✓ Taking initiative ✓ Taking responsibility for delivering targeted results ✓ Providing feedback / communicating progress towards key milestones ✓ Exerting effort on skills development ✓ Ensuring alignment to organisational strategy ✓ Attendance ✓ Building relationships ✓ Working with minimal supervision
	➢ Ethical conduct (4)	✓ Honesty ✓ Integrity ✓ Keeping promises
	➢ Focus on envisaged strategic outcomes (14)	✓ Focus on achieving targeted strategic outcomes ✓ Meeting deadlines / key milestones ✓ Getting the job done

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural outcomes of affective organisational commitment	➢ Focus on envisaged strategic outcomes (14)	✓ Contributing to delivery of strategy ✓ Swift response to business requests ✓ Making things happen ✓ Aggressive approach to delivery ✓ Aligning effort to strategic outcome ✓ Committed to seeing the organisation succeed ✓ Making it a personal goal to achieve targeted outcomes
	➢ Determination (9)	✓ Overcoming obstacles/challenges ✓ Full commitment to delivery of strategic outcomes ✓ Full team commitment towards delivery of strategy ✓ Stretching oneself
	➢ Indifference or uncommitted to implementing strategy (8)	✓ Unbothered about strategic outcomes ✓ Lacklustre or constrained effort towards implementation ✓ Lack of belief in strategy ✓ Withdrawn from the implementation process

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural outcomes of affective organisational commitment	➢ Indifference or uncommitted to implementing strategy (8)	✓ Inadequate comprehension of strategy ✓ Poor or impeding dissemination of strategy ✓ Mediocre performance ✓ Not invested in delivery of strategic objective ✓ Little or 'under-the- radar' approach to strategy implementation / judicious execution of minimum requirements of the job ✓ Compromising the strategy / Dragging feet on deliverables ✓ Not providing feedback on strategy progress
Behavioural outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment	➢ Accountability and responsibility (15)	✓ Freedom to make own decision / Independence within role ✓ Freedom of choice for preferred way of strategic goal delivery ✓ Company is reliant on incumbent ✓ Decision-making is goal directed ✓ Freedom to make decisions enables delivery of results

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment		
	➢ Energised performance (12)	✓ Absolute trust in ability tenable perform in role ✓ Targeted strategic goals are realisable ✓ Self-confidence boosts performance ✓ Delivering on expectations ✓ Getting things done ✓ Doing the job to the best of one's ability ✓ Seeking to contribute to the company ✓ Autonomy for decision-making breaks stagnation ✓ Focus ✓ Value congruence
	➢ Risk taking (5)	✓ Willingness to take risk ✓ Emboldened to take risks – try out things until they get done ✓ Always looking for challenges ✓ Free to make mistakes and learn

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment	➢ Self-belief / self-confidence (11)	✓ Trust in abilities boosts self-confidence ✓ Trust creates confidence to deliver ✓ Can do what needs to be done ✓ Motivated to do more: extra effort ✓ Mobilising resources ✓ Incredible knowledge and experience ✓ Continuous learning ✓ Positive mindset drives goal achievement
	➢ Constrained ability to deliver on strategic outcomes (demotivated) (7)	✓ Limited autonomy for decision-making ✓ Operating within set mandates ✓ Lack of trust in abilities ✓ Incongruent value alignment ✓ Managerial interference ✓ Frustrations due to having to refer decisions ✓ Self-doubt impedes decision-making

Preliminary Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment	➢ Constrained ability to deliver on strategic outcomes (demotivated) (7)	✓ Limited or failure of implementation ✓ Commitment to implementation is hindered ✓ Erosion of self-belief ✓ Stagnation ✓ Reduced commitment to company ✓ Bottle necks created by approvals slow implementation

Compiled by author

Table 34 : Final coding frame

Final Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Strategic influence imperatives	➢ Role in strategy implementation	✓ Sense-giving ✓ Articulating and communicating ✓ Championing the execution of strategy ✓ Implementing the strategy
	➢ Motive for strategy implementation	✓ Perceived outcomes ✓ Reward and recognition ✓ Social impact ✓ Role dynamics ✓ Organisational culture / climate ✓ Personal drive/ self-motivation

Final Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Strategic influence imperatives	➢ Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	✓ Diligence ✓ Volitional or discretionary conduct (concerted effort application ✓ High performance culture (timely, intentional and quality delivery ✓ Ethical conduct ✓ Living the strategy ✓ Accountability ✓ Optimism - Belief in positive future potential / performance ✓ Incongruent behaviour ✓ Skepticism - Doubtful of future outcome / performance

Final Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Antecedent conditions of affective organisational commitment	➢ Organisational dynamics	✓ Organisational culture / climate ✓ Sustainable growth ✓ Organisational leadership ✓ Company credibility ✓ Diversity in organisation ✓ Organisation's customer value propositions ✓ Organisation's strategic focus
	➢ Role dynamics	✓ Exercising creativity and innovation ✓ Flexibility and variety in role ✓ Clarity of role ✓ Passion for role / responsibilities ✓ Job satisfaction ✓ Role autonomy (decision-making within set mandates)

Final Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Antecedent conditions of affective organisational commitment	➢ Personal attributes	✓ Contribution to company's success ✓ Contribution to industry skills' development ✓ Personal and professional growth ✓ Opportunities to learn ✓ Accountability
Behavioural outcomes of affective organisational commitment	➢ Implementation-supportive behaviours	✓ Volitional or discretionary effort ✓ Diligence ✓ Responsibility ✓ Ethical conduct ✓ Results and delivery focused ✓ Determination
	➢ Negative or impeding behavioural outcomes	✓ Indifference or uncommitted to implementing strategy ✓ Sabotage

Final Coding Frame Table		
Main category/ dimension	**Subcategory 1**	**Subcategory 2**
Behavioural outcomes of perceived psychological empowerment	➢ Implementation-supportive behaviours	✓ Accountability and responsibility ✓ Enhanced / improved performance ✓ Risk taking ✓ Self-belief ✓ Constrained ability to deliver on strategic outcomes (demotivated)
	➢ Negative or impeding behavioural outcomes	✓ Lack of confidence ✓ Constrained ability to deliver on strategic outcomes (demotivated)

Compiled by author

Table 35 : Dialectal synthesis of interview data – Affective organisational commitment

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	**IP1:** *"I think I enjoy the leadership in this company. It is, I think, quite empowering. You are free to talk to anyone, you are free to interact with any member of Exco, you are free to express your views as long as they are constructive."*		1
	IP2*: "For me I think it is well firstly at least being recognised as part of the company. I mean the fact that you're remunerated according to what you give in the organisation and it is just the love for the job I guess, passion for what I do."*	0	
	IP3: "*Like I said job satisfaction is a big thing and number one and belief that belief in the management team. I believe that they are managing this company successfully and do believe that it is going to be around for the next 100 years. And a big part of that is also the integrity of the people that you are working with and stuff like that.*		1
	IP4: "*Well I mean, I think the organisation itself has good values from my personal perspective so it has got good grounded people values in terms of respect for cultures, respect for people and then we don't*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	*unnecessarily harm people where other organisations where I have seen them being very malicious with people".* **IP5:** *"Two things, the fact that the position I am in is not static it is changing everyday there are different things coming along and 2nd of all remuneration and I think that would have come through in the questionnaire that I did online and stuff like that yes I am committed to this company. That doesn't mean to say that I am 100% am determined to stay here until the day I retire you know there is always other possibilities".* ***IP6:*** *"I think I am a loyal person I am always loyal to company that has been loyal to me for a long time and want to see it be sustainable for another 10, 15 years at least and then you are still around even if I am not still around. It is still a good company and we still want to see it".* **IP7:** *"So if I look at gross profit margins and income growth we have been able to overachieve on those areas and that to me frankly means everything. And I want to be able to say we have achieved these parameters in terms of our contribution to the balance sheet and the return on capital".*		1 1 1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	**IP8***: "Just to try and get the best out of what I am doing. I really don't care much about what is happening around me in terms of the situation because there will always be bad things. But when I get involved with the thing I really want to make sure that the next person who comes in they realise that there was a person who knew what he was doing on that particular situation so I really make sure that up to the last point I do think thoroughly and very thorough".*		1
	IP9*: "Well, like I said, once again the success there is a monetary aspect to it. The success of the company directly reflects in my pocket so that does motivate me. The goal and the target or the strategic goals of the company is aimed towards achieving success, uhm, and, you know, so it definitely, that is why I am committed towards it".*	0	
	IP10: "*I do, I certainly feel as if I am learning and I have also had a view that if I am not learning within the organisation, then it is time for me to relook at my career. At the moment, I have been afforded the opportunity to learn, so while that learning is there, then I am fully committed to the organisation".*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	**IP11:** "*It is, first and foremost, it is a passion for what I do. So it is a passion for marketing and all that, uhm, but then also the commitment to the organisation, it is that commitment to see the company grow. Like I said, I have been here for 10 years so we started out small, it is nice to see how the company has grown, and it is also nice to see how you play a part and how the company has grown".* **IP12:** *"That's a tough one. Am I, do I feel I'm committed to Innovation? Ja, you know, Innovation Group is an incredibly successful business, I think they've done incredibly well over the, you know, in their successes. Is the question, for me, is Innovation committed to me in what I do? Is more so, you know, where to, for myself, you know, as a middle aged white male, at what point is my growth going to be capped, and what I'm doing. So, if someone had to come along tomorrow and they'd had to make me an incredible offer which I could not turn down, I think it would be a case of, I wouldn't leave for an extra R50.00 a month, I'm using that as an example. But if it was an incredibly good offer, I think we'd all, in our natural thinking, would obviously look at an offer. So whether you want to see commitment, I think I'm committed to Innovation, every day I get up. It might not be seen, because I am more committed to my client than Innovation, but as I've explained in the previous question, if my commitment, it overflows into what I do"*	0	1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	**IP13:** "*Look, the values here resonate with me, so overall I think I fit the company and I also get an opportunity to contribute to its long term success. I also, I like variety so in the role that I perform here, it gives me a chance to use my skills to the fullest".*		1
	IP14: "*I come from, it is a different culture, number one, it is a culture, and they have a culture that fosters growth. And they have a culture that basically, I don't know how to position it or how to put it, but what I found refreshing about '*PO1*' is that you are the custodian of the account that you hold. Therefore, if you need to deal with anybody, even if it means you need to contact the highest level in your partner's organisation, and you do the negotiation or any discussion whatsoever with the more formal relationship with them, it is allowed. There are no hierarchies. It is a flat structure according to how they operate. Of course, there is different levels but it is a flat structure in terms of how they operate. There are no hierarchies. I don't have to, I have got mandate to make decisions which is another big deal for me. And I am allowed to exercise my creativity, innovation and I am allowed to question and, what do you call it, challenge certain thinking that is probably not in line with how I see certain things. That is done without any discrimination".*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	**IP15:** "*But also, it's a very diverse company, there is no other company, in my opinion, like our company"*. **IP16:** *"No. This was something that I mentioned in your quantitative survey, the answer is no, do you need an explanation? So.it is a combination of personal and professional, I will start with personal first, start with the positives, I have been around for 9 years, it has been great, I have had the chance to experience different roles. But specifically, in direct marketing, so I haven't grown outside of direct marketing, and there are a few reasons for that which is one of the reasons for why I answered no. But I have got the chance to work in different countries and experience AIG globally, which is great, but the professional growth that I thought would have materialised with these opportunities hasn't and I have got to a point now where I don't understand why, and I say that because I have taken advice, I have spoken to senior leaders within the company, locally and abroad. You know, again, personally there doesn't seem to be a lot of growth and development from my perspective, it doesn't, from a company perspective, I don't see it as a priority or as a top three priority in identifying talent and growing them. I think I am worthy of development, so my, I have proved it through company management, so if you look at your KPI's, I rank in the top 20% globally. So that I have a problem with because I don't feel that there is a piece of the company that is actually looking at the talent that the company has, and actually develop*	0	1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	*them for the future. That you will find from a local perspective, you know, I haven't seen as many people leave the company over the last year and a half as I have the last 9 years. Turnover is pretty high, it would appear that management see it not as a bad thing, they think it is acceptable, you know, being around for 9 years, I have a lot of relationships with a lot of people in the company. Long story short, professional growth and development seems to be lacking from my perspective and the frustration is that I have proven myself and as much as I try and network and create opportunities, I find that it is very hard to do here. Which is one of the reasons why I am doing the MBA is to try and correct that. So that is the first issue, the second one is around leadership and that is why I am very interested in leadership, I don't believe we have transformation leaders in the company and this is what we need right now. The division that I am working in is in the decline and you need that transformation leader to come in and from that perspective, I also think you need a transformation leader for the company as whole, I don't believe we have that. That comes with motivation, it comes with energising people, it comes with creating clear visions, I don't think all of that is in the system".* **IP17:** *"The fact that I have been here for 5 years going on 6 I think that shows commitment. Also when I have been approached if it has been a significant offer or they have offered something else. I have*		

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	*actually gone and discussed it said look I don't want to leave but I have been given this offer and in the one instance the CEO just gave me an instant increase and said it is alright I would rather you stay and I said to her I don't want to leave when it is about money and so she gave me a nice increase and that I am committed to staying otherwise I would have taken another offer.* *It is the work environment where you can grow and learn it is important to me to be able to grow and learn. I like to problem solve and see new things and get a lot of opportunity with that in small company where there is growth. So I wouldn't get it in a corporate I will have a job that I do everyday and everyday would be the same or similar and everyday for me in this job is not the same".* **IP18:** *"Yes I am still here after so long. I am grateful to the company they did me a favour I believe they paid for my MBA. They really didn't have to and in fact when I did my second year because remember I come from an acquired company I come from Investec, Investec Insurance Brokers was bought by Santam and then by Aon and with my previous management they approved for me to do a MBA and by the time we transitioned to Aon policies were very different there is a MBA for like top execs and at the time I was nowhere near that so I feel I owe them and I went to ask them can you please continue paying for me and they did and I think they placed a lot of trust in me. So I feel indebted to them for that and*	0 0	

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	*also I feel whatever it is I have learnt in my studies I need to apply here first because this is the place that gave me the opportunity so for me that is my thing that is why I am still here".* **IP19:** *"Well I think first of all, there is a nice bunch of people. We are more like a family, you know. When you come here I feel comfortable. I think because I know what is expected of me. I know what is required in my job I have a boss who doesn't sit on my shoulder all day and breathe down my neck. He has got confidence in me in knowing what I am doing and I just get general job satisfaction. I think that is what it is and also I live just down the road which is wonderful I don't have to travel along way to work"*. **IP20:** *"I believe in what we do okay. And I think, for me if I believe in what I am doing, what the company is doing, okay, that then just makes me loyal and committed to the company that I work for. So, I see a lot of good that we do in terms of the products that we offer. I love the products and I think they work for people they work for a lot of people which makes me happy so I can buy into that and because I buy into it you have got my support".*		1 1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	**IP21:** "*I think I like the fact, the person that I am, I'm not very, I get bored easily. So I like the fact that they're quite innovative in the way they think about business. So, it gives me commitment, you know, it gets me going. So, I'm not doing the same thing over and over again, there's always something new and expected that comes before me. So, that's very motivating, yes".*		1
	IP22: ***"****It is the freedom to be able to think. It is also the position I am in that gives me the flexibility and freedom to come up with the creative ideas as to we can take this company forward. And the fact that the executive listen to what you saying and they support you well in most instances provided you know you have a business rational for this you are supported"*.		1
	IP23: *"As I say, it is different things all the time. It changes, you know, when I first started at Aon, it wasn't so much about the company, it was about my boss. My boss groomed me, I went to him and said to him, I am not going to be a PA forever so tell me what to do to get out of this job? He said to me go study insurance, so I went and studied insurance and I came back and said okay, I have done that, now what? He said, okay, go and work in personal lines, and I went and worked in personal lines and after a year, I said, geez boss, I feel like a postman, I can't do personal lines in, you know, I get the stuff in and I send*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	*it out, I get it in and I send it out, there is no thought, I need something that is going to mentally stimulate me, give me something more. And I went into the marine division and the global division, I worked in the corporate, you know, I worked on a number of different accounts and I went back to him and I said, okay, insurance is not for me. He said, alright, come back and by my administrator for the entire team, you can, you know, help me with all the admin and all the work and you can be my internal broker and backup and do xyz. So I went back to him for three years and then Athemi joined our company…that is the year I mentioned a few moments ago. I think you know as at that stage it was how do I progress up the corporate ladder, and he helped me, he believed in me so that was the hook, he was willing to put doors in front of me, I had to walk through them myself and make it happen but he was willing to give me the opportunity. So career path for me was very important, but I have got a staff member who doesn't want to climb the corporate ladder, she just wants to come to work, do her job well and go home. And we need people like that, we can't have everybody as the CEO, so to look after her is very different to look after me. So I need a career path, I need recognition, I need promotions, I need bonuses, I need all of those good things, she wants to be paid well and for instance, you know, they talk about hygiene factors. Give me a decent parking bay and cafeteria and a good medical aid and a pension that is going to look after me one day, she wants those basic needs and a good salary. I want to come to work, I want to be looked*		

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Antecedent conditions for affective organisational commitment	*after, I want to go home, I want a nice cup of coffee when I get to work, that is what is important to her, different to me"* **IP24: "***I think their broader focus, in terms of what they want to achieve. As an organisation, they are very much keen to make a difference, to demonstrate a difference in their service profile, their product deployment which then also excites some of us to ensure that we can also grow within that kind of space".*		1
	TOTAL	6	19

Explanation of coding

Low score (coded 0): This code is allocated to the respondent's statement if the statement does not reflect an antecedent condition for affective commitment to the organisation as the primary reasons for the participant's commitment to the organisation (e.g., financial, indebtedness etc).

High score (coded 1): This code is allocated to the respondent's statements if the statement reflects an antecedent condition for affective commitment to the organisation as the primary reasons for the participant's commitment to the organisation (for example, desire to contribute, identification with the organisation, congruence in values, organisational climate etc).

Compiled by author

Table 36 : Dialectal synthesis of interview data – Psychological empowerment

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP1:** *"Yes and partially no because like I said initially I enjoy going out there negotiating with clients clinching deals and at times I find I respect the clients and I sincerely believe that they won't mislead me and offer me something that is not workable and also I access and evaluate and then at times you can then come back internally and then the other department that is supposed to give you support they don't believe in this proposal and being at the start undermining the client external client, the external client is supposed to know better and we are in reinsurance the client is insurer they know there product better and you when you start that negotiation because we are in-between we are we mediate between the client and our internal at times I find there is a lot of dishonesty which sort of works conflicts with my values, personal values and also treating other people with some what is the word disrespect, ja and also at times you can see I mean I will give you an example where I met with a client a new client and whatever and came back to the office also you do your research today there is internet and you find the information that you got doesn't tally you what is in the profile of the person the person is saying they have been working in the industry or they left and did this, then you discover a person was in Australia was out of industry for 8 years so in times ja"* : 1.		1

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP1:** *"Personally I have got a lot of trust in my abilities and that trust is actually is not in a vacuum. I have done a lot invested a lot in myself in terms of studies and also in terms of personal empowerment or trying to understand our internal systems be it actuarial and so forth one person who every day, every night or every week when I go home for the weekend. I print a document just go and read and understand something better. So I think that trust for me goes a long way in building confidence in myself on how I can deliver"*: 1. **IP1:** *"That is a tricky question because what I have noticed is something peculiar to multinational organisations you have got autonomy yes at local level. But you still find at times that autonomy is not exactly complete. There is ways other ways subtle ways that are inbuilt to regulate how you make decisions so you still find you are tied down at times it is a bit frustrating you think you have got the autonomy but you still have to refer things and at times can be shot down and you have made your maybe you have made already made a commitment to the client maybe made an indication that you can assist you can provide a solution and then you fight at the end of the day the powers that be in say no, we can't do this and it just destroys your confidence and also it might even affect your relationship with the client"*: 1.		

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP2:** *"I think yes I mean personal values and beliefs when it comes to integrity, honesty, openness. I think being open and frank and being honest in terms of values which I firmly believe in, definitely I mean important also in terms of the managerial role"*: 1. **IP2:** *"Difficult one but I think fundamentally if you don't trust, if there is no trust, ja then I guess commitment and trust go together if you don't trust, if there is no trust in your abilities. I can't see how you can then be committed to deliver the two for me go hand in hand":* 0. **IP2:** *"It has a great bearing because at least you then feel responsible and accountable when making your own decisions, whereas if you are sort of just the Post Office... I mean the question you really you ask yourself, is there any real empowerment or I mean is there any way that you are actually making a contribution apart from just being the Post Office. I think autonomy you need that autonomy so that I mean you are able to function whereas I mean if you don't have autonomy and you just. I am not sure if you will have that commitment the same level of commitment towards implementation of strategy"*: 0.	0	
	IP3*: "Sure I do think that there is a strong fit and I think and that is personally that is one thing that I quite enjoy about working at the reinsurance level okay. I think that and I think the tone is set by the industry that you work in and the fact that we work in a regulated industry and the fact that I work for*	0	

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*Junior quite honestly it is set in ethical tone it sets, it sets all the kind of beliefs that I would like and so I mean my personal beliefs are in being ethical and in fairness and in working hard and all those kind of things and I think if I work for a company that didn't have those kind of beliefs or attributes I think the fit would be a little it wouldn't be great so I think the fit is pretty good"* : 1. **IP3:** *"Ja that is I think that is a very good question. Because I mean it is absolute I mean if you read, if you read these books on let's say on psychopaths, if you read these books I think there is a book called the psychopath or whatever and if you look at. If you look at why those people are so successful in the organisations is because they have no self-doubt. So, it is absolute confidence in their ability to perform the job that they are given. So, I think that those of us that are not psychopaths I think if you do not, if you do not have the trust in yourself and your ability to perform your job I think that would be certainly would detract from your ability from your performance"*: 0. **IP3:** *"Yes and no so working for a financial services organisation and in a regulated environment, I don't think you ever going to have full autonomy, no matter which company you are in. I think that I can't see that it is any different for anyone in any financial services company. I think you are always going to have a whole bunch of boxes that you need to tick, okay. So I think there is always going to be a whole bunch of requirements to fulfil however we do work in a very flat environment okay so that*		

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*then allows us to work relatively autonomously so there is not so much of this there is very little of this dynamic between I am the boss and you are the worker you know so from all levels and that is not really a culture that is entrenched in the company, which is great because that really does help the commitment and we all realise that we have do something for a common goal and sure that is ticking a lot of boxes. But I think that if you create an environment where it is to whatever hierarchical or there is too much managerial interference. I think that could also be there has got to be a balance there as well. I mean people have got to deliver"*: 0.		
	IP4: *"So it is very similar to as I mentioned earlier so beliefs and values for me is really treating people with respect and dignity even in hard decisions and that is congruent with this role, sometimes not always because I still have to do the tough things that people don't like okay where you have to let someone go or whatever. But at least I can still hold true to my values around treating me with respect and dignity"*: 1. **IP4:** *"Yeah, so trust is similar to self-confidence so if you have confidence to do this job, which you are employed to do as HR manager then definitely so ja, if I felt anyway inadequate, yes then I definitely*		1

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		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*wouldn't be able to perform in this role. So definitely need a high level of confidence, self-confidence self-trust to handle this role":* 1. **IP4:** *"Not too much because from a HR perspective there are certain things you still need approval from above you know so ja in certain decisions I don't have freedom to make those decisions and that is where I can't really implement organisational strategy. The approval needs to come from above"*: 0		
	IP5: *"I think so I believe there is a fit there or otherwise I wouldn't be able to sleep at night, for example one of the things that is underneath the compliance is the code of conduct and that is all about business ethics or the way things should be done. So as head of that whole lot obviously, I have to make sure that my personal beliefs aligned with what we have got in our code of conduct, which is ethical yes 100% alignment I couldn't sleep if there wasn't and I don't understand how ethical people can sleep at night"*: 1. **IP5:** *"Having been in this line of work for many, many years okay and having been with Munich for a number of times. I know how business operates and that becomes quite an important one for me to be able to do my job as the company Lawyer as well as the head of the compliance. I am very confident in my abilities to do what I can do. I have proven that over the years. But there is also a realisation that I*		1

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		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*can't do everything. So, or my team can't do everything so and I am happy with that. So, you know there is something that we can't do, we get somebody else to do it, in terms of the strategy 20/25 it is very difficult for us to register us in Ghana for example from here, we need somebody on that side saying that is the situation instead of me flying there and going and battling you appoint external legal guys so got a legal firm that will do that. So, I am very confident and comfortable in what I do because if I am not I have always got the ability to go outside and get people that are professionally in that field"*: 1. **IP5:** *"Yes it does there is autonomy and as I mentioned at the beginning here in terms of the compliance function in terms of the financial services Board notices the compliance function has to be independent and it reports directly to the Board and it can report to the Board in the absence of executive management okay so that is completely autonomous, from a legal perspective, the legal services do report directly through to the Chief operating officer. But there again it is very autonomous because it is legal work the CEO is not a legal person by any stretch of the imagination. So, the company relies on me and I am autonomous to go out and basically do what needs to be done"*: 1		

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP6:** *"I think so yes overall in the 10 years that I have been here I never really came across something that I was required to do that I felt I can't do I think the company has quite high values which I also do have and it is just it is just wrong to do stuff that is not right"* : 1. **IP6:** *"I think if I did not believe that I can do it I will probably not be as committed to the strategy because then I will probably feel that I won't be here for the next couple of years anyway. So I think if I believe in something that we are working towards and I can see the end goal that I can actually do it, I will give 100% to get there"* : 1. **IP6:** *"I think on my level not so much but I mean ja, there really is a sort of a ability to influence something we will obviously keep the long midterm goals in mind so"* : 0.		1
	IP7: *"Look my personal if we are talking about personal beliefs as things like principles what I live by hey. I am Christian and those are the beliefs that I follow. So that will entail things like okay my job we all understand that we have to achieve targets every business has to achieve targets within that context though does that link in with my personal principles of how I want to treat and lead people. I mean when I walk out this office that entails things like respect have I developed people under me you know*		1

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*have I had an opportunity to skill people and pass down knowledge, have I learnt from them in various aspects"*: 1. **IP7:** *"Ja look I have come to trust I have come to know where I am strong and week okay and I have come to know certain strengths for example on technical areas and I know exactly when I know the global strategy what they want over here how they want this priced. The parameters they want say on the modelling and the pricing side. I have got a great confidence because I have been trained up on this over many years that I know and understand the business. So, we know and understand our markets we know and understand areas we want to target long before we go into a renewal we kind of have an idea as to where we want to place and position ourselves so being a person who sort of respected here for technical skills the technicalities of implementing the strategy I am very comfortable with and confident. I have produced a lot of the controls sheets and the audit sheets and everything that can double check back to that"*: 1. **IP7:** *"Look, I have autonomy decision-making, but we have on every single major decision we produce there is a 4 eyes principle. However, the autonomy within that is that I analysis it. So, if I go to my boss and say this is great, you know the price I have is this and the price they want is this, he has confidence that I have arrived at that price correctly. On file, I will have a model that says why I believe*		

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*the price should be that and I write a report on every single risk I underwrite to say why I believe the price is that and why I believe the input are correct. So, the autonomy for me is in summarising correctly my analysis, my boss doesn't have time to do that, he has 5 minutes to review what I have done in 2 hours. So I have to be confident that I have fed through the correct information that we can both sign off on and that is the autonomy that we have. It is basically a situation of trust you know if he doesn't trust that I can arrive at the right decision and if he has had far too many experiences in the past as to why my report shouldn't be trusted he won't he will lose that so it is still a situation of trust that we have. But ja, I have a huge responsibility to get the analysis right and that role is"*: 1		
	IP8: *"There will be quite a lot some they will be a fit some there be no fit. So, because of my commitment usually to the job that I do. So, issues such as where times I am required to extend working hours and go beyond that I won't have any issues with that so they will fit within my belief system. But the issues where they touch on ethics they will clash with my belief that definitely will clash and normally when such things come across I am very vocal I would raise my voice and I will talk about them. In some instances I may have to carry on and do them but this is where you will find that my level*		1

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*of commitment would be certainly down I am doing it because there is no other way that it is definitely against my grain"* : 0. **IP8:** *"It tends to motivate I believe because I trust myself and my ability that I can do and I am always looking for a challenge so it just motivates myself to try and get involved in that and deliver as per the expectations"* : 1. **IP8:** *"Ja it does quite a huge one because I believe in being free to make my own decisions and doing things and if that is not there it tends to really demotivate me and it affects me in decision making because you always say what is the point in making this decision if obviously it will either be overruled or the decision will always be against what the company policy is so it definitely does affect me or impact, impact on my level of commitment or level of delivering the results"* :1.		
	IP9: *"I do believe there is a fit, uhm, my personal values, something that I feel very strongly about is I always try to be successful in what I do. I always, I am a hard worker, I am committed and, you know, and I do believe that I am innovative as well, and to me, a lot of the issues that I strive for in my own life and in the own things that I do, I believe is what is being almost envisioned in our strategy, the company strategy. And because it is in the company strategy, me as a manager, you know, it is easy*		1

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*for me to follow and also work towards those responsibilities. Ultimately, as a manager, my main responsibility is making sure all my staff that reports to me are performing at a certain level and that they succeed in what they do and they add value. And if I don't like to fail personally, so I like the fact that we are focusing on the success aspect and the innovation aspect rather than focusing on more negative aspects"* :1. **IP9:** *"Still important, I mean, if I am not confident in my ability to make decisions, then it is going to be detrimental to my performance in this company. If I don't trust myself, ultimately to me it comes down to making a decision when you need to. If you don't trust yourself and trust your experience and your skills, you won't make those decisions and your team will stagnate. So, to me, trust is important, trust in myself, uhm, if I don't believe I can do the job to the best of my ability, then I am not going to"*: 1. **IP9:** *"I think that is vitally important to have that kind of autonomy. Uhm, to me there is no point in employing, and putting somebody in a position of a managerial position and not allowing them to make day to day decisions, etcetera. Uhm, and the bearing on the commitment to the company, if I'm being given the responsibility to in a certain role and I am held accountable for it but I am not empowered to do the job, that will reduce my commitment towards the company. So right now, I feel that I do have that autonomy, I can to a large extent drive my department and my team how I see fit, and because I*		

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	know that I can drive the process, it actually builds my commitment, it actually makes me more committed towards this company": 1.		
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP10:** *"Yes, definitely, I think, uhm, I think if you look at my personal beliefs system and the way I measure myself as a person, if you don't have those, if you don't have those key beliefs and values then you are not going to, in my opinion, succeed in the finance role. If you are not honest or reliable, I think the finance operations of a business will fall apart. I think, especially in a finance role, there is a lot of value placed on being honest and reliable and having a level of integrity about you"*: 1 **IP10:** *"I think if I didn't trust myself to do it, if I didn't believe in myself, then I would question my own ability would be there to implement, so I think, again, if you don't trust yourself to do it, I don't think you are going to make, you are not going to take that risk to get it done. So, uhm, I am not sure if I am answering the question right but if there is no trust in your own abilities, then I think implementation will fail. Uhm, and again, for me it is directly linked in terms of how your trust in yourself will affect how you implement a strategy, whether it is divisional or operational, so I think there is quite a strong link"*: 1. **IP10:** *"Uhm, without a doubt, I think if I was not able to make the decisions and sort of kept getting told what to do, how to implementation, I don't think the implementation would go as smoothly as it has*		1

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	gone. I think, uhm, my own style of management is not to, uh, sort of manage by input but manage by output. So, I enjoy being managed in the same way, so I think autonomy around making decisions really has affected how I manage it, how well. I don't know if that is correct. But implementation of our strategy, so it has a big effect, yes": 1.		
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP11:** *"Uhm, so, I am just trying to get on the, yes, again, I don't think that I would have been here for this long if I didn't believe there to be a personal fit and what I believe, and how we get there. Because in all our strategies over the past 10 years, there has always been an element of believing in people. And, I believe that is the core of any strategy, so if that wasn't there, I wouldn't have been here for so long. So, yes, there is definitely a fit there"*: 1. **IP11:** *"Well, I think it plays a huge role, uhm, yes, obviously being in a management position, you need to be able to trust the decisions that you make and the decisions that you make on behalf of your team. I mean, if you second guess everything that you do, you are never going to implement that strategy. Uhm, so it does play a huge role, so I have learnt how to trust myself on the decisions I make"*: 1. **IP11:** *"Definitely. Uhm, I think if you get to a certain level, I think it talks to again that trust element, so it is trusting in yourself to make those decisions in order to drive the strategy. But it is also having the*		1

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	company trust behind you to make those decisions to go forward. Uhm, and I think if that autonomy is not there, then it breaks down that trust between company and role again": 1.		
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP12:** *"My management role, and my roles and responsibilities, and my beliefs and personal values, you know, I believe in, you know, trust, integrity, you know, honesty, reliability. All those things are something that I place my entire life on, if there's a, you only got one chance in life"*: 1. **IP12:** *"I worked in various aspects and areas in the motor trade, so I have an incredible knowledge that I've acquired, and you know, really hind in my skills and what I do. So I've got a lot of confidence in what I do, but I'm not ashamed to say, if I don't know something, I can always put up my hand and say, I'm not following here, you know, for me to improve something that might be currently in place, could you help me understand it better so I can get a better idea of what to do"*: 1. **IP12:** *"Look, I must say, I get a lot of freedom to make those decisions. I do, I never believe in making decisions on your own, in fact, I sometimes look for decisions up and down. I will go to my staff and I'll say, you know, and I don't know if it's a good thing or a bad thing, but my brain never seems to stop, I'm always continuously thinking about work, and sometimes I don't know if it's a good or a bad thing, I must say"*: 1.		1

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP13:** *"As I said earlier, my personal values are very aligned to the company stated values. Integrity for me is the number one value that I really, uhm, operate on daily. Reliability, care, commitment, you know, all of those things are something which is important for me personally. I think I wouldn't be here as long as I have, if the company didn't strive for the same sort of ethics by which I live by"*: 1. **IP13:** *"I think it boils down to my confidence in my own knowledge and experience, and being somebody who is willing to take a risk and back themselves to achieve something that is possible. I think every single day here, people make mistakes but as long as they making those mistakes and they are learning from them in a, uhm, attempt to achieve something which is better than the current result, then I think they should be allowed to do that, and luckily in my case my, immediate manager gives me a lot of autonomy and in most cases, will back my idea. But at the same time is that, you know, I think you need to you have got to fight in the trenches together, if we take that decision that we are going to do something, if it works, we should all be rewarded for taking part in it. If it doesn't work, we should all take responsibility and accountability for the failure, it is no use being part of a decision to do something and then washing your hands of it and hanging someone else out to dry. I don't think, I think we live and die together, you know, it's uh, as long as we communicate and back each other then, whatever the result is should be a joint result"*: 1.		1

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	IP13: *"Yes, I think it is absolutely critical that especially at this sort of level, that you get given a mandate and autonomy to achieve certain things. But the boundaries need to be clear, I mean, I know when I need to go and ask for approval. And I am pretty clear about when I can go ahead and do something, uhm, and that means that it doesn't slow the process down, there are no bottle necks"*: 1.		
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP14:** *"Okay, my values and job requirements, no, absolutely, they are in line. Because from my job requirement point of view, relationship building is one of my biggest things, driving new business is another one. From a values perspective, how do I marry the two, it has got to do with the kind of relationships that I form and usually the people that I have met so far, it is people who almost have a similar value system that I do, that I have. They don't have to be Christian but there are certainly some similarities in how I do business with them, there is ethics there. I have never seen any form of bribery or underhanded dealings that we have done"*: 1. **IP14:** *"No, I certainly believe in what I do and I certainly believe that I can deliver, I do trust that very much in the job description, funny enough, we were having a job evaluation this morning with our Human Capital and one of the questions they asked there was, with the job that we do, how long does it take for one to fully understand it, just to get to an 80% level of understanding, what they are*		1

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*employed to do. And my peers said a year, which is true because the business is quite complex, however it took me about almost 6 months to understand exactly what we do to get to the 80% level. And they are quite helpful, I have got a lot of support as well with the people that I work with which makes it much easier for me to do what I do, and I trust that I can deliver based on that"*: 1. **IP14:** *"Sometimes it does, depending on what decision I need to make, most decisions I don't need to consult, I do if I feel that maybe perhaps input is required. But most of the time I make decisions myself, which usually or so far what I have seen have delivered results the expected results"*: 0.		
	IP15: *"From the HR Operations side, we need to ensure that all the company policies adhere to the basic conditions HR best practices, that it's implemented, that it's consistently applied within the company, we work with confidential information. We need to ensure all our systems are up to date, we get to deal with personal information from people, people share a lot with us, people, we work with salaries. So, we work with a lot of personal information of employees, and if I wasn't a person with integrity, respect towards others, honesty, then I wouldn't have been able to do my job"*: 1. **IP15:** *"Ja, it plays a huge role, because if I didn't trust myself to do it, I wouldn't have been able to do it. So, it doesn't help, I trust my knowledge and my skills and my experience, and I know that I can use*		1

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*that to meet my, the strategic goals, and contribute towards the company's. But if I didn't trust my own abilities, then I wouldn't have the confidence to do what I'm doing"*: 1. **IP15***: "Ja, my team, if I didn't have my team, I would also not be able to contribute towards the company strategy. If I didn't have a team that I can trust, but we are very open, we, I trust my team, I employed them myself, I know what I got, and I know what their abilities are, and I'm not an autocratic person. So, we have teams spirit and motivation, and we all work together, and towards that strategy"*: 0.		
	IP16: *"I do so, and I am going to take out, there is a revenue target and revenue perspective to the role, so at the end of the day, you know, most of our roles are linked to revenue so I am going to take that part out. Where I see a fit in the value is trying to help people. So, we are an insurance company and we know we want to sell as much as we can, I see it a bit more than selling, I see it as trying to help people, so, you know, when you are in the moment of need, you have insurance, you have an insurance, is generally a grudge purchase, but I see it differently. At the end of the day, it is still a choice, so you are not forced to do anything that you don't want to do, so my values are along that line of, I don't know how to say it correctly, but being there for people, helping out or ensuring that people*	0	

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*are okay, that they are not left out in the dark, that kind of thing. So, from that perspective, definitely, so you know the role of direct marketing within this organisation is a distribution channel to get out the consumer insurance products. So if I am marketing to you, I must believe that if I have your best interest at heart, then yes"*: 0. **IP16:** *"So there is two sides, I will look at that in two perspectives, the first one is very confident in my ability so if I trust my ability, if I am in that position which I generally am, then my commitment is over 100% because I know and I can do. But on the other side of it is I could not trust my ability to an extent if I don't know, so if you know if there is a strategic perspective that the company is taking, which I am inexperienced or don't have much background or whatever the case is. Even though I don't doubt my ability, the fact that I am inexperienced or I am not familiar with the settings of the organisation there could be a bit of, I wouldn't doubt my ability but my ability levels would decrease a bit because I am inexperienced and I don't know. I wouldn't say it is a problem moving forward, so one of the things that I think I do well is to adapt to change relatively quickly, and I believe in that ability. Maybe it is a week or two weeks of doubting my ability a bit but I will get there"*: 0. **IP16***: "I would say, yes. I am just trying to figure how I would explain, so the issue that I have with not having autonomy is I could be asked to do something and if it goes against my values or morals, or if it*		

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*is something that I don't believe is the right thing to do. You find yourself sometimes in a position where you have to do it because there is no autonomy, so you have been told this is what must be done, you must do it and that is a grey area and conflict for me. So, if it goes, the things that I have, autonomy over is fine, that gives me the opportunity to do it the way I think it should be done, but the grey area is not having it and just being told what to do. Specifically, when it goes against my morals and values"*: 0.		
	IP17: *"Yes because I think that I where I underwrite for the reinsurance for facultative these are risks that we don't want on our book but we are also taking some for our own account, therefore I won't pass it on to the reinsurer if I am not going to take it and I have the ability to say no. So, because I think I can underwrite and I have control it is a good fit for me and also because I take imitative I can grow my books of business. I am not I think that I am given a lot of freedom that fits with my personality. So in terms of job fit and personality it is a good fit for me"*: 1. **IP17:** *"I think if I make a mistake I get called in quite quickly and then it is forgotten, which means that you can go on from there. I do trust myself to make the right decision because I have learnt over the years and I have referred things and I know what the decisions are going to be so then I can I think there is a framework that I work in which if there is a kind of scaffolding that catches you when you*		1

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		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*make a mistake and supports you then you have the trust and the organisation if you and I do trust myself to make the right decisions because I am given more work I am given more responsibility and I know that I can do it. I can rise up to that occasion and I can learn more about the reinsurance I can place the reinsurance directly I can learn and grow. So I trust myself to be able to do that"*: 1. **IP17:** *"Yes I have complete freedom I have a lot of freedom that makes a huge if you have freedom you can think creatively, you can try new things, you can make mistakes that means that you can grow in ways that maybe the strategy hadn't considered and then you can feed that back and that is my value that I add"*: 1.		
	IP18: *"There is definitely a fit I pursued this role, this role didn't really exist I pursued it because I felt that it was aligned to my beliefs and values. So yes, I believe it.* *Okay, yes again, I am a very what is the word. I believe in personal development as the key to a lot of problems that we are having I believe it all starts with the individual okay previously I was in insurance I was in the business with the insurance business and I was doing compliance quality I have done a lot of stuff and there has always been particular thing that bothers me and it goes back to that other example about confidence I find a lot of people have confidant and yet they want to do these big things*		1

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*but they don't even have the small thing in check okay. So, for me I had to sit and think in order for me to make an impact yes I can continue selling insurance I can continue doing operations standards and compliance things but I felt where I can make a lasting impact and something closely aligned to what I believe and what I think my purpose of it then I will have to be in a place or a role or a position we have got access to people on that level. So, there is a perfect fit"*: 1. **IP18:** *"I think there is a lot of things that I probably don't know how to do that I need to do. But I don't necessarily think that is a problem, not at this stage anyway, like I said this is a new role the trust that I can do what I need to do I think at the pace that is required business yes, I can do it. I do think that the company is light years behind in terms of where it needs to be. So, if we were as a company here then I will be very intimidated with this role and I will not necessarily trust that I can do this role or I will be the best person to do this role okay but because in terms of this, we are still infants, it's a new thing, I feel I can grow with it and I can make it what it needs to be as I also grow in the role. So no, my short answer is no. I mean I am not completely trusted that I have got the ability to do what I am doing at a particular level, but that does not mean I am not committed to learning does not mean I am not committed to having a positive impact"*: 0.		

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	IP18: *"100% what I think about my boss is he does pretty much give me autonomy to do what I need to do as long as it achieves the overall objective of what we are trying to do and I can't function any other way anyway. So I have just been lucky that I have worked with people who understand that you need to tell me what the end result is what is the overall objective but leave it up to me to do it the way I want to do it otherwise I would not be able to cope"*: 1.		
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP19:** *"Yes there is a fit there but by the same token the fit must come from me okay because I can have a list of items in my job that I have to do okay they are not asking me to do anything illegal. So that fits in with my value system but by the same token I can make my value or the job fit in with my values system by doing the job according to my values of being open and honest and frank and all the rest of it. Is that what you are getting at ja so I am not saying because you know if they were asking me to do things that were illegal it would go against my grain and I would say no so then I will probably couldn't work here, well if they ask me to say well okay you know Hardy is coming won't you slip a few R100 under the desk and hopefully you will give us I couldn't do that so, but that is not part of my job, so ja, I mean obviously we have got to uphold Hanover's values, which one of these are honesty and integrity so you know it does, it it fits in with my values, my personal values"*: 1.		1

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Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP19:** *"I have never really thought of that to be honest because I mean I do trust myself to do the best I can so it has never been an issue in my life. Because I think I am very fortunate I think probably my stage in life I have had a lot of experience I have been around the block a few times so I pull on that experience and that gives me the trust, the self-trust that I need"*: 1. **IP19:** *"Well look put it this way not having to rush to the boss to make every decision it makes my life a lot easier. Look there are certain decisions that I think BB likes to be privy too and over the years I have got to know him. So, I know when to go and discuss things with him and when I can just get on with it. So it does make my job a lot easier it takes out a lot of frustration which in turn helps me to be committed to get done what is done"*: 1.		
	IP20: *"Ja, so let's flesh it out a little bit, so I am fortunate enough to be on a executive coaching session that Innovation Group are funding. So, there is a company who coaches me and obviously, so they do the personality profiles on you and if you have a look at my personality type in terms of what my inherent strengths are and requirements are in order to achieve certain things. I am perfectly fitted for the role that I am in now. I have to have positive results, I need to achieve that I am not the kind of person who is happy to say drive something and then walk away from it and in anticipation that*		1

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*somebody will take it over and finish it. I will make sure I drive to a degree and then I want to see the results of what we have implemented and I am very meticulous when it comes to detail so I drill down into detail to ensure that the processes that are in place that are supporting the sales people out there and clients are met to the nth degree and that is just me naturally and before I met with you I was running, we really are what we are doing what claims we have paid what claims we haven't paid and I am having a look at all of this and I have got a good sense of exactly where we are, who is doing what before I come here so I am not a control freak. So from that perspective, from that perspective the role that I am in is I am very suited to it and that is also picked up by the coach that I have got, ja he picked that up"*: 1. **IP20:** *"Ja, that is a good question. I like that question. I tell you again by just virtue of the person who I am I will succeed that is it and I believe that I will okay and just because I believe in it that is inherent I think I will always make a success okay. There are days that I question my ability there are certain things that are sort of outside of my control or my sphere of expertise and I need to rely on other people and when that fails then I question myself on why I let that fail maybe I should have had more knowledge, so I do question myself then and question then my ability to make sure I can drive or see my whole department through into this strategy okay so it plays a huge role and my confidence and my*		

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*trust within myself, but when I go back to basics, I realise through my career right from where I started, maybe even as a boy, a little boy, to where I am now, I can see a success and that in itself gives me a level of confidence that I can do this job"*: 1. **IP20:** *"No, for sure you know because I have the autonomy to make certain decisions and quite influential decisions okay because I influence policy and procedures within my environment because I have the autonomy to do that. It also just gives me a level of confidence to make sure that I can do my job because I am trusted to do these things and I am trusted with millions of Rands, okay and procedures that can affect. I can put something in place now and only in 6 months or even in 12 months' time will you see the effect of it, okay so and I have that autonomy and because of that I am obviously very weary or mindful of the things I can do that autonomy that I have and obviously that in itself has effect on how I implement my strategy"*: 1.		
	IP21: *"I think it does, I think it does. In a greater way. I think for, beside the skill and knowledge, the maturity and personality is required at that level, and this really, the requirement within the job. So you need to, especially in the legal department, you need to balance yourself from, you dealing what the officers, but you deal a lot with the other stuff that are at your level or junior. So you need to always*		1

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*have to be able to balance the two, so not, so whatever, when you relate to officers in which you can give high level information, but when you relate to other people, you need to give it more detailed information, so you should always be able to balance the two"*: 1. *IP21: "I think at my level, it's not just trusting my ability. Who I am when I perform my function is second nature, so I don't doubt that. And if I know the strategy and what is required of me to participate in that strategy, it's not something that I doubt that I can do, or I can, the function that I think I can't perform, I know I could do that, you know? I'm not junior, so I'm not, I know how to focus on the important thing. If the strategy is AB, I'm not going to be concerned very much on the peripheral things that really want or have an impact on the strategy of the ultimate goal"*: 1. **IP21:** *"Yes, because at the end of the day, decision-making is by me, I'm the one decision maker, even though there is a level, of course, there is an extent thereof. So there is a level of decision making, but ja, it does have an impact because whatever decision I make should be towards achieving the goal towards supporting the business strategy, the company strategy"*: 1.		
	IP22*: "Yes, I think there is a fit between the values that I hold and the in most I think to a large extent not totally. Purely because I think the insurance industry is still in the paradigm of being product*		1

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*orientated rather than customer centric. And customer orientated they are two different terms, I mean customer centric is a bit different to being customer orientated. The products we create and when I get told by the Product towers the owners the heads of the product all I have for the market is off the shelf products. And say okay, you are not in touch with the dynamics of the market of what they are asking for. So for me that conflicts with my value system. And you are asking me to pitch products to the market to say to customers and people, no this can add value to your life when I know there are various enhancements you can make to your product that can add more value to that clients' life, which will make my job easier in terms of selling but it will also make the propensity to take up so much easier. I don't have to push the product as hard as I need to because the customer just says hey this talks to me I want this product. Versus I have to think about it because all the 10 things I need from this product, you are only giving me 4 or 5 and if the entire market is doing that what does the client do, he needs the product cover him from an insurance point of view, he has to take it. But he is never really totally happy because there are still 4 or 5 things you don't give him as features in that product. And I always believe you can price for risk and if you think that the risk is high you can put a premium on that price or that risk, and if the client is willing to pay for it what is the issue. I mean the client says I have a 1986 Datsun, and I park it outside plot 2 road 6 in Diepsloot, okay. Surely, I can price for that and I*		

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*would probably in all likelihood have a lesser loss ratio on that product than a brand-new Golf GTI in Sandton. That parks in an estate because there is a higher potential, we all know of that car being highjacked in Sandton than this car parked in Diepsloot with no gate, no garage, no alarm, nothing, let us be honest about it. So, that is why I find a conflict sometimes between my value system and what I am being asked to put in front of a client"*: 1. **IP22:** *"I have a high level in my ability to do my job. It is probably why I am good at what I do and the company recognises that in helping them to implement the company strategy. So I have a lot of trust if I had to put it on a continuum of trust in my ability I trust my ability totally not considering outside external factors. 100% to be able to do my job. Obviously, you know there are other factors that you have no control and influence over that will prevent you from doing the job to the best of your ability and you have to find ways to circumvent that. But you always have 100% trust in your ability and if you don't then you can't be committed you know if you don't trust your ability you don't have confidence to your own ability then you can't be totally committed. My view is I can be absolutely committed to what I am expected to do because I trust my ability to do it"*: 1 **IP22:** *"It depends how you define autonomy in my role, so, autonomy in my role, this is a point to which I have total autonomy to be able to make decisions and get my job done and there is a point at which*		

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
	that the ability to get my job done is limited by the autonomy that I am sanctioned or mandated to have. So I could take something to a point and it needs somebody else's intervention and decision before I can go back to my client and say it is a deal we are ready to roll so it is limited by factors that are not within your control": 1.		
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	**IP23:** *"I think that there is a fit, I think my personal values and beliefs and mantra is, I am here to make a difference and I think through marketing the organisations products, I am quite a social butterfly, I like people, I like to communicate, I enjoy it. I believe if people understand things, they are willing to use them, try them, be them, go there, it is when there is a lack of understanding that people are not willing. People are scared of what they don't know, so when you can communicate sufficiently and in the right way to our prospective clients, our clients, our staff, our shareholders, our stakeholders. And you can understand what their needs are, you can meet them, so my personal values are to take time to get to know a person, understand what makes them tick, and I don't do it so scientifically, it just happens naturally, I am quite an inquisitive person so I ask a lot of questions quite naturally, and I think that fits quite nicely with marketing. Because in the marketing and sales process, you need to understand what*		1

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*a client's needs are before you can offer him a solution on the product. So yes, I think my personal sort of personality and belief system works quite nicely with my role"*: 1. **IP23:** *"I suppose if you don't believe in what you do, and you don't trust yourself then you won't deliver on it because you will constantly be second guessing yourself. So I think it is hugely important but it is a combination, it is not just your own trust of yourself, it is not just your own belief of yourself. It has got to be a, it has to be more than just you, I think I know I can do my job. I trust I can do my job but if I have a boss that starts second guessing me and poking in all the holes, then it doesn't work, it has to be a combination, it has to be I believe in myself, my team believes in me, my boss believes in me, my peers believe in me and trust. So I think that is massively important that I have self-trust, it is the number one, it is more important than any of those others but it has to be backed up by those others"*: 1. **IP23:** *"Huge, huge, huge. Because it comes back to trust. I worked for an organisation for 11 months, I left Aon for an 11-month period and it is not that I wasn't so much as told I don't trust you, but it was those little noticeable things, no, no, you don't need to handle the budget, you can just come and tell us what you need. Really? They wanted to sign everything off, they would phone me at 16:00 to find out where I was, why I am I not at my desk. This is an 08:00 to 16:30 job and it was a manager level, you*		

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*just, I wasn't used to that level, actually I am out seeing a supplier, you know. You need to trust that I am going to put my hours in, in fact, I am going to put more than what is required, and I am going to deliver more than that. But the minute you take my autonomy away, you don't trust me, there is a fail in the relationship and then I actually became somebody who I wasn't familiar within myself. I became another person and I didn't work hard, I wasn't, I was always trustworthy but that is just, I think up bringing my father drilled it into us with certain things. But it is more about, then I thought, well, stuff you, then if I am sick, I am not going to work at home, then I am just going to ignore my laptop. Whereas normally whether I am half dying, I would still have my laptop out, you know, because it is that level of commitment. But when somebody doesn't trust you and they don't give you that autonomy and they are not committed to you, then you kind of feel the same way about them"*: 1.		
	IP24: *"Largely, yes, personal values though, I think can be personal but, I am in a professional outfit so as far as I am concerned, the fact that they are professional, as long as personally my own values do not conflict with being professional and ethical and all that, it is not going to be too much conflict. But I might have certain values that are very personal to me and maybe they are not considered values, which are not necessarily part and parcel of the way an entity such as this one would look at things, but*		1

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Psychological empowerment cognitive variables	*then I really don't expect that to be the case anyway. So largely at a professional level, they are aligned, yes"*: 1. **IP24:** *"I think you need to have that positive mindset, that you can achieve and, yes, it does contribute a lot because the more you can set your mindset to be positive and believe in your own capabilities, the more you are likely to achieve, it can be challenging sometimes but I think, you know, again, through experience and maybe some level of coaching, etcetera, you come to realise that your mindset is a key component and therefore how you believe in yourself is going to transmit to whether you can achieve what is required or not, yes"*: 1. ***IP24****: "Yes, it does. To a large extent because if there was not going to be sufficient autonomy, then you know you would feel to some degree constrained, I am not saying that I have got all the independents autonomy but that is quite important part of it"*: 0.		
	TOTAL	3	21

Category	Interview response/statements and sub-code	Overall Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**

Explanation of coding

Low score (coded 0): This code is allocated to the respondent's statement if the statement does not reflect any psychological empowerment cognitive variable (e.g. meaning, competence, self-determination or impact).

High score (coded 1): This code is allocated to the respondent's statement if the statement reflects any psychological empowerment cognitive variable (e.g. meaning, competence, self-determination or impact).

Source: Compiled by author

Table 37 : Dialectal synthesis of interview data – Commitment to strategy implementation

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	**IP1:** *"Yes there are you look mainly from our side looking at your portfolio, your client base and see how you can achieve this strategy or can implement the strategy within your portfolio, we look at we do segmentation of our clients, you look at which are your high potential clients that can assist you to achieve this strategy, retention strategies and basic clients that need just to be maintained and a lot of analysis goes into that in terms of data, looking at the formation base that you have, how that information you can use that information to assist or backup your initiatives in meeting your strategy".*		1
	IP2: *"What do I do, well I work night and day for towards achieving I mean that is what we do I mean, we also give feedback, and report back in terms of reviewing where we are with our strategy we do that on our balance scorecard, so we review that I think 3 times a year 3 or 4 times a year so what else".*		1
	IP3: "*I think a couple of things so I think that you live that everyday so I think every decision or most of the decisions that you have to make are especially like I said I mean the organisation so I think we have got a very senior role and then most of your decisions are going to be based on what is the best outcome for my company and that is always a mediated view. So, I think that is part of it that is part of the*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*commitment and that is always a very varied view. So, it is a combination of taking a pricing outcome and a client view and how much do you believe in the client and how much do you believe that strategically together you can actually know that you can do something good going forward. So, that is the one thing that I think I live. The other thing is I get involved in a lot of other projects a lot of other projects out of the I don't necessarily have to get involved in so I get involved in a lot of innovative ideas and I try and add value in other areas whether that is projects or pension fund committees you know just trying to add back some value to the company."* **IP4:** "*Oh okay I mean we have to act fast quick turnaround times. I mean basically the organisation succeeds I mean everyone succeeds at end of the day in terms of long term bonuses or short term bonuses so if the business makes money, then we make money so you need to act swiftly support the business and give them what they want basically."* **IP5:** *"There has to be a legal basis on which to do business okay where there is regulations, there is legislation and stuff so for me what I am doing is part of the foundation of that strategy. So you are part of that and there are a whole lot of different controls and I am sure the finance guys will tell you they are*		1 1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*the most important than you guys and that they are the most important inputting the strategy into place, marketing and the actual underwriting is the end product. It is putting the stuff in place to make sure that can happen from a proper regulatory legislation compliance perspective."* ***IP6:*** *"Ja I think at the moment for instance at this stage it is pretty much focused on cost controlling and keeping the cost down so we all need to have that in mind the whole time. If you see big invoices coming through you always just question it and see if it is really necessary expenses."* **IP7:** *"Ja the audit sheets are very much in line with that so once we have written a class of business we will look through all the tick boxes to say did we actually follow the steps and underwriting guidelines that we should have. There is also we look very carefully at our performance against the budget to say what we commit too in terms of our return on capital are we achieving those targets. If we are not we tend to go into those areas in quite a bit of depth to say what do we need to do differently or we produce exception reports a lot of the time to say we are absolutely sure that we have followed those routes and those processes, we have a strategy internally here where we peer review each other. So, I will go and look at somebody else's underwriting they will look at my underwriting so we have a very much 4 eyes principle*		1 1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*within the company, when we underwrite we have 4 eyes. So, I will refer my underwriting decisions to Randolph he is my boss and MD level and I will do it in a format where we have worked together over many years. So, he knows exactly my thinking, my pricing, my pricing approach and everything and he will come back if he has any questions on that, we will sign off the decisions together and then that in turn is reviewed by somebody not obviously just a selection of files that will be reviewed to say does my counterpart in another department think that I have followed those processes and then once every few years we will have a home office audit review as well. So, you know we of underwriters reviewing underwriters and it is done in a very positive way it is not done in a negative way to bash the other guys done to say ja."* **IP8***: "Certainly wherever I am involved I try and put myself and make sure that that is done carried through to the end of it and the real thing is to make sure that everything is done properly so you will have to check all the things for example with huge projects that we are doing make sure that things that relate to the product they are all done correctly and they will raise concerns wherever there is a need to concern and where our system is involved make sure that the system caters for our strategy terms of the product*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*and in terms of pricing as well we need to make sure that the pricing is in line with the overall strategy of that particular project. So I am relatively involved in all those aspects."* **IP9***: "Well, in the first place, I focus on a high-performance culture, in other words, we are achieving, we meet deadlines, we are productive in the projects that we take on. And I always make sure that whatever project and task we implement within the company in the business intelligence sphere, that it is very much focused towards adding value. And that is how I see it, uhm, so certain of the products that we are implementing and putting out there actually does add value to our clients' processes, and it actually does ensure our clients success. So, uhm, to me, it is clear the results that we produce clearly shows my commitment in my work."* **IP10:** "*I think personally, I try and take accountability, I mean, if you are only as good as what you say and if you don't do what you say, then you sort of not implementing, so for me it is a personal feeling, that if I have said that this is what I am going to do, then I try and make sure that I deliver on my personal promise to the organisation and that is my personal value of trying to be uhm, I suppose having integrity throughout all aspects of the business. So, if I say something I want to be known that I, at least I am*		1 1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*going to do what I say so that I suppose is one way to try commitment. I hold my standards quite high, my ethics quite high and that is what I try and deliver when I am tasked with something."* **IP11:** "*Okay, so again from a marketing and communication support perspective, it is basically for us to ensure that each business unit that has their own strategy that we supplement what they are trying to do. And it is providing those support services to make sure that they can deliver to what they have committed to deliver on. So how we are committed, so we are all here to perform a role and we are here to deliver. So, and it is that personal commitment to seeing something through. Uhm, so that is obviously throughout meetings with people, it is the more departmental focus strategies that we develop specifically for the business units to drive that. So, we make sure that we align to the business units in terms of what they want to do in terms of their strategies. But there is also aligning to group strategy."* **IP12:** *"So, I listen to what my client wants. For me, the most important thing is what my client wants, and what my client needs, and their goals and their strategies, more so than ours. I believe that if I follow those principles with my client, it will, then we'll have the direct results in my business for Innovation Group. So, my commitment and passion is shown in various facets of my cohesion with my client, you*		1 1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*know, I wear their brand, I drive their brand, I live their brand, and that's all I do, you know? It's those types of commitments to their needs ensuring their successes are bought to the table."* **IP13:** "*Well, the first thing is, I get measured on that, so I have a vested interest in ensuring that my own performance appraisal and, uhm, targets are achieved. The second thing is, I have been in the organisation now for more than 8 years and I have played multiple roles, so I think people view me as a senior member of the team and I am somebody who has experience and knowhow with regards to what we should and shouldn't be doing. And then I have my own aspirations in the organisation, so I think when I get the opportunity to add value to the future thinking and the future strategy, uhm, I can influence that and that obviously positions me well for future advancement. I am results driven, so, you know, I like to achieve the goals that I have set for myself and that the organisation has set. Well, we have our own financial reports internally, which I ensure that I interrogate every month and understand what's being achieved, and where the revenue has been generated and where we have fallen short, I like to be proactive about solving that faster and coming up with plans, either with additional incentives or rewards or adding more resources, something like that to make sure that it happens."*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	**IP14:** "*Well, luckily I am a structured person, so communication with my counterparts internally and externally is usually critical for me to seeing the strategy through. So one, I have to document what it is that we are implementing, whether that is through a project document or whatever it is. I have to document everything including minutes of every meeting that I hold, and unfortunately this is the part that I don't like, but I have to follow up with people to ensure that it is whatever they have, whatever their deliverables are being delivered. Obviously when coming to reporting, that is when you will actually realise how much of the work has been done and how much of it hasn't been done. So, that is actually quite critical, that is how I manage it and I definitely have weekly or monthly communication, depending on how quickly the strategy has to be implemented and what the strategy is at that point."*		1
	IP15: "*Well, I just insure that we adhere to our project plan, and that we adhere to the timelines. And that I would also research to ensure that our systems adhere to all the necessary requirements, and that we not sitting with some old information, where in the market there is some new information."*		1
	IP16: *"But from a personal perspective, when I start something, I have to finish, I can't leave it unfinished or close to be finished. That is me personally, I think you will find that if you look at the product team in*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*general, you have those personalities so it has to be finished, unless I leave the company or I have seconded or something like that, it must be done and that is me."* **IP17:** *"If I pick up on something that a competitor is doing that I know would interest my boss I will go and tell her. So, I do gather market intelligence and that is very important in terms of our position, our products. We do need to know what the market is doing and in terms of strategic input I do a lot of that. So, it is not just market intelligence in terms of what the other products and services are being provided by our competitors but it is also about competitors we don't know about. I tell my boss about someone who has just acquired another insurance company and what sort of growth they have achieved and that is of interest to her. If there are ways of doing things that are different to our compliance I provide feedback on that as well. So, I can't say it is always the same feedback that I give, but in terms of those kinds of things I give that information and I know that it is used and I know that because when the CEO comes round in the morning and says Good morning she will ask me a specific things or she will call a meetings with me. I think if you have the CEO'S ear then and you regard that person it is different if you work you never see that person, you never see the CEO of the company, you don't know whether your ideas are filtered through and you don't know if you are regarded and also if you don't regard that person*	0	

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*our CEO is competent and I respect her. She is not always easy to work for, but I have a good working relationship with her and that is important to me and it is important to her too so she if there is something she will thank me for it and I just feel that that is kind of a good position to be in in a company."* **IP18:** *"Okay, I will share an example that was quite recent and I think it would demonstrate my commitment above the normal stuff. Like I mentioned earlier, I conduct focus groups and one on one interviews with staff to understand certain things. I think especially with the ladies more often, more often than not I pick up other issues other personal issues mostly issues of low self-esteem low self-confidence and what I do when I pick that up. I sort of go beyond the interview and I say can we have off- the-record discussion. And try to give them the tools that I have used or the tools that I do use when my confidence is very low so to cut a long story short. I give them my personal tool kit of, you know how you cope, a woman black woman confidence issues and I think the feedback and this is off the record this is not my job and this does not go on any report but you get feedback and you can see people starting to change and to you know be more of who they are which is nice and I think it is a good thing so that is an example that demonstrates my commitment it is not just also about Aon. I think when you are dealing with people all the time you can't help but get personal with them and if they are personal views of themselves are*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
	very low trust me it is going to impact the work that they do in any case so the person it has to start from the person inside so if you can help people do that then you are already solving many other problems all the way that can come so that is just an example."		
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	**IP19:** *"Well, like I say, look if necessary we would work overtime if we need to go and fetch people at the airport on a Sunday or whenever we have done it, we have even made lunches for overseas Directors on New Year's Day. So, you know we will go the extra mile if it is required you know if we have to stay here at 10 o'clock at night because something is needed we do it."*		1
	IP20: *"The obvious and it is always very difficult to pinpoint, but obviously to see the effects on the bottom line to make sure that our cost of sales are reduced so when we have a look at that specific line and the income statement and you can see your cost of sales have gone down your head count is not increasing or it is increasing, but it is increasing at a slower rate than what your revenue is okay. So also, again if you were to ask any of my staff what kind of a leader I am. I am definitely hands-on, so I get involved, I don't just delegate, I get involved I work with my team. I come in and do the extra hours when they do it as well. So, I try and create a harmonious environment as well, okay, so those are the things that I*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
	personally drive. I make sure that I motivate people I make sure that they understand the requirements so if I set a task for a group of people or a management team, I make sure that everybody understands what the requirements are and what the outcomes are. So that there is no uncertainty about what the deliverable is and when the deliverable is."		
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	**IP21:** "*I think most importantly is, as far as the legal and compliances concerned is, because whenever there is a strategy that turned to a plan, then this fix is executed. Not just to look at the legality thereof, once there is approval, it's always, you need to make sure that the proper process is in place to meet the strategy, and the proper agreements that are entered into. Because it's good and well to handshake, and if the strategy is to meet, or get the number of customers, then this particular section of business doesn't have agreement to cater for that, then there is not quiet. So, there is stress management involved there as well."*	0	
	IP22: ***"****Well, I mean if I know I have to achieve a three-year break-even on a particular project there is no way that I am going to take on projects, where break-even is only in year 7 and I start making money. You know that is the sort of thing they would look at, so when I bring a business case to the table it has got to have one of the key criteria if it is not in the three-year break-in, I don't want to bring it to the table.*	0	

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*Take it off the table, now to do a three-year break-in in today's environment is extremely tough because your injection of capital required initially is quite high. And then you can't go and set a high price for all your products because you want all your products to sell in the market. So, you have to be price competitive, you have to be competitive from the benefit point of view and if you are competing with the Hollards, Outsurance of this world and those guys. You cannot simply go into the market with a premium product and say here I am you are trying to break into that market. So, you have got to come in even though it is niche you have to be quite competitive in terms of price. Now if you are doing that there is no way in three years you are going to be hitting massive volumes right, to be able to because of the competition to be able to break-even in three years it is not going to happen. So, those are the sort of things that I have to think about and in my deeds it has got to show in my business cases I put forward, it has to show that I thought through that it is a three year break-in. But again, these are assumptions, you know, your business case can get blown out of water with some economic incident in the market and that is it, it is gone."* **IP23:** *"If you don't look after your staff, my team are very special to me, very important to me, so I spend a lot of time training them, mentoring them, working with them, allowing them to go on courses. Making*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
Behavioural manifestation of the commitment to strategy implementation	*sure that I understand what makes each one of them tick, making sure I understand what their expectations are so that I don't drop balls with, you know, if you have got a team that supports you and backs you up, it gives you time to go and do what you need to do. I can only be a star if my team is a star with me, do you know what I mean, so I kind of I put them in the forefront, sometimes a little bit too hard I will put them in spaces that makes them uncomfortable. But I know that they are worth it, I know that they can do it and I know that they are going to shine, I would never put them into an environment to fail, I would put them in an environment where I know they are capable, they just don't believe in themselves enough just yet. So I try and stretch people a little bit."* **IP24:** "*Ja, well I think the extra commitment is very much linked to the desire to ensure that we grow, we are successful, and specific to the business that we service outside South Africa, it requires you to have a very deep understanding of the needs of the different clients within different markets. Because even in one particular market, clients' needs are very different. So, your understanding of those particular, the personalities that you are dealing with is not necessarily, you know, it does not necessarily require your technical expertise, it requires something beyond your technical expertise. So, because that more or less is going to ensure that you can service them to their needs, and you can*		1

Category	Interview responses/statements	Coding	
		0 = low	**1 = high score**
	understand them and they can understand you better. So I think it takes extra effort it also, just from a, again, volumes point of view, it, arguably, it's always a debate obviously in among ourselves, it requires much more time to service the number of clients that we have to service to achieve similar revenue, or ja. Compared to say, South African client. Ja, but of course they have got their own dynamics and challenges which are also quite demanding in their own right."		
	TOTAL	3	21

Explanation of coding

Low score (coded 0): This code is allocated to the respondent's statement if the statement does not clearly reflect the respondent's effort, attitude or any mechanism that indicate a concerted effort towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy.

High score (coded 1): This code is allocated to the respondent's statement if the statement clearly reflects the respondent's effort, attitude or any behavioural mechanism that indicate a concerted effort towards the achievement of the organisation's strategy (for example, volitionality, extra-effort, energised performance, etc.).

Compiled by author

Appendix E – Integrated results

Table 38 : Matrix for integrated findings

Theme/ Research question	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	
		Behavioural mechanism underlying the relationship between variables (Prominent themes)	**Selected interview statements**
Research question: Do middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) influence their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business-level strategy?	• Hypothesis 1 is supported. There is a moderate positive partial correlation between affective organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy implementation (r = 0.492, p < 0.05). This suggests that middle managers, who are affectively attached to their organisation, are more likely to exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisation's business strategy.	67% of all interview participants subjectively associate their affective organisational commitment with the commitment to strategy implementation. Because of their affective attachment to the organisation, their keenness to see the organisation's strategy being implemented is reflected in their: ✓ Volitional effort ✓ Focus on envisaged strategic outcomes ✓ Diligence ✓ Responsibility ✓ Determination Likewise, 33% of interview participants subjectively associate a lack of affective commitment to their organisation with a lack of commitment to strategy	• *"I really work hard. I really will put in extra hours just to reach my goals"- IP15)* • *"Because I believe that if you show commitment to a company and it is not just a straight 08:00 to 16:00 job, it extends past that" (IP11).* • *"Well, if you are not committed, you know the strategy implementation is going to fail" (IP22)* • *"If you are not interested and you are not committed to the company, you*

Theme/ Research question	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	
		Behavioural mechanism underlying the relationship between variables (Prominent themes)	**Selected interview statements**
Research question: Do middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) influence their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's business-level strategy?	• Based on the multiple regression analysis (i.e adjusted R^2 statistic of 0.374), the predictor variables (affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) account for 37.4% variance in the dependent variable (i.e. the commitment to strategy implementation). The model is statistically significant in predicting the dependent variable as reflected by the *p*-value of 0.000 (i.e. which is less than 0.05). Further, the standardised coefficient and *p*-value for affective	implementation. They perceive a lack affective attachment to the organisation to be the driver of behaviours that characterise a lack of commitment to strategy implementation. Such behaviours include: ✓ Indifference to the strategy, ✓ Lacklustre or constrained effort towards implementation ✓ Lack of belief in the strategy ✓ Inadequate comprehension of strategy ✓ Poor dissemination of strategy, ✓ Little or 'under-the-radar' approach to strategy implementation, ✓ Judicious execution of minimum requirements ✓ dragging feet on deliverable, and, ✓ mediocre job performance	*don't necessarily become vested in how to deliver on the strategic objectives" (IP23).* • *I think if you are not committed to the organisation that employs you, I don't think it is possible for you to deliver at a really high level. You will deliver at probably a mediocre level" (IP20)* • *"I think that if you are not committed to the organisation, certainly your commitment to the implementation of the strategy, it is going to show in one or the other (IP8).*

Theme/ Research question	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	
		Behavioural mechanism underlying the relationship between variables (Prominent themes)	**Selected interview statements**
	organisational commitment (i.e. 0.268 and 0.007 respectively), indicate that affective organisational commitment makes a statistically significant unique contribution to the prediction of the commitment to strategy implementation. • Path analysis: The path from affective organisational commitment achieved a statistically significant relationship with the commitment to strategy implementation ($p < 0.05$), supporting the hypothesis that affective organisational commitment has a direct		

Theme/ Research question	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	
		Behavioural mechanism underlying the relationship between variables (Prominent themes)	**Selected interview statements**
	positive effect on the commitment to strategy implementation.		
Research question: Do middle managers' psychological states (i.e. affective organisational commitment and psychological empowerment) influence their commitment to the implementation of the organisation's	• Hypothesis 2 is supported. There is moderate positive partial correlation between perceived psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy implementation (i.e. $r = 0.574$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that's middle managers who perceive to be psychologically empowered, are more likely to exert considerable effort towards the implementation of	83% of all the interview participants subjectively associate their psychological empowerment, (emanating from perceived value-role congruence, autonomy in decision-making, trust in abilities and perceived contribution to the organisation) with their commitment to strategy implementation. Because they perceive to be psychologically empowered, they are keen to exert considerable effort towards the implementation of their organisation's strategy through: ✓ Being accountable and responsible, ✓ Energised performance, ✓ Self-belief and increased confidence to perform, and ✓ Risk taking	• *"I certainly believe in what I do and I certainly believe that I can deliver" (IP14)* • *"So it (*i.e autonomy in decision-making) *does make my job a lot easier. It takes out a lot of frustration, which in turn helps me to be committed to get done what is to be done" (IP19).* • *"It (*i.e. autonomy for decision-making*) has a great bearing*

Theme/ Research question	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	
		Behavioural mechanism underlying the relationship between variables (Prominent themes)	**Selected interview statements**
business-level strategy?	their organisation's business strategy. • Multiple Regression analysis: Psychological empowerment, at standardised coefficients of 0.438 and *p*-value of 0.000 makes a statistically significant unique contribution to the prediction of the commitment to strategy implementation. Psychological empowerment uniquely accounts for 14.1% of the total variance in the commitment to strategy implementation. • Path analysis: The path from psychological empowerment achieved a practically and	On the other hand, 29% of the interview participants believe that a lack of psychological empowerment constrains their ability to perform. The constrained ability to perform is characterised by the limited autonomy for decision-making, operating within limited mandates; lack of trust or doubt in own abilities, incongruent value alignment, managerial interference, and frustrations due to having to refer decisions. As a result, the effect of the lack of psychological empowerment include the limited or failure of implementation effort; erosion of self-belief, stagnation in role; reduced commitment to company, slow implementation created by bottle necks for decision approvals; and lack of commitment to the implementation strategy.	*because at least you then feel responsible and accountable when making you are making own decisions" (IP2).* • *"I think it boils down to my confidence in my own knowledge and experience, and being somebody, who is willing to take a risk and back themselves to achieve something that is possible" (IP13)* • *"I suppose if you don't believe in what you do, and you don't trust yourself, then you won't deliver on it because you will constantly be second guessing yourself" (IP23).*

Theme/ Research question	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	
		Behavioural mechanism underlying the relationship between variables (Prominent themes)	**Selected interview statements**
	statistically significant relationship with the commitment to strategy implementation ($p < 0.05$), thus supporting the hypothesis that psychological empowerment has a direct positive effect on the commitment to strategy implementation. Psychological empowerment, with a path coefficient of 0.438, achieved both practical (standardised coefficient in excess of the 0.300 criterion) and statistical significance ($p < 0.05$).		

Compiled by author

Appendix F − Research questionnaire (Quantitative study)

Good day,

Thank you for taking your time to complete this questionnaire. This questionnaire is an instrument for collecting data for a study conducted as part of a self-sponsored Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Business Sciences at Witswatersrand University, for which I am enrolled.

This questionnaire solicits your opinion on statements and response to questions provided below.

In addition, you are kindly requested to provide brief demographic details about yourself. With each item provided below, you are requested to choose only ONE response to the question or statement provided. All data collected remains confidential and will not be ascribed to any participant's identity in the results of the study. Participants' details will be limited to the demographic requirements noted below.

Your participation is essential for this study. However, you have the right of choosing not to participate in completing this survey questionnaire. Efforts have been made to ensure that the questions and statements on this questionnaire are within acceptable ethical guidelines and have been vetted and approved by the Witswatersrand University's Research Ethics Committee.

Should you feel or experience any harm or unethical conduct on my part, before, during or after completing this questionnaire, you are at liberty to report such to my

academic study leader, Professor David Coldwell on 083 684 5140 (mobile), 011 717 000 (office) or at david.coldwell@wits.ac.za.

Yours faithfully

Hardy Ncube (PhD Student – Student number 508528)

Email: hardy@nedbankinsurance.co.za or 508528@students.wits.ac.za

Contact details: 084 306 9613 (mobile), 011 667 8385 (office)

Participant Consent

I acknowledge that I understand that my participation is voluntary and that the information, which I give to the researcher, will be used solely for research purposes and may inform the outcome of the research. I further acknowledge my personal details will remain anonymous throughout the research study as well as in the research report:

- I agree
- I disagree

Demographic Characteristics

Please select **ONLY ONE** response to the questions below which applies to you.

1. What is your gender?
    - Male
    - Female

2. How old are you?
    - 18-40 years

- 40-45 years
- 46-50 years
- 51-55 years
- Above 55 years

3. How long have you been with your organisation?
    - Less than 2 years
    - 2-4 years
    - 5-7 years
    - 8-10 years
    - More than 10 years

4. What is your highest formal educational qualification?
    - Matric
    - Diploma
    - Bachelor / Honour’s degree
    - Master’s degree
    - Doctoral degree

Perceptions on your commitment to your organisation

Please select ONLY ONE response reflecting your view to the statement below.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Neither disagree nor agree (4)

- Somewhat agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly agree (7)

5. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organisation.

6. I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it.

7. I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own.

8. I think I could easily become as attracted to another organisation as I am to this one.

9. I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organisation.

10. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organisation.

11. This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

12. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation.

Perceptions on your psychological empowerment

Please select **ONLY ONE** response reflecting your view to the statement below

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)

- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Neither disagree nor agree (4)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Agree (6)
- Strongly agree (7)

13. The work I do is very important to me.

14. My job activities are personally meaningful to me.

15. The work I do is meaningful to me.

16. I am confident about my ability to do my job.

17. I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities.

18. I have mastered the skills necessary for my job.
19. I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job.

20. I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work.

21. I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.

22. My impact on what happens in my department is large.

23. I have great deal of control over what happens in my department.

24. I have significant influence over what happens in my department.

Perceptions on the Commitment to strategy implementation *(changes in scale anchors)*

Please select **ONLY ONE** response reflecting your view to the statement below.

- This statement is entirely false (1)
- This statement is false (2)
- This statement is somewhat false (3)
- This statement is neither false nor true (4)
- This statement is somewhat true (5)
- This statement is true (6)
- This statement is entirely true (7)

25. I am committed to seeing that our organisational strategy is effectively implemented.

26. I don’t worry about implementing strategy; I just do my job.

27. I don’t concern myself with implementing strategies if they are not beneficial to my department.

28. Departments in our company tend to be less concerned with working together and more concerned with competing for resources.

29. Our organisational is most successful when everyone works to implement a common strategy.

30. Developing our company strategy is often a waste of time.

Appendix G − Interview protocol (Qualitative Study)

Good Day,

Thank you for allowing me time to interview you. This interview is a means of collecting data for a study conducted as part of a self-sponsored Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Commerce at Witswatersrand University, for which I am enrolled. The interview solicits your opinions and responses on questions noted below. With your permission, the interview will be recorded and transcribed verbatim later for in-depth analysis. All data collected remains confidential and will not be ascribed to any participant's identity in the results of the study.

Your participation in the interview is essential for this study. However, you have the right of not participating in the interview, should you choose to do so. Efforts have been made to ensure that the interview questions are within acceptable ethical guidelines and have been vetted and approved by the Witswatersrand University's Research Ethics Committee. Should you feel or experience any harm or unethical conduct on my part, before, during, or after the interview, you are at liberty to report this to my academic study leader, Professor David Coldwell on 083 684 5140 (mobile), 011 717 000 (office) or at david.coldwell@wits.ac.za.

Yours faithfully

Hardy Ncube (PhD Student – Student number 508528)

Email: hardy.ncube@iburst.co.za; hardy@nedbank.co.za or

508528@students.wits.ac.za.

Contact details: 084 306 9613 (mobile), 011 667 8385 (office)

Interview questions

1. Self and role in organisation

1.1 What managerial role do you play in your organisation?

2. Views on role in the strategy implementation process

2.1 Do you believe that the strategic direction that your organisation has chosen is the correct one? Please give reasons for your views.

2.2 In what ways are you involved in the implementation of your organisation's strategy?

2.3 What motivates you during the process of strategy implementation?

2.4 In what ways are you committed to seeing that your organisation's strategy is effectively implemented?

3 Views on organisational commitment and the commitment to strategy execution

3.1 Do you feel committed to your organisation? And what motivates your commitment to your organisation?

3.2 In what ways do you demonstrate your commitment to your organisation?

3.3 In what ways do you think your commitment to your organisation or lack thereof affects your commitment to the implementation of your organisation's strategy?

3.4 In what ways do you think other middle managers' level of commitment to the organisation or lack thereof contribute to or impedes commitment to the implementation of the organisations strategy?

4 Views on psychological empowerment and the commitment to strategy execution

4.1 Is there a fit between the requirements of your managerial role and your beliefs and personal values? Please elaborate.

4.2 How does trust in your ability to perform activities for which you are employed contribute to your commitment to implementation of your organisation's strategy?

4.3 Does autonomy in your managerial decision-making role have a bearing in in your commitment to implementation of your organisation's strategy? Please elaborate.

Appendix H − Participant consent for interview

I acknowledge that I understand that my participation is voluntary and that the information, which I give to the researcher, will be used solely for research purposes and may inform the outcome of the research. I further acknowledge my personal details will remain anonymous throughout the research study as well as in the research report.

Signed ……..

Date ……..

Appendix I – Ethics clearance certificate

Appendix J – Approval of title