



**AN ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS
ON ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIC CHANGE IN THE CONTEXT OF
CRL COMMISSION.**

by

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the impact of employee perceptions on organisational strategic change with specific reference to the Commission on the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL Commission) at Braamfontein, Johannesburg for the past five years. The research design used in this study was the quantitative approach, which allowed the researcher to use structured questionnaires when collecting data. Because of the small size of the population of the CRL Commission - only 33 employees - the survey method was used for enhanced accuracy. A high response rate of 90% was obtained using the personal method of data collection of a questionnaire that was structured in a 5-point Likert scale format. The main finding shows that employees were generally positive towards the necessity for change. Other findings also show a close relationship between organizational strategic change and employee perceptions in one way or the other. These findings helped in the solid conclusion reached in the study. The recommendations highlighted that top management should involve employees in any issue that will affect them in the organization. It also recommends that management should encourage teamwork within the organization to improve organizational effectiveness. The study also provides the recommendations and direction for future research.

KEY TERMS

Organization, strategic change, employee, perception, CRL Commission

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I love them so much!

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to three very special people, my parents and little sister. Family,

“Thank you for your affection, your constant encouragement, unconditional love and sacrifices you have made helped me in completing my study”.

Thank you for shaping and developing me to strive for the following:

“To create something exceptional, your mind-set must be relentlessly focused on the smallest detail”.

-Giorgio Armani-

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the research project submitted for MTech: Human Resource Management in the Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Management Sciences at the Durban University of Technology is my original work in the text and the bibliography and has not been submitted to any other institution. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged in the bibliography.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

In the growing global business environment, change has become the norm for organisations to sustain their existence and success. Amit (2018:3) describes organisational change as the process during which an organisation changes its structure, strategies, technologies, operational methods or organisational culture. Thus, when change occurs in any part of the organisation, it tends to disturb the old equilibrium, and necessitates the development of a new one (Aishu, n.d). The type and extent of the new equilibrium depends on the degree of change and its impact on the organisation.

Studies show that the success rate in the implementation of large-scale organisational change initiatives ranges between 25% and 35% (Cmoe, 2018). This low success rate calls makes it imperative that any intended change initiatives must be carefully planned and executed by the management team, beginning with the clear perceptive of the categories of change and the preferred outcomes that fit with the competitive landscape (Smith, 2002).

A thorough understanding of the categories of change and awareness of when best they apply will aid leadership in determining the correct route the business should follow. Marshak (1993) classify change into three types: Developmental change, transitional change and transformational change. Developmental change enhances already existing processes and procedures, where the change is not necessarily large-scale. Since it is generally not a significant change, it is the most common of all organisational changes. This form of change is seen by businesses as incremental improvements in response to a desire to increase efficiencies, rectify a discovered flaw, build on previous success, or widen the scope of the business offerings. Because developmental changes are usually gradual and non-disruptive, there is less resistance to them inside an organisation. These small improvements add up over time to provide favourable returns for the company,

which can compound to become a big value driver. Failure to respond to the need for improvement may have the reverse impact, resulting in market share loss over time (Marshak, 1993).

Transitional change, according to Marshak (1993), recognises that in order to remain competitive in their industry, organisations must adapt frequently. The way the business runs must be adapted or changed on a regular basis and in a way that is understood by the organisation's leadership. Allen (2007) suggests that in this kind of organisational change, the company is not charting unknown waters, but the change is bigger than those enhancements or improvements made during developmental change and therefore, may cause disruptions. Marshak (1993) add that these changes may also include acquisitions and mergers, or restoring and introducing major new systems and processes in the organisation. Thus, this kind of change may frequently have an impact on relationships within the organisation or with external stakeholders, the organisational culture, and job functions. Transitional change can also lead to and or involve substantial retraining in the organisation. Based on the the significance of this type of change, management must have clear strategies in place and proceed cautiously, while not becoming locked in a cycle of indecision that will lead to lost market opportunities.

Transformational change, according to Marshak (1993), is a radical organisational strategy that usually involves major shifts in the organisation's underlying values and operating principles. When organisations launch a new range of products or enter new markets, encounter dramatic developments in technology, or new leadership ushers in structural and organisational culture overhauls, radical transformations occur (Marshak, 1993). Using a transformational change process, the organisation may decide to pursue a new mission, vision, or new values. As a result, a major disruption to the business will occur, and addressing it will require extraordinary management skills and expertise. Ultimately, the changes result in an organisation with a different identity and corporate culture (Marshak, 1993). According to Marshak (1993), transformational change is the less common of the types of organisational change in that organisations do not frequently undergo radical transformational change.

This is in line with the observation by McPheat (2009) that most changes in organisations are either developmental or transitional. Kelchner (2019) suggests that transitional changes may be the most common or the more obvious changes.

Apart from these three change categories, which focus mainly on the drivers of change, organisational change can also be differentiated according to the content of the change. Amit (2018) identifies three main types of change: Business process re-engineering, technological change and incremental change. BPR (business process re-engineering) is a business management strategy that was initially introduced in the early 1990s and focuses on the analysis and design of workflows and processes within a company. BPR attempts to assist businesses in rethinking how they operate or carry out their work in order to substantially increase customer service and become world-class competitors (Amit, 2018). As a result, BPR assists businesses in reorganizing their operations by focusing on the entire business process and how it functions from the ground up (Amit, 2018).

The total process of creation, innovation, and diffusion of technology or processes is referred to as technological change (TC). The phrase is synonymous with technological advancement, achievement, and progress (Amit, 2018). In essence, TC refers to the creation of a technology (or a process or system), the continuing process of improving that technology (often making it cheaper or delivering an enhanced way of functioning), and its widespread adoption in industry and society. In a nutshell, technological advancement is recognised as being achieved by better and more technology being incorporated into existing operating processes (Amit, 2018).

Incremental change, on the other hand, is a way of introducing numerous modest, incremental (and often unplanned) modifications to a project rather than a few major, quick (and meticulously planned) improvements (Amit, 2018).

Thompson (2019) likens the rapid change in many organisations to a hurricane season, stating that it is always known to everybody that it is coming, but the only unknown is

“who it will hit this time”. In today’s fast-moving environment, any organisation that still hopes for the pace of change to slow down is likely to be confronted by the reality of being forced to change at one stage of the organisation’s life cycle. The world is changing everyday, and so are customer trends, the population composition, technology and the economy. According to Agote, Aramburu, and Lines (2016), organisation’s strategic transformation and development are challenging and complex topics that can be a difficult undertaking for many businesses. From micro businesses to giant corporations, all businesses will have to make changes at some point, and the best way to navigate these changes is through strong leadership, positive attitudes, and the ability to follow a change model. All three of these characteristics, according to Giauque (2015), are equally important when dealing with change and must be implemented. Management will not be able to encourage employees to accept and support change, if they there is a low staff morale, and it will be difficult to progress through change without motivated personnel. Employees and management must provide each other with the skills and motivation they need to follow a change model and accomplish the organisational shift.

1.2. Background to the Study

Change has become an integral aspect of the business world, and human activities are now surrounded by change in a variety of ways (Samuel-David, 2016). Traditional managers believe that their organisations are functioning in a relatively steady manner. They concentrate on how to rationalise and stabilise organisational knowledge to achieve optimal organisational performance. Organisational theory, on the other hand, has evolved to include more dynamic theories that applaud organisational transformation processes (Samuel-David, 2016).

Caused by the global pressures on economies and businesses, strategic transformation within organisations has become unavoidable, and reaction to shifting needs becomes a significant issue (Weber and Camerer, 2003). Competition, technological advancement, innovation, expansion, product quality maintenance, mergers, changes in leadership and management styles, and a variety of other variables all contribute to the factors that have

an impact on change in today's organisations. Overall, the ability of an organisation to deal with change in an effective manner gives the organisation a competitive advantage (Madsen, Miller, and John, 2005).

In progressive environments and agile organisations, employees see organisational change as an opportunity for growth rather than a risk. The extent to which individuals will personally gain or lose as a result of the change, as well as their perceptions of the actual substance and outcomes of the change initiative, are major predictors of their attitudes towards change and their level of resistance towards or acceptance of the change (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005).

1.3. Definitions of Key Terms

1.3.1. Employee perception

According to Robbins (2004:132), employee perception can be defined as a process by which employees organise and interpret their sensory impressions to give meaning to their working environment. Therefore, perception is not necessarily based on reality, but is merely a perspective from a particular employee's view of a situation. In dealing with the concept of organisational behaviour, perception becomes important, because people's behaviour is based on their perception of their sense of reality, and not on an abstract or objective reality.

Employee perception can also be defined as the organisation, identification, and interpretation of information in order to represent and understand the presented information. Employee perception is a process wherein the individuals receive various stimuli, organise their impressions, interpret in their own way, thereby giving some meaning to the environment (Lindsay, 1977).

1.3.2. Organisational strategic change

Moullin and Torres (2017) define organisational strategic change as the restructuring of an organisation's business or marketing plan that is typically designed to achieve an

important objective. Such planned-for change might cause a shift in the organisation's policies, target market, mission or structure.

Organisational strategic change has also been defined as the process of migration from a current situation to a desired future state (Mack et al., 1998). The term has also been described to be usefully conceptualised, in terms of both its process, i.e. how change occurs, and its content, which describes the process of continually renewing an organisation's direction, structure and management of people in a changing environment, in order for the business and organisational changes to be successful and for the desired results to be realised (Berns, 2007).

1.4. Problem Statement

Most past research studies on employees' reactions to organisational change had the propensity to focus on the negative elements or the rejection of change (Wickford, 2019). Oreg (2006) underlined that there was a need to examine employees' subjective perceptions of change, but that this should include both, the positive and the negative perceptions. According to Ashford (1988), insights from prior studies will aid change agents in personalising their intervention efforts by revealing the precise aspects that contribute to employees' acceptance of, as well as opposition to, change.

One of the drawback of past studies on organisational change was that researchers did not adequately account for individuals within different groups' perspectives and responses to organisational change, or the intergroup nature of organisational change (Jones, Gallios, Bordia, and Callan, 2004). Organisations offer members the opportunity to join several groups (for example, work units and divisions) that all contribute towards the employees' voice, where different groups of employees discuss the intended or executed change (Veldsman, 1995).

Change is critical for any organisation (Rebeka and Indradevi, 2015), because fresh ideas stimulate growth for the organisations and their stakeholders. Employees' perceptions of

change may be similar or dissimilar (Amit, 2018). Therefore, taking cognisance of employees' perception is a critical aspect in ensuring that organisational changes are implemented swiftly and effectively. Management, as well as all other stakeholders, benefit from an assessment of employees' perceptions and attitudes towards the change process. Therefore, studies on the relationship between employees' perceptions and corporate strategic change have gained popularity.

1.5. Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to assess the perceptions of employees in the CRL Commission (The Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Rights Commission) on the organisational strategic change in the past five years. By understanding employees' perceptions on organisational change, the organisation will understand its employees attitudes, which will result in greater work retention, job satisfaction, loyalty among customers and quality service delivery.

1.6. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- To assess the attitude of employees belonging to different work experience groups towards strategic organisational change;
- To study employees' perceptions of organisational change with regard to their gender;
- To assess employees' perception of different designations towards organisational change.
- To understand employees' attitudes for greater work retention, job satisfaction, loyalty among customers and quality service delivery.

1.7. Research Questions

The research questions of the study were as follows:

- What are the employees' perceptions about the organisational change?
- What is the impact of strategic change at the CRL Commission?
- What is the importance of employees' perceptions in an organisation such as the CRL Commission?'
- What change practices are used at the CRL Commission?
- How does the CRL Commission ensure that the change practices are effective?
- How does changing the organisation ensure that the CRL Commission remains competitive?
- What are the effects experienced by the CRL Commission regarding employees' negative perceptions about the organisational changes?

1.8. Significance of the Study

This study has relevance to organisational change management, which considers the whole organisation and what needs to change. Organisational change management practices and principles include change management as a tool for change focused mostly on the individual, and how individuals and groups are affected by the organisation's transition. Managing organisational change is the process of foretelling and recognising change in an organisation in such a way as to lessen employee combat and cost to the organisation, while at the same time intensifying the value of the eventual change.

Employees are an organisation's most essential and beneficial resource. Unlike previous eras when employees were considered merely a factor of production in the whole equation of organisations, today employees are recognised that they fulfil much more than such limited role. They present the organisation as its immense asset, and if managed properly, they can contribute to the effective transformation and long-term

development of an organisation and its sustainability. Considering the important role employees hold in the organisations, it has to be borne in mind that their perceptions also affect their working relationship relating to the factors of organisational behaviour as an individual, or as part of a group or structure (Robbins, 2004:2).

1.9. Scope of the Study

The focus of this study was on a selected constitutional body, namely the CRL Commission. The organisation is based in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. In this study, the focus was on the total organisation, including employees from top management, management and other employees.

1.10. Background and Definition of Terms

This section discusses the literature review of the study. The purpose of literature review is to explore the existing and available information covered by different researchers.

1.10.1. Strategic organisational change

An overview of literature agreed that there is inevitable change sweeping across the world which compels organisations to undergo strategic change. Richards (2019) suggests that the world is changing on a daily basis, and so are the population compositions, the economy, and technology and customer trends. Powell and Mandell (2017) equate organisations that fail to embrace change to dinosaurs – out of touch and unable to compete under current trading conditions.

Christensen and Tryggestad (2019) believe that acceptance of change is important to organisations, while Thompson (2019) states that without change, organisations would lose their competitive edge and fail to meet the ever-changing needs of customers. Agboola (2014) also points out that organisational change is necessary to meet consumers' needs.

Organisational change happens in all the areas of an organisation. Organisational change in organisations that must compete in competitive marketplaces includes the introduction of new technology, job designs, workforce rearrangements, and downsizing. As a result, how an organisation manages change has a direct impact on the behaviour of its employees (Samuel-David, 2016).

1.10.2. Organisational strategic change at the CRL Commission in the past five years

Section 181(1)(c) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides for the establishment of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities. (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996). The Commission was established in 2002 and is known as the CRL Commission. The CRL Commission's Annual Report (2019) highlights that the apartheid-era system had led to South Africa being divided on racial, ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic lines, and elevated ethnicity and race as instruments of division rather than being celebrated as a diverse and artistic tapestry of common humanity. As a result of the past apartheid system, the diverse religious, linguistic, cultural customs, experiences and expressions of African people were not freely expressed in the past, until the system was replaced by a full democracy in 1994.

In its initial stages, that the CRL Commission struggled to fulfil its mandate and could have veered towards obscurity. However, in the past five years, the CRL Commission has increasingly become the point of entry on issues of culture, religion and language in South Africa Mkhwanazi-Xaluva (2019). The author states that the CRL Commission has increased its oversight work, made great improvements in the manner in which it implements its mandate, and increased its visibility to local communities and the broader South African nation. Mosoma (2019) confirms this was done through "a review of organisational vision, values and strategies, which include the identification of objectives and outcomes". This speaks to the implementation of transitional change and business process re-engineering as the type of change involved in the organisational strategic change that took place at the CRL Commission.

1.10.3. Employee's perceptions

In the study of organisational strategic transformation, employees' perceptions and inferences have grown increasingly relevant (Benoy, 1996; Schneider and Bowen, 1995). Human resource (HR) practices have adapted accordingly, to include communication between the company and the employees (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). Such communication indicates an organisation's willingness to invest in its personnel, the employees' contribution to the company's added value, and how much the company cares about its employees' well-being. Employees should thus feel compelled to display positive attitudes and behaviours if they have a positive opinion of these HR procedures.

Employees constantly construct perceptions and feel various emotions in the workplace, according to Amabile and Kramer (2007). These perceptions, emotions and beliefs have an impact on their motivation to work and, as a result, their performance. When employees' daily experiences include more positive experiences and attitudes, a higher intrinsic drive, and more favourable opinions of their leaders, their job, teams, and organisations as a whole, their performance will be at its peak. Other scholars also stated that the HR department has a critical role to play in the employees' well-being, which should consist of guarding against management's indifference (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Francis and Keegan, 2006; Harris, 2007). According to Beatson et al. (2008), employees' fulfilment, devotion, and commitment can all be affected by organisational strategic change. Schneider and Bowen (1985) state that there is a documented positive association between how organisational strategic change is implemented and the employees' attitudes and behaviour.

Extant literature, therefore, suggests that organisational strategic change and the manner in which the change takes place has a great influence on the employees' perceptions and attitudes in an organisation. Even though change is implemented for positive reasons, employees could respond negatively towards change and resist change efforts (Jones, 2015). It is thus important to understand employees' perceptions during organisational strategic change.

1.11. Research Methodology and Design

This section briefly deals with the methodology, with an emphasis on the study's research design, data collection technique, target population, questionnaire design, sample selection, and data analysis. The subject is, however, discussed in detail in Chapter 3 in this report.

1.11.1. Research design

The methods used to gather data, the instruments used, and the data analysed are all part of a research design. Bhat (2019:1) describes research design as a researcher's choice of methodologies and procedures to combine varied components of research in a logical manner in order to efficiently solve the research issue. It elucidates 'how' to do research using a particular approach. The research design has a significant impact on the dependability of the results obtained. It provides a firm foundation for the entire research, allowing the research operations to go smoothly, and it makes the research as efficient as possible by delivering maximum information with the least amount of effort, money, and time spent.

According to Bhat (2019), a research design may be divided into two types: quantitative and qualitative. In circumstances where a researcher wants to gather multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations and documents, a qualitative research approach is used. Researchers rely on qualitative research design, with the goal of determining "why" a theory exists as well as "what" participants have to say about it. When it is critical for a researcher to have statistical conclusions to collect actionable insights, a quantitative research design is used. Numbers offer a clear viewpoint on which to base crucial business decisions. As is elaborated in the relevant chapter, the quantitative research design was chosen for this study, because it quantifies behaviours, opinions, attitudes and other variables and makes generalisations from a larger population (Formpl, 2019).

1.11.2. Data collection method

A structured questionnaire was used as the primary method of data collection in this study. However, secondary data in the form of literature review was also used to guide paradigms, theories and approaches (see Chapter 3).

1.11.2.1. Primary data

The two most widely used primary data gathering procedures refer to the use of a questionnaire and interview (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). Questionnaires and interviews allow researchers to ask participants questions to get answers to their research topics. Both questionnaires and interviews have unique characteristics that influence how they should be used for certain data collection purposes. The use of close-ended questions by primary sources is the first step or an empirical investigation. A questionnaire is an efficient data collection technique if the researcher understands the required outcomes and measures the variables of interest (Sekaran, 2003:89). According to Debois (2019), the benefits of using a questionnaire include that it is a practical and inexpensive tool, it allows for comparability, easy analysis and scalability, validity and reliability. Constraints of the questionnaire include the lack of personalisation or in-depth interpretation, survey fatigue, and accessibility issues (Debois, 2019).

1.11.2.2. Secondary data collection

Secondary data refers to data that was collected by someone other than the researcher. Common sources of secondary data for social science include censuses, information collected by government departments, organisational records and data that was originally collected for other research purposes (Johnson and Sylvia, 2018). Secondary data from other sources, which may already have been used in previous research, makes it easier to carry out further research. Administrative data and census data may cover both larger and much smaller samples of the population in detail. However, secondary data can present problems, because it may be out of date or inaccurate. In this research, secondary data pertains mainly to the reviewed literature.

1.11.3. Target population

The target population for this study constituted of all employees of the CRL Commission, which is based in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, in the Gauteng Province. Lavrakas (2008:1) states that for a survey, the target population is the set of units for which the

survey data are to be used to make inferences. The target population defines those units that the findings of the survey are meant to generalise. For this study, the target population was obtained from the HR department at the CRL Commission and it equated to (N = 33).

1.11.4. Sampling technique

Trochim (2006: n.d.) states that sampling is the process of selecting units such as people or organisations from a population of interest, so that by studying the sample one may generalise the results back to the population from which they were chosen. Surbhi (2016: n.d.) categorizes sampling methods into two types: probability sampling and non-probability sampling.

Probability sampling is a sampling technique in which all members of the target population have an equal chance of being included in the sample. This is based on the randomization rule, which states that every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen.

Masteller (2014: n.d.) states that non-probability sampling is more commonly used for qualitative research, when the chances of being selected as a participant are not known. This leaves the selection at the discretion of the researcher and may not accurately represent the target population.

Olorunfemi (2020) adds the census method, also called a complete enumeration survey method, wherein the entire population is studied to collect the detailed data about every unit. Poudel (2017) suggests that this method ensures a higher degree of accuracy than the other techniques. It provides complete and is a very reliable method of data collection. This method was the chosen method for the CRL Commission, based on the organisation's small population.

1.11.5. Measurement instrument design and protocols

The primary data was collected by the researcher using a structured questionnaire, which contained a series of questions for which the participants had to provide the answers (Bell, 2003:533). Kervin (1999:1) provides a relatively restrictive definition of surveys,

emphasizing the importance of respondents recording their own responses. A questionnaire can serve as an inductive method with the aim to formulate new theory, where open-ended questions are used to 'explore a substantive area' (Fournier and Gray, 2000:7). The questionnaire's development took into consideration the necessary guidelines from reputable sources (Edwards, 2000:1), which included closed-ended questions, using clear instruction that the participants may select more than one response option. The Likert scale format was used for the answer options, balanced on both sides of a neutral option, thus creating a less biased measurement (George, 2000:10).

1.11.6. Analysis of the data

The replies to the closed-ended structured quantitative questionnaire were used to produce a data set. The raw data for the demographic factors was translated into descriptive statistics. The information was organized and summarized in graphs, and descriptive statistics were used to examine the sample's makeup and characteristics (De Vos et al., 2007:169). (For the full detail, see the chapter that presents the findings).

1.11.7. Reliability and validity

According to McLeod (2013:1), the consistency of a research study or measuring test is referred to as dependability in research. Kelly (1927:14) argues nearly a century ago that a test is valid if it measures what it claims to measure. In this study, the principles of reliability and validity were used to assess the research's quality. They describe how precisely a method, approach, or test measures something. The accuracy of a measurement is referred to as validity. Validity is more crucial to a study's conclusions than dependability, despite the fact that it is more difficult to assess.

The researcher ensured reliability by checking the consistency of results over time, across different observers, and across different parts of the test. The validity of the results was determined by examining how well they corresponded to established theories and other measures of the same concept (Middleton, 2019).

1.11.8. Ethical considerations and confidentiality

According to Grady (2010:1122), social research entails the interaction of ideas and evidence. Researchers utilise evidence to extend, amend, and test ideas, and ideas assist social researchers to make sense of evidence. These include the following:

- Participation is voluntary, and participants have the option to withdraw either partially or completely from the procedure;
- Participants' consent and the possibility of deception;
- Maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of data provided by individuals or identifiable participants;
- Privacy of potential and actual participants;
- Effects on participants of how one uses, analyses, and reports one's data; and
- Behaviour and objectivity of participants.

Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by placing the questionnaires at the reception area of the CRL Commission, where the employees completed them without supervision or assistance. They did not record their names, thus remained anonymous to the researcher, allowing the researcher to remain unbiased and objective.

1.12. STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 presented the introduction of the study. This included the background to the research problem and a brief review of the literature investigated. The purpose of the study, the problem statement, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, the research objectives, the research questions, and the research methodology and design were also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2 comprises the literature review. It covers an overview of the relevant literature pertaining to the variables identified in Chapter 1 in the problem statement. The researcher used secondary sources to compile the literature review.

Chapter 3 explains the research methodology employed in the study in detail. It explains the relevant methodology for the study, the target population and the way in which the

sample was drawn. The chapter provides an overview of the study's quantitative components.

Chapter 4 presents a discussion of the results of the study.

Chapter 5 comprises a summary and discussion of the study, conclusions and recommendations.

1.13. CONCLUSION

This chapter served as an introduction and overview to the research. It offered a context for the survey by concentrating on the CRL Commission's specific issues in terms of the importance of their employees' views. In addition, the research's problem statement was examined, underlining the necessity for studies on strategic change in emerging economies. The study's justification was presented in terms of its possible future relevance for informed strategic change implementation in a South African setting. The research objectives were stated with reference to both theoretical and empirical goals. The study's scope and delimitations established the variables that would influence the outcome. In conclusion, the structure of the chapters was provided to demonstrate how the information and findings will be reported. The chapter that follows covers an overview of the relevant literature pertaining to the variables identified in the problem statement.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The study's literature review is discussed in this chapter. The chapter examines existing and available information on the impact of employees' perceptions of organizational strategic change as covered by various scholars. Organisational strategic change, employees' views, and specifically, organisational strategic change at the CRL Commission in the last five years are all addressed in the literature.

2.1.1. Organisational strategic change

The concept of 'organizational change' has been described as clearly conceptualized in terms of both its method, which refers to how change occurs, and its content, which refers to what changes occur in the organization (Arsaelsson, 2013, citing Barnett and Carroll, 1995). It refers to the process of constantly renewing an organization's direction, structure, and human resource management in a changing environment, in order for the business and organizational changes to be successful and the desired outcomes to be achieved (Berns, 2007). Numerous aspects play a role in successful organisational transformation. Change is an ever-present characteristic of organisational life, both at an operational and a strategic level. Thus, it is critical for a company to be able to have clear strategic goals and plans in place and how to manage the change required to get there (Theodorsdottir, 2013). Much of the work on organisational transformation in organisational theory has concentrated on the content of change rather than the method of change (Arsaelsson, 2013). Scholars such as Rafferty (2013) argues that in an increasingly fast-changing environment, organisations can no longer afford not to change, and are obliged to change in order to survive. Acquisitions and mergers, restructuring and downsizing, expansions, organisational culture shifts and technological shifts are all examples of these developments. Rebeka and Indradevi (2015) suggest that organisational transformation occurs when an organisation evolves from its current state

to a preferred opportunity. Managing organizational change is the act of anticipating and implementing change in an organization in such a way that costs and employee frustration are minimized while the benefits of the change are maximized. Organisational change occurs frequently as a consequence to an ever-changing environment or as a response to a present pressing problem (Rebeka and Indradevi, 2015).

Employees might experience both positive and negative feelings as a result of organisational change, since companies that undergo organisational change are either constantly reorganising or re-engineering themselves, or even downsizing, and deploying new technologies to survive and remain competitive. According to Vakola (2004), these ongoing and seemingly infinite efforts can place a significant strain on the performance of these organizations as well as the individuals who work within them.

The reviewed literature appears to concur that change is unavoidable, forcing organisations to take stock of where they are and where they wish to be in future, and then make the necessary strategic changes. According to Richards (2019), the world is changing on a daily basis: the population compositions, customer patterns, technology, and the economy are all changing. Thus, organisations that refuse to adapt to change or even initiate change and become agile, can easily wind up as dinosaur – out of touch and unable to compete in today's market.

Scholars agree that change and transformation are vital and necessary for the organisations' sustainability. Thompson (2019) states that change is critical for any organisation, otherwise they would lose their competitive edge and be unable to meet the ever-changing needs of their client base. Agboola (2014) also emphasises the importance of change within an organisation in order to match consumer demands.

Theories about how organizations evolve over time are frequently based on a lifecycle or development paradigm, which assumes that as organizations grow in size, a specific transformation, such as a shift in managerial control from direct to informal, must occur (Barnett and Carrol, 1995). According to Theodorsdottir (2013), organisational routines are an internal component that defines what the organisation knows. She goes on to say that routine-based management and transformation models have a tendency to focus on

the consequences of routine changes, such as disruption and loss of competency. As a result, if stable and repeatable routines are the foundation for dependable performance, organizational change can increase the likelihood of failure because such routines fall away.

According to the literature, the net consequences of organisational change are highly dependent on time (Amburgey et al., 1993). Studies on organisational change also demonstrate that change can be adaptive, but only when the organisation had enough time to rectify the problems caused by disruption. If change occurs too frequently, this recovery may never occur, and then the organisations that change frequently will repeatedly have to reset their newness liability (Amburgey et al., 1993). It is apparent that organisational change has an impact not only on strategies and other strictly organisational issues, but also on the personnel. Therefore, during an organisational transition, the attention will also have to be on managing employees' emotions about the changes taking place.

2.1.2. Employees' perceptions

Smit (2007) defines perception as a process through which people organise and interpret sensory experiences to make sense of their immediate environments. He emphasised the importance for a manager to understand that what employees see differs from objective truth, and that individuals react to what they perceive as reality rather than to facts. He adds that no two persons are the same, and that differences in age, gender, mental status, or the number of dependents can make a visible difference to perceptions, while disparities in emotional intelligence, intellectual capacity, personality, learning experiences, values, attitudes and motivation are difficult to distinguish. Therefore, he concludes that managers must understand people's complexities and, as a result, their various interpretations of reality.

Johnson and Scholes (2007) state that change begins with the impression of its necessity, and the first barrier to change is a faulty view. Managers in charge of change vastly underestimate the level according to which employees comprehend the need for change,

what such change is meant to accomplish and what is involved in the change or what it will cause.

In their study on change perception, Prasad and Sayeed (2006) discover a link between individual and organisational change by establishing that individuals' effective states and positive perceptions of organisational characteristics directly control the very foundation of transformational processes. Therefore, employees are at the core of the success or failure of every organisation, and as a result, it is critical for management to appropriately and effectively understand their employees' emotions and motivate them to buy-in to any intended change.

In a study on organisational strategic transformation, employees' perceptions and inferences have grown increasingly relevant (Benoy, 1996; Schneider and Bowen, 1995). According to Guzzo and Noonan (1994), HR practices include the important aspect of communication between the organisation and the employees. These send a message to the employees about how much the organisation is willing to invest in its employees, whether they perceive them as a valuable asset to the organisation, and care about their well-being. When employees have a favourable opinion of their employer and HR practices, they feel obligated to respond fairly by exhibiting favourable attitudes and behaviour.

Employees hold a range of views and feel various emotions in the workplace (Amabile and Kramer, 2007). From time to time, these perceptions and emotions have an impact on their motivation to work and consequently, their performance. When employees have more positive emotions, stronger intrinsic motivation, and more positive perceptions of their work, leaders, teams, and organizations as a whole, their performance will be at its peak. In his study, Min (2006) found that in order for change to be successful, managers must be aware of their employees' reactions to change at all times. Managers must also understand their employees' acceptance and desire to adapt and support change (Min, 2006) if they wish to avoid poor customer service.

Other authors confirmed that the HR department has a crucial role to play in the lives of employees, which should not only deal with contracts and grievances or promotions, but also consist of protecting employees from management's indifference (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Francis and Keegan, 2006; Harris, 2007). Beatson et al. (2008) claim that organisational strategic change has an impact on employees' happiness, loyalty and commitment. According to Schneider and Bowen (1985), there is a proven positive association between the manner in which organisational strategic change is implemented and the employees' attitudes and behaviour.

These debates on change and employees' perceptions regarding such change suggest that change can sometimes begin with an incorrect initial impression regarding the necessity of such change, and that the first barrier to change is a faulty initial perspective or interpretation of what had been communicated. As a result, management's better understanding of how employees develop certain perceptions of and reactions to change can lead to the development of a strategy that motivates everyone to work towards the organisation's common goals. Developing a sense of unity across all levels of the organisation that allows all staff members to see things the same way is critical, because it can result in the organisation's desired objectives being met, which in turn, can contribute to the successful change implementation. Burnes (2004) refers to it as the "critical mass" of individuals or groups whose active commitment is required to generate the energy for change to take place.

The extant literature implies that organisational strategic change has a significant impact on employee views, and in turn, their interpretations, perceptions and views will have an impact on their behaviour and actions. Employees may react negatively to change and reject change attempts, even if it is implemented for constructive reasons (Jones, 2015). This emphasises the need of comprehending employees' attitudes throughout any planned organisational change.

2.1.3. Organisational strategic change at the CRL Commission in the past five years

The CRL Commission has only been in existence for 15 years. Yet, it is increasingly becoming the focal point on cultural, religious and language conflicts in South Africa. There is not much literature available on the CRL Commission, owing to its relatively short existence. However, the available literature suggests that the past five years have seen it grow in status among the Chapter 9 institutions. Mkhwanazi-Xaluva (2019) suggests that the CRL Commission has increased its oversight work in the past five years, made great improvements in the manner in which it implements its mandate, and increased its visibility to local communities and the broader South African nation. Mosoma (2019) suggests this was done through a review of the organisational values, vision, mission and strategies, which include the identification of goals and outcomes.

Mafadza (2019) outlines the five strategic objectives of operational excellence, including a number of sub-components. Among them are: Putting community councils into operation; increasing marketing; effective investigation and conflict resolution; and research and development. The organisation's ultimate purpose is to enable all citizens and communities to work together in peace and harmony.

The CRL Commission developed a scorecard that would help it become more service delivery oriented and help to meet the expectations of the community. Mafadza (2019) also suggested that the CRL Commission should split its leadership into organisational and operational functions, each of which took a distinctive approach (Mafadza, 2016). As a result, the Commission formed strategic collaborations with a number of institutions of higher learning. Some of these collaborations were formalised through the signing of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) that required colleges to develop cultural, religious and linguistic rights chapters. The Commission helps these colleges bridge the gap between theory and practice through these partnerships, so that research is not simply theoretical but also practical regarding concerns of culture, religion, and languages in all their forms (Mafadza, 2019). All these changes speak to the business process re-engineering as a category of change involved in the organisational strategic change that took place at the CRL Commission.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

According to HR scholars, the following theories can explain the causes of organizational change: The social exchange theory, the model of planned change theory, Kotter's 8-step model theory and the rational choice theory.

2.2.1. The social exchange theory

The main proponent for this theory was Blau (1964), who described the social exchange theory as a valuable framework for analysing social relationships. This theory underpins many trust theories, because it assumes that trust develops through the frequent exchange of advantages between two people. This theory can be used to investigate the motivating mechanisms that lead to the start of trustworthy behaviour. A social exchange occurs when one person freely delivers a benefit to another, triggering the other party's obligation to reciprocate by delivering a benefit in return. When developing such social exchange ties, demonstrating one's trustworthiness can be difficult. Blau (1964) claims that trust can be built in two ways, by fulfilling responsibilities on a regular basis (for example, reciprocating for advantages obtained from others) or by gradually expanding exchanges over time (Blau, 1964).

There are both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards in a social interaction (for example, getting information or advice from someone). Extrinsic rewards include pay raises, bonuses, and benefits, while intrinsic rewards include a sense of proud, personal fulfilment from completing an activity ad feeling like an important part of a team. Social interaction is casual, and benefits are rarely discussed. According to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), subordinates who have faith in their superiors are more likely to have a positive exchange relationship. These conversations instil a sense of obligation in the subordinates toward their superior, and the subordinates expect the same from their superior.

2.2.2. The model of planned change theory

Lewin's endeavour to comprehend the complexities of group behaviour resulted in his development of this model. He saw behaviour as a collection of intentions and forces that influenced both collective and individual behaviour. Any change in behaviour, he claimed, was due to changes in these forces (Lewin, 1946). This model of planned change defines social institutions as a balance of forces, some driving change and others impeding it (Lewin, 1951). Within organizations, these two forces interact in a dynamic way, eventually reaching an equilibrium. An imbalance in this equilibrium can cause tension, which can lead to change.

Unfreezing, changing, and refreezing are the three different operations in the model. Unfreezing is prompted by a dissatisfaction with one's current behaviour and a desire to change it. Human behaviour is stabilised by a quasi-stationary equilibrium supported by driving and restraining forces (Lewin, 1951). This balance is critical, since transformation requires it to be destabilised under difficult psychological situations, resulting in a state of instability, according to Lewin (1951). The insecurity of current behaviour, on the other hand, aids in the reduction of resistance to change. To put it another way, unfreezing the tradition would be enough to overcome internal opposition to further forces of change or reduce resistance (by educating employees on the need for change). When there is enough unhappiness with the current situation, change occurs. It is then time to assess what needs to change and thereafter put the change or changes in place to achieve a new standard of behaviour. This is where the real transformation happens. Training new behaviour patterns, changing managerial methods, and modifying reward systems can all help to influence the direction of change. When change continues until a new balance between driving and restraining forces is achieved, this is referred to as refreezing. The quasi-stationary equilibrium is re-established in this final phase. The new behaviour becomes established, stable, or habitual. The new processes are expected to be adopted, and what was learned in the previous steps will then be put into practice on the job (Durmaz, 2007). This theory functions as a step guide to describe the organisational transformation process and provides a basic foundation for it.

2.2.3. Kotter's 8-step model

As the name implies, Kotter (1996) is the proponent of this theory and he claims that in order to maximise the likelihood of successful transition, organisations must go through a succession of changes. The first step is to create a sense of urgency, which is crucial, especially early on in the process, in persuading employees that change is necessary. A lack of this, according to Kotter (1996), will lead to resistance, making the implementation process more difficult. It is critical to effectively communicate the need for change as well as the potential advantages to employees in order to motivate and enhance the employees' support for the change endeavour.

As the second step, it is necessary to form a *guiding coalition*, which emphasises the necessity for change strategists to assemble a group of individuals whose role it will be to articulate the goal, plan and prospective advantages of the change. They must be individuals, also referred to as champions, who are devoted to the change and can pass that commitment on to others. This stage emphasises the need of finding the correct combination of competence and status, as elements such as hierarchy, area of specialty, leadership, and perceived integrity all play a role in communicating with the rest of the organisation.

The third step refers to the importance of working with clearly defined goals and objectives when it comes to the change process, emphasised by the requirement to build a vision and strategy. In reality, according to Kotter (1996), most change programmes fail because of ambiguous objectives, a lack of planning, and a failure to implement contingency plans.

The fourth step states that the change vision must be conveyed so that everyone understands why the proposed change is required. Employees' commitment is required, which can only be achieved through effective and clear communication as well as participation.

Fifth, action must be enabled, empowered and supported to promote change, overcome obstacles, and establish a channel of communication among members of the organisation. This necessitates top-level support as well as an incentive for staff to provide constructive comments.

Sixth, because a change process can be a long and difficult experience for employees, defining short-term goals is essential. Victories in the short term can assist build momentum in the early stages by indicating that progress is being accomplished. It can also boost staff morale, because completing modest goals gives individuals a sense of success, which encourages them to complete the assignment.

Seventh, it is critical to gauge success by consolidating gains and thereby achieve greater change, but it is also critical to reconsider your aims and ambitions once the existing ones have been fulfilled. If goals are not accomplished, the causes behind this failure or shortcoming must be investigated, and a new plan of action must be implemented.

Finally, it involves establishing new approaches as cultural norms. Kotter highlights the importance of cementing a successful change, similar to Kurt Lewin's "freeze" concept. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, but the most important, according to Kotter, is to try to integrate the changes into the organisation's culture (Kotter, 1996).

According to this theory, organisational change has an impact not only on strategies and other strictly organisational issues, but also on the individual employees. As a result, during organisational change, the attention should not only be on change implementation challenges, but also on managing employees' perceptions and emotions.

2.2.4. The rational choice theory

The proponent of this theory is George Homans, who first proposed it in 1961. It propagates that people act in certain ways, because they believe the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs. Individuals must calculate, which course of action is best for them, based on the outcomes of other courses of action, according to this notion. According to rational choice theorists, the same general principles apply to understanding human interactions as they do to economic theories that examine how commodities and services are produced, distributed, and consumed using money.

The rational choice theory is based on the assumption that all acts are inherently 'rational'. It differs from other theories in that it denies the reality of any actions other than those

that are completely logical and calculative. It claims that all social behaviour is logically driven. Rational choice theory also claims that complex social events can be explained in terms of individual acts, which leads to methodological individualism, and holds that individual human activity is the fundamental unit of social life.

However, the theory fails to explain collective behaviour; that is, if individuals make decisions based solely on personal profit, it is difficult to understand why they would choose something that benefits others more than themselves. As a result, this theory is overly individualistic and falls short of adequately explaining and accounting for the emergence of larger social institutions. This theory also fails to explain why some people appear to embrace and obey social norms of behaviour, causing them to act selflessly or to feel a sense of obligation that outweighs their self-interests (Kang'ethe, 2015).

2.3. Application of the Theory to the Study

The goal of this study was to determine the influence of organisational change on employees' perceptions, using the planned change theory paradigm. In many ways, the theory guided this study. First, the theory considers that when employees believe that their employer recognises their efforts, the employees will respond with a positive attitude and behaviour that will benefit the company (Goulder, 2005). It also takes into account the fact that employees are motivated to strike a balance between what they perceive to be their inputs or assistance and what they perceive to be their outputs, such as applying a lot of effort, their skill level, tolerance, and excitement, and what they see as their rewards, such as salary, benefits, and so forth (Robbins, 2005).

Finally, the theory proposed that employees who have favourable impressions of their employer and the organisation will feel the need to respond by displaying positive attitudes and behaviour. Overall, the theory proposed that if an employer provides pleasant working environment that make employees happy, they will be more dedicated to going above and beyond what is expected of them from their employer as a form of reciprocity.

Lewin's change management theory (1946) helps account for both the uncertainty and resistance to change that can be felt at all levels of an organisation. Employees' resistance to change, a general suspicion of unproven methods, and the fear of abandoning what has worked in the past are just a few of the barriers to change implementation (Lucid Content Team, n.d).

To ensure that everyone involved understands the need for change, organisations' management must first 'unfreeze' the existing processes and examine how it may be improved. Thereafter, the organisation can implement the planned modifications and assist staff with the transition. Management must consolidate or 'refreeze' the new status quo once modifications have been implemented and refined in response to employee feedback (Sharma, 2019).

In conclusion, this chapter examines relevant literature review and unpacks the theoretical frameworks and how its applicable to the study. The next chapter explains the research methodology employed in the study in detail.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the methodology chosen for the study, the quantitative component of the study. The chapter summarises information on the research methodology, research design, research method and data collection. It also provides an overview of the survey instrument (questionnaire) and its psychometric properties.

3.2. Research Design

There are two well recognised techniques to research design, namely qualitative research and quantitative research (Saunders et al., 2003:97). The quantitative method was employed in this study in order to acquire relevant and accurate data. Quantitative research is an investigation into a specific subject based on the testing of a hypothesis, which is then quantified and analysed using statistical methods. The goal of this type of research is to collect a measurable amount of data about a social or human concern. To investigate social phenomena, quantitative techniques include the use of numerical measures and measurement statistical analysis (Hussey and Collis, 2007:56).

3.3. Research Method

Quantitative research is based on the use of numbers and measures, and includes a well-defined data collection procedure (Edwards, 2010:8). Gil and Johnson (2001:1) explain that quantitative research aims to build informal associations. The researcher in the quantitative paradigm requires a well-defined plan for completing the research and is more involved in the data collection process (Brannen, 2005:173). Because of the nature

of the investigation, a quantitative descriptive technique was used to collect, code, analyse, and characterise the huge amounts of data obtained. Quantitative research is widely used in psychology, sociology, and marketing as a way to provide evidence that a hypothesis is correct. This method of research seeks out facts before suggesting an outcome (Garage, 2020). The quantitative technique enables the results of the analysed surveys to be confidently generalised to the intended audience as a whole (Brannen, 2005:179). Benefits of quantitative research include that this method allows the researcher to reach a larger sample size, one can collect information quickly when using quantitative research, especially if the survey is conducted online. The approach uses randomised samples, it can focus on facts or a series of information, the research performed with quantitative approach is anonymous and quantitative research does not require direct observation to be useful (Miller, 2020).

3.4. Research Strategy

According to Krishnaswami and Ranganatham (2007:45), the adequacy of the method used determines the quality of a research project. As a result, when choosing a research approach for a topic, caution has to be exercised. According to Bhattacharyya (2003:107), a survey is a fact-finding investigation and a research approach that involves gathering data directly from a population or a sample of that population at a specific period. This information can be gathered in a variety of methods, such as by observation, interviews, or the use of questionnaires. Closed-ended structured questionnaires were a reasonably reliable approach for collecting data from the CRL Commission's staff. Such questionnaires consist of a set of questions that are sent to or handed to a group of people for answers, and the results are tabulated and statistically tested (Shajahan, 2004:86). McBurney (2001:96) states that in order to meet the objectives of the study, the researcher should use a quantitative design that allows the research to be carried out as efficiently as possible, providing the most information with the least amount of work, time, and money spent.

3.5. Data Collection

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on targeted variables in an established system, which then enables one to answer relevant questions and evaluate outcomes. Data collection breaks down into two methods namely primary data and secondary data (Simplilearn, 2022).

3.5.1. Primary data

Primary data is obtained through direct observation of the phenomenon under investigation or through personal collection (Welman, Kruger, and Mitchell, 2005). After the researcher has gained some insight into the problem by reviewing secondary data or analysing previously collected data, primary data is frequently sourced (Creswell, 2003:170). According to Andrew and Halcomb (2009), the researcher is in charge of gathering primary data for a specific purpose. Creswell (2003:171), on the other hand, claims that primary data is costly to collect and manage. Interviews, personal or telephone contacts, emailed surveys, and self-administered surveys are all examples of primary data collection methods (Welman et al., 2005:88). In this study, a closed-ended structured quantitative questionnaire was used. A quantitative research method is closed-ended or structured questionnaires (Durkheim, 1858–1917). It is a positivist research approach with a minimal level of researcher engagement and uses a large number of participants. People are more likely to answer questions on sensitive topics when self-administering questionnaires. These questionnaires inspire less irrelevant or clouded answers, and they inspire less articulate participants to partake in the survey, and do not rely on prior knowledge and feelings of the interviewees (Debois, 2019).

3.5.2. Secondary data

According to Hussey and Collis (2007:198), secondary data is information gathered by the researcher while conducting research. Secondary data analysis allows the researcher to save time that would otherwise be spent gathering information. The fact that most of

the underlying work has already been done by others, such as literature reviews, case studies, published texts, scrolling the internet, and studying certified publications, is an obvious advantage of using secondary data. Secondary data is information that has previously been gathered from other sources by others. This data is less expensive and easier to collect than original data (Sekaran, 2003:75). According to Hussey and Collis (2007:199), secondary data is inexpensive, saves time and effort, helps to make primary data collection more specific and in line with other secondary data, aids in improving understanding of the problem, and provides a basis for comparison for the data collected by the researcher. This type of material was mostly used as a literature review in this investigation.

3.6. The Administration of the Questionnaires

Before the administration of questionnaire, the researcher sent a letter to the CRL Commission requesting permission to conduct the research. A few weeks later, permission was granted by the CRL Commission for the researcher to conduct the study. Thereafter, the researcher sent out the questionnaire to the employees to complete via email. However, because a large number of employees were working from home, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic's regulations, the researcher was advised to hand deliver the questionnaires to the CRL Commission's offices in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, together with a clear instruction to the Receptionist that turnaround for collection of the completed questionnaires was four days. However, as employees were working on a rotational basis, necessitated by the Covid-19 regulations, it took longer than the stipulated days to receive all completed questionnaires back.

3.7. Questionnaire Construction

Tashakkori and Teddie (2010:803) define a questionnaire as a group of questions on a form that participants fill out in response to a research project, designed to enable the researcher to implement scientific methods and collect data from the participants.

Bergmen (2008:192) define it as a data collection approach, the most widely utilised instrument of all is the questionnaire. Closed-ended questions have a limited set of possible answers. They are often suitable for surveys, because they lead to higher response rates when users do not have to type or write out answers, but are able to 'tick' their chosen answer among pre-stated options. Also, answers to closed-ended questions can easily be analysed statistically (Farrell, 2016). For these reasons, the researcher developed a close-ended structured quantitative questionnaire.

3.7.1. Brief perspectives on the use of questionnaires

According to Bryman (2012:1), a questionnaire is used to collect data for a study, and the process is guided by the study's objectives. Alexander et al. (2008:38) state that a questionnaire is one of the most prevalent data collection instruments. Rowley (2014:308) describes a questionnaire as a structured series of questions for acquiring information from participants, which Rowley considers the primary method of collecting quantitative primary data. Bakker et al. (2013:464) emphasise that the questionnaire should also meet the assumptions that surveys are built on, such as the participants' ability to read and comprehend the questions; their ability to supply the information required to answer the questions; their willingness to answer the questions; and their interest in the research's outcome and its implications for the betterment of society

3.7.2. Guidelines followed in developing the questionnaire

While Thompson and Seber (1996:106) state that responding to a questionnaire is entirely voluntary, a questionnaire must be well-designed, because it is extremely rare for the researcher to be able to repeat the survey if the researcher later discovers that the questionnaire was incomplete or that an important topic was missed (Cameron, 2011:245). According to Bazeley (2010:431), good questionnaires accomplish the research objectives, gather valid and trustworthy data from participants, enable data processing, and attain and retain the participants' involvement. Shields and Rangarjan (2013:156) contend that a good questionnaire should be developed to keep participants

interested; thus, the questionnaire in this study was designed to be professional and provide exact and clear instructions on how to respond to the questions. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014:1) recommend that to make a questionnaire easier to read, it must be separated into logical sections. Ernest (2011:223) asserts that when creating a questionnaire, the researcher has to avoid questions that are double-barrelled, biased, sensitive, leading, or negative in nature.

3.7.3. Advantages of a structured questionnaire

According to Thompson and Seber (1996:108), a structured questionnaire permits the researcher to contact a large number of participants quickly. Lieber and Weisner (2010:560) add that structured questionnaires with closed-ended questions are reasonably simple to construct, code, and understand. Ivankova, Creswell, and Stick (2006:9) state that the structured questionnaire is simple to standardize because each participant is asked the same question in the same way. The researcher can be confident that all of the sample participants will answer the same questions, making this a reliable research method (Harden and Thomas, 2010:749). Combs and Onwuegbuzie (2010:1) contend that a structured questionnaire places a smaller cognitive load on the participant and minimises the amount of thinking required, resulting in higher levels of replies and more accurate data. A closed-ended structured questionnaire was constructed for this study, taking into account the target population and the sample size chosen.

3.7.4. Design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire's architecture and design underwent multiple revisions prior to its finalisation, requiring a significant amount of time for modification before the final research instrument was produced. This study's questionnaire included a mix of structured and open-ended questions. The questions were designed to focus on a specific topic in order to get precise data that could be analysed statistically. The questionnaire included single response statements with nominal and ordinal categories, as well as scaled questions.

Participants were given a variety of options to choose from when answering the single response questions. For the scaled questions, a five-point Likert scale was used to elicit the degree of agreement or disagreement, with a neutral column provided for each of a series of statements relating to the main theme. According to Ivankova et al. (2006:15), the Likert scale is widely used because of its ability to examine attitudes, beliefs, and views. The Likert scale was used to connect the study objectives and the exploratory model.

3.7.5. An overview of the final questionnaire

This study's instrument was a pre-coded structured questionnaire that was carefully designed to elicit as many responses as possible, while also obtaining complete data. The questionnaire (Annexure B) consisted of 30 statements and comprised the following sections:

- Section A: Demographic questions;
- Section B: Employees' perceptions;
- Section C: Organisational strategic change;
- Section D: Employees' perceptions, organisational strategic change and the CRL Commission.

For sections B to D, a brief definition by an author was highlighted on the top to reinforce the understanding of the concepts.

3.8. Target Population

According to Patton (2015:1), the actual specification of a sample must start with the identification of a population to be surveyed. Corbin (2015:1) clarifies that the target population refers to the group of people who form the object of the survey and from which conclusions are drawn. A population can also be described as finite or infinite (Patton, 2015:1). A finite population has a limited or fixed number of individuals or objects, while

an infinite population has an unlimited or non-fixed number of individuals or objects (Corbin and Strauss, 2015:1). Caracelli and Greene (1997:23) state that during the sample selection process, the researcher must anticipate decisions that are likely to arise and participants must have the information and specific features or characteristics for their responses to be meaningful.

A population is a mass of individual units that is homogeneous (Greene, 2008:12). Corbin (2015:1) states that while the population is divided into multiple strata, the units within each stratum should be as homogeneous as feasible. Because of time and financial constraints, it is often not practical to investigate the entire population. However, if the population is smaller in size, as was the case in this study, then it is feasible to cover the complete population (Lowenthal and Leech, 2009:205).

The target population for this study comprised all line workers and support staff members of the CRL Commission based in Braamfontein, Johannesburg. This is referred to as the total population (Glen, 2018). It is also referred to as survey (Lavrakas, 2008:1) or census (Olorunfemi, 2020). The total population provides the researcher with the opportunity to obtain better insights into a target population than partial samples would be capable of. This also eliminates the risk of a biased sample selection that is often encountered in random study samples (Glen, 2018). The source list of the target population was obtained from an internal staff list provided by the HR department at the CRL Commission. The identified total target population equated to (N = 33). The census method was the most accurate and suitable for the CRL Commission, because of the organisation's manageable population.

3.9. Validity

Blumberg et al. (2005:56) define validity as the degree to which a measuring instrument achieves its intended purpose. It also refers to how well it corresponds with a criterion that is not related to the instrument. Validity is the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it was supposed to measure. The research questionnaire's validity decides whether the study measures what it claims to measure (Saunders et al.,

2009:95). Asking the proper questions in a clear way is critical to a questionnaire's validity and this has to ensure that questions measure the important components of the investigation's goal. Terms must be carefully defined so that all participants understand what they mean (Cohen and Marion, 2003). Researchers can never be confident that an educational or psychological measuring instrument will measure what it is supposed to measure accurately and consistently. (Norval, 2006), thus they have to take all steps to test the questions and carefully analyse all results. Shajahan (2004) states that validity is an essential property of the measuring equipment. The closed-ended questionnaire was written in plain English so that any member of the team could understand it. The questionnaire's questions were written in such a way that the responses could be collated and statistically tested (Shajahan, 2004:86).

3.10. Reliability

Trochim (2006:109) defines measuring instrument dependability as whether or not the results of the measuring processes are consistent when they should be consistent. According to Burns and Bush (2010:73), reliability is a statistical concept associated with consistency and dependability, or the consistency in obtaining the same relative answer when measuring constant events. According to Norval (2006:13), questionnaires serve a certain function. Questionnaires are often one-time data collecting methods with a short lifespan that are given to a small group of people. The questionnaire was structured into four sections, and each section was meant to produce consistency, while addressing the aim of the study. The closed-ended nature of questions made answers by the participants easier to complete, which inspired fewer irrelevant or clouded answers.

3.11. Data Collection Method

The researcher had intended to hand-deliver questionnaires to the participants, using the personal method for data collection. According to De Vos et al. (2007:154), when using the personal method, a questionnaire is handed to the participants who will complete it in

their own time, but the researcher is available to assist in case problems are experienced. However, in this study, the questionnaire was placed at the reception area of the CRL Commission, because staff members were in the office on a rotational basis. The researcher collected the completed questionnaires a number of days later.

3.12. Data Analysis

De Vos et al. (2007:169) describe that the process of giving order, structure and meaning to a large amount of data is known as data analysis. The collected data was edited or cleaned, coded, classed, and evaluated for completeness and consistency of information, and descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse it. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 15 for Windows.

3.13. Ethical Considerations

Yip et al. (2016:684) state that there are various reasons why it is critical to follow ethical guidelines in research. First, set norms foster research goals such as knowledge, truth, and error avoidance. Second, because research frequently entails considerable collaboration and coordination among different persons from various fields, ethical norms encourage values such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness, which are critical to collaborative work. Finally, numerous ethical protocols aid in the researcher's ability to be held accountable to the public. According to Dich, McKee, and Porter (2013:1), participants may have a variety of queries about the research that they have been requested to participate in. To address such potential concerns, a covering letter was assigned to each questionnaire to introduce the participant to the research and the questionnaire for this purpose. George (2016:15) identifies a number of aspects, for example, the topic, the need for the investigation, anonymity, confidentiality and ethical protocols, which have to be included in the covering letter to address ethical considerations and transparency.

According to Andrew and Halcomb (2009:217), participants' rights to self-determination and full disclosure should be reinforced by the researcher. Participants were fully informed about the nature and importance of the research and each participant was in a position to decide whether or not to participate in the study. Participants also had leverage to withdraw from the study at any time without any reason. Participants were not asked to write their names when filling in the questionnaire to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. By completing the questionnaire on a voluntary basis, participants gave their informed consent.

3.14. Conclusion

The quantitative research design was chosen as the relevant research approach for this study. This chapter described the research design, methodology, target population, and census sample selection. The chapter that follows provides a summary of the analysis and its findings.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The design and method employed in this study were described in Chapter 3. This chapter presents the information gathered from the participants' responses to the questionnaire. The major goal of this survey was to determine how the CRL Commission employees feel about the organisation's strategic change during the last five years. The study's specific objective was to determine how employees from various work experience groups feel about strategic organisational change. This was analysed according to their gender and various designations. The research questions of the study were structured in a manner that would extract information on the employee's perceptions about the organisational change, the impact of strategic change at the CRL Commission, the importance of employee's perceptions in an organisation such as the CRL Commission, and the change practices used at the CRL Commission. Questions were also posed to assess how the CRL Commission ensures that the change practices are effective, how changing the organisation ensures that the CRL Commission remains competitive and the effects experienced by the CRL Commission regarding the employees' perceptions about the organisational changes.

In this study, the data was gathered through a personal way. The study's target population included all of the CRL Commission's personnel, translating to 33 employees in the target population. The survey method was used for this study, and a five-point Likert scale was used to format the questionnaire. The SPSS version 15 for Windows was used to analyse the data.

In this chapter, the results show the "strongly agree" and "agree" responses in a combined format, and the "strongly disagree" and "disagree" percentages were calculated by combining the responses.

Section A in this chapter deals with the participants' demographics. Demographic questions in a survey allow researchers to gain background information on their participants. These questions provide context for the collected survey data, allowing researchers to describe their participants and better analyse their data (Allen, 2017).

Section B deals with the employees' perceptions by analysing the employees' attitudes towards organisational change in their organisation.

Section C deals with organisational strategic change and seeks to determine the levels of understanding among the employees working at the CRL Commission regarding the concept of organisational change and their readiness to participate in it.

Section D deals with a combination of the employees' perceptions, organisational strategic change and the manner in which these concepts are applied at the CRL Commission.

The study was quantitative in nature, and a high response rate of 90% was obtained from the 33 questionnaires distributed. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The statistical test was used to determine whether or not the variables had a significant relationship.

4.2. Section A: Analysis of the Demographic Data

This part uses appropriate baseline computations to analyse the participants' demographic information. This section provides a broad understanding of the different employees in the organisation. The demographic data includes the nature of employment, function of employment, gender, age, length of service, and qualification. According to the CRL Commission's Annual Report (2015/16), the researcher had initially estimated that the staff component of the CRL Commission comprised 40 members. However, at the time the research was conducted, the CRL Commission employed only 33 employees and by the time fieldwork was conducted, only 30 which is 90% of all employees were able to respond to the questionnaire. This was attributed to the fact that the three employees were only working from home and did not come to the office at all. Arrangements were made to visit them in their homes, but they preferred not to be visited,

fearing a potential Covid-19 infection.

4.2.1. Figure 4.1: Nature of employment (N = 30)

The nature of employment includes the educational requirements, as well as job security and social protection (Nayyar, 2012). This question was asked to establish how many of the employees are working on contract or whether they are permanently employed, because their opinions of organisational change could differ, according to their job security.

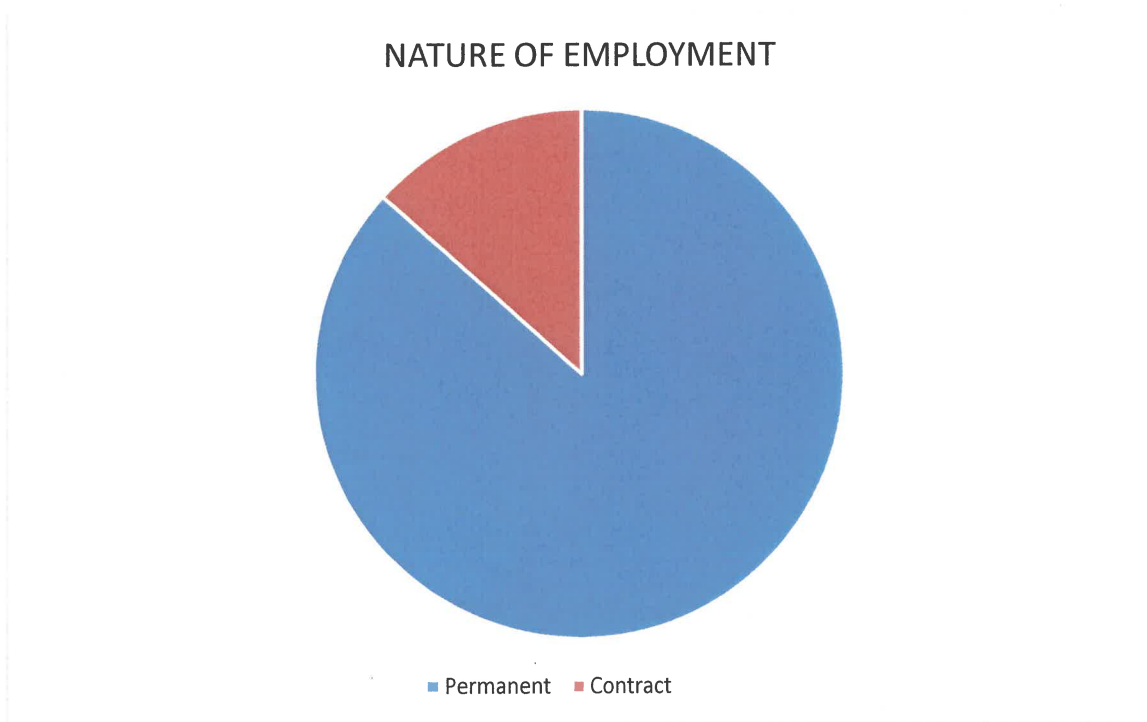


Figure 4.1: Nature of employment

As illustrated in Figure 4.1 above, a total of 86.67% of the participants who participated in this study are permanent employees, while 13.33% participants are working on contract. This indicates that the greatest group comprises permanent employees with relative job security.

4.2.2. Figure 4.2: Function of employment (N = 30)

The aim of the support function and the line function is to ensure that the organisation meets its business objectives. The line function involves the actual core work to meet the business objectives, while the support function assists the line function in meeting these objectives, reporting to the line function, who report to senior management.

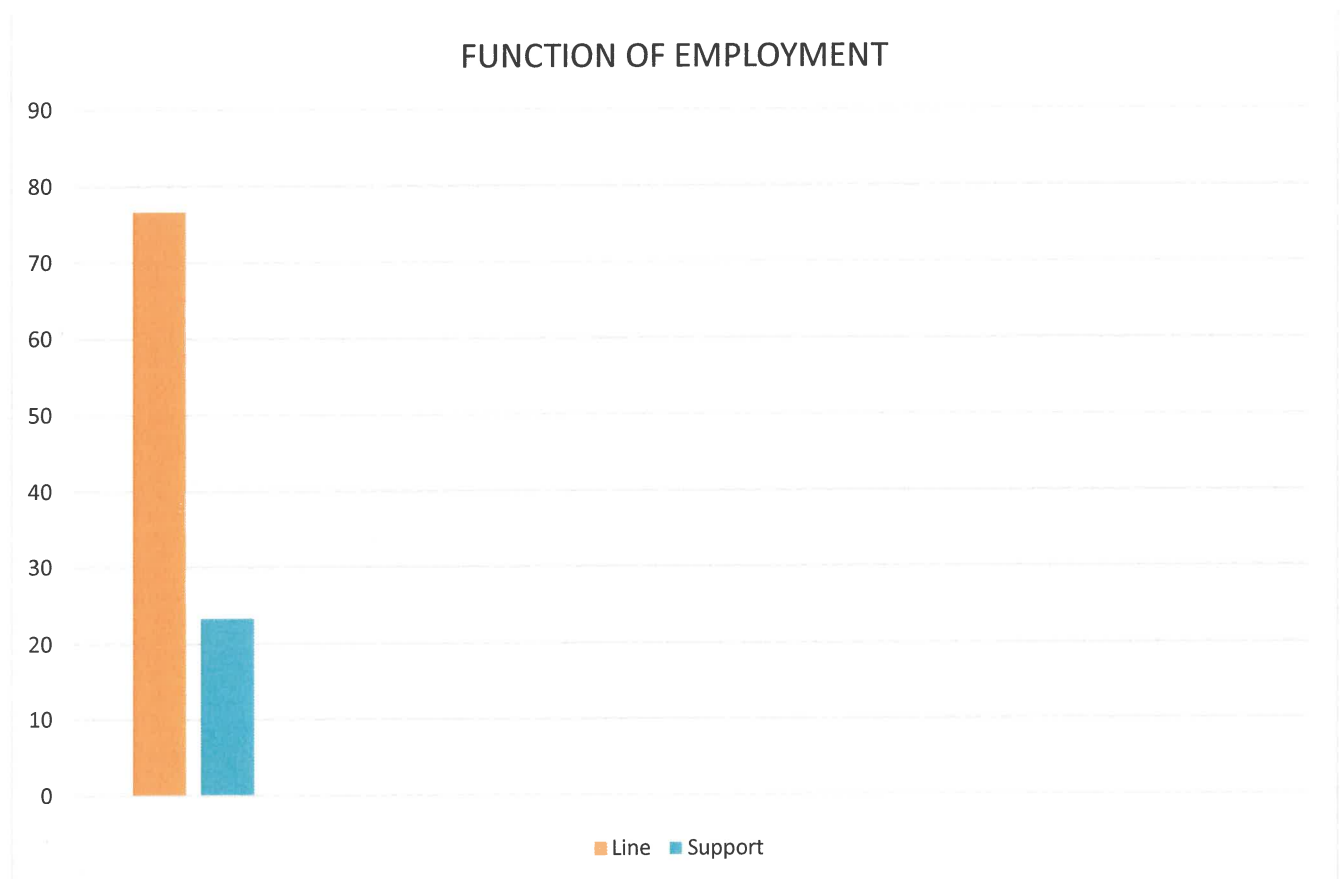


Figure 4.2 Function of employment (N = 30)

As illustrated in Figure 4.2 above, a total of 76.67% of the participants are part of the line function, while 23.33% participants are part of the support function. This indicates that most participants have more influence on the decisions taken at the CRL Commission.

4.2.3. Figure 4.3: Gender of participants (N = 30)

To establish if there are any differences in attitudes regarding organisational change between men and women, it was important to include both gender, as gender identity can influence a participant's perspective on a topic (Si, 2015).

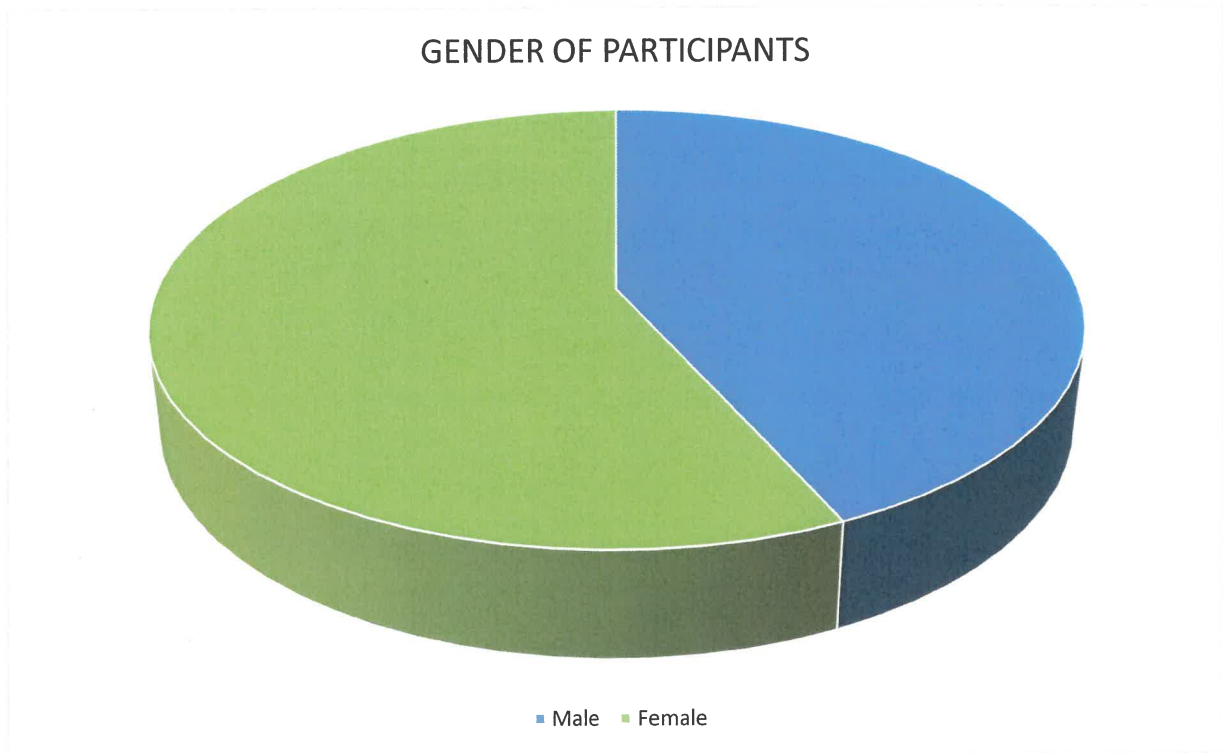


Figure 4.3 Participants' gender (N = 30)

Chart 4.3 above illustrates the participants' gender. A total of 43.33% of the participants are male employees and 56.67% of participants are female employees, indicating a slight bias towards female employees.

4.2.4. Figure 4.4: Participants' age (N = 30)

Measurement of age can be of interest to researchers in trying to understand the different age groups' reactions towards change and their own change in behaviour, belief, attitudes and lifestyles. Given the differences in experience and possibly different attitudes towards change, and because people within a particular generation tend to share some similar characteristics and ways of thinking, marketers often segment their target market based on age. Therefore, age was also included as a measurement in this study.

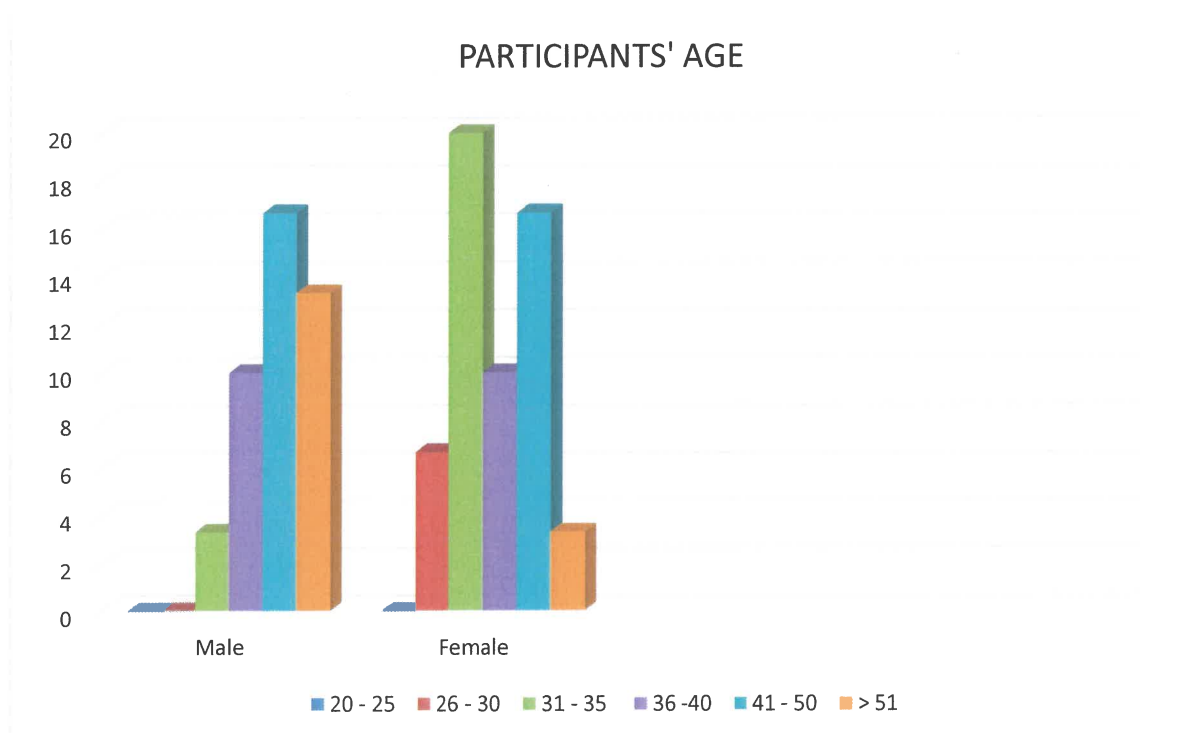


Figure 4.4 Participants' age (N = 30)

As illustrated in Figure 4.4 above, none of the participants in this study are between the ages of 20 and 25, while 6.67% are between the ages of 26 and 30, according to the results. A total of 23.33% of those polled are between the ages of 31 and 35. Only 20% of those who responded are between the ages of 36 and 40, while 33.34% are between the ages of 41 and 50, and the remaining 16.66% are between the ages of 51 and above. Most of the male participants are over the age of 40, while the female sample is younger.

4.2.5. Figure 4.5: Length of service (N = 30)

Employees who have worked for the company for a long time have a wealth of knowledge about the company's organisational culture and service. They have also experienced more changes in the workplace. However, employees who are still new in the organisation could have a different perception of the organisation, because they might not have experienced the change yet.

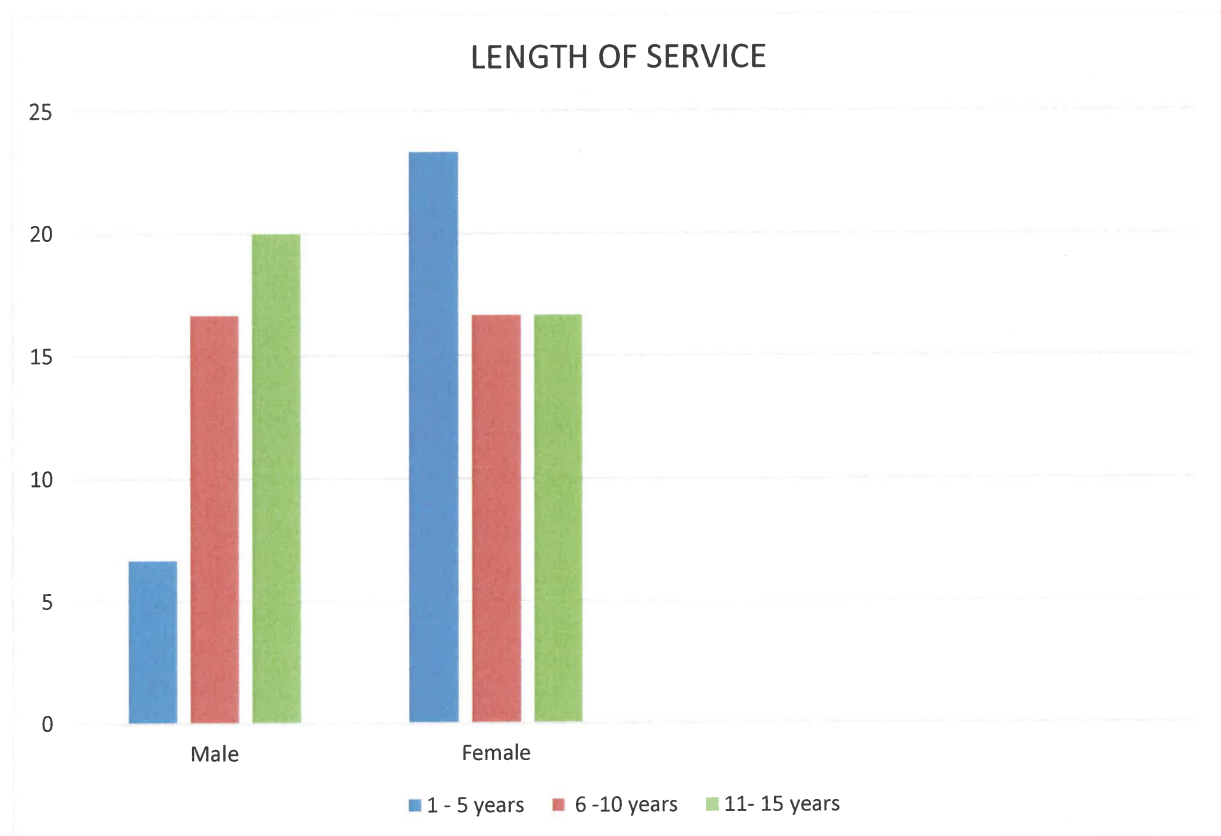


Figure 4.5 Length of service (N = 30)

As illustrated in Figure 4.5 above, a total of 30% of the participants record between 1-5 years of service, while 33.34% of the participants have worked at the Commission for between 6-10 years, and the remaining 36.67% of the participants have worked there for between 11-15 years. Results show that in line with their age, the older male participants tend to have a longer service record than their female colleagues. It could be hypothesised that the Commission hired younger (and often female) employees as the organisation grew to its current staff compliment.

4.2.6. Figure 4.6: Level of qualification (N = 30)

The question regarding the participants' level of education provides an insight into the level of qualification the employees have. Academic qualifications often lead to more senior appointments and thus line functions or senior management and decision-making, which would influence how higher qualified participants will help shape the change in the organisation.

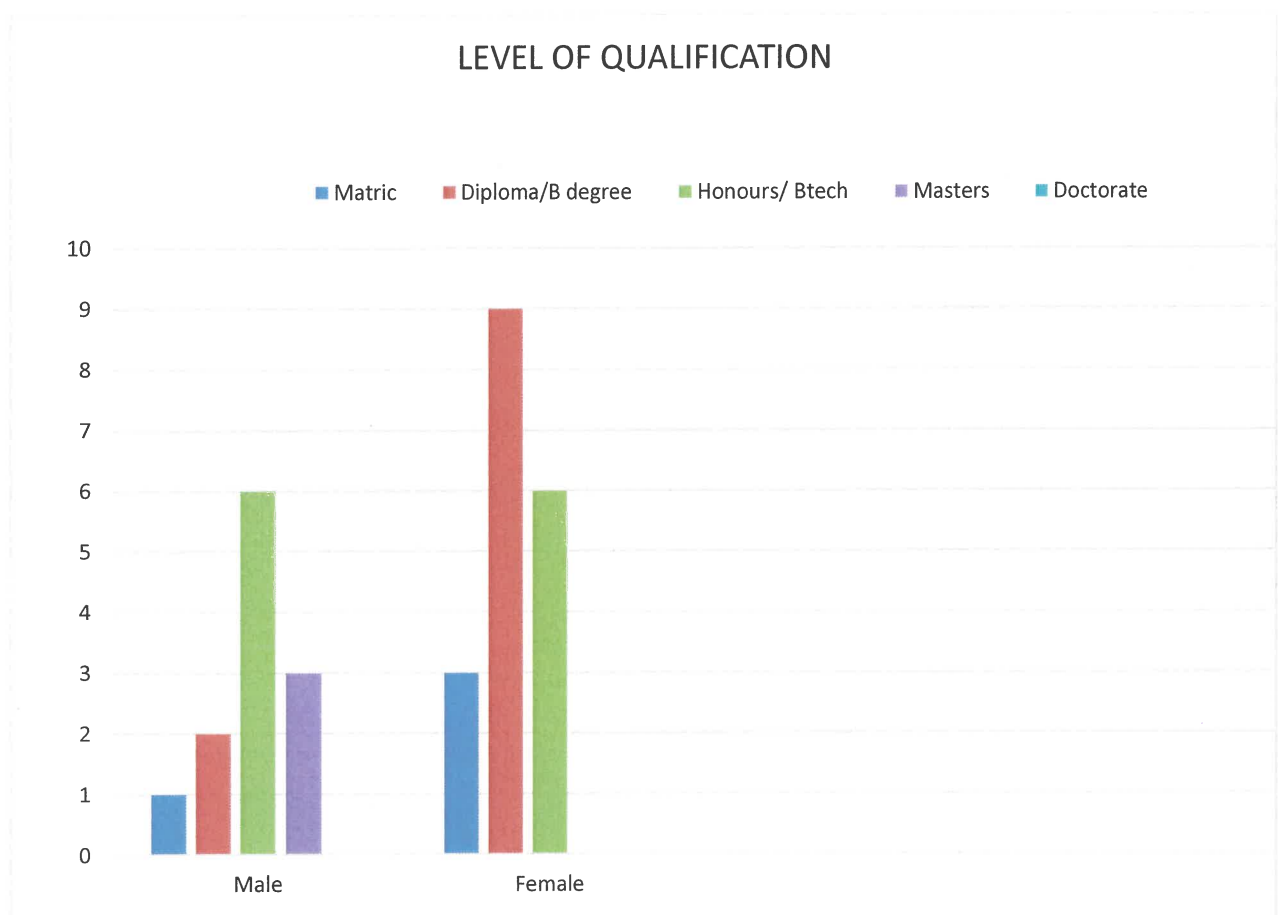


Figure 4.6 Level of education (N = 30)

As illustrated in Figure 4.6 above, a total of 13.33% of the participants have matric as their highest level of qualification, while 36.67% of participants have a Diploma/Bachelor's degree as the highest level of qualification. A total of 40% have an Honour's/BTech degree and only 10% of the participants have a Master's degree as the highest level of qualification. It is interesting to note the differences in qualifications achieved between the two genders, which may also have an influence on their perceptions of change, as they may have accepted change through their studies.

4.3. Section B: Employees' Perceptions

This section deals with the analysis of the response related to the employees' perceptions of organisational strategic change.

4.3.1. Table 4.1: Positive attitude ensure that CRL Commission remains competitive in the industry.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	30%
Agree	16	53.3%
Neutral	3	10%
Disagree	1	3.33%
Strongly disagree	1	3.33%
	30	100%

Table 4.1 illustrates that a total of 83.3% (30% + 53.3%) of the participants agree that a positive attitude ensures that the CRL Commission remains competitive in the industry, while 10% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 6.66% (3.33% + 3.33%) of the participants disagree that a positive attitude among employees ensures competitiveness. However, it implies that a positive attitude among employees is an essential component for a successful change.

4.3.2. Table 4.2: My department works together to achieve a common goal.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	16.67%
Agree	14	46.67%
Neutral	5	16.67%
Disagree	2	6.66%
Strongly disagree	4	13.33%
	30	100%

Table 4.2 illustrates that a total of 63.34% (16.67% + 46.67%) of the participants agree that the department works together to achieve common goals, while 16.67% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 19.99% (6.66% + 13.33%) of the participants disagree. Working towards common goals is one of the defining traits of a team, according to Hartman (n.d.). Thus, teamwork across the department is important when change takes place, although not as highly ranked as a positive attitude by the employees.

4.3.3. Table 4.3: Employees have trust in management

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	1	3.33%
Agree	8	26,67%
Neutral	14	46.67%
Disagree	3	10%
Strongly disagree	4	13.33%
	30	100%

Table 4.3 illustrates that a total of 30% (3.33% + 26.67%) of the participants agree that they have trust in management, while 46.67% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 23.33% (10% + 13.33%) of the participants disagree. Blog (2020) states when employees trust their employers, they are more likely to work together towards achieving the same goal. Gray (2000) agrees that the need for trust in the workplace is a fundamental factor for any organisation. It is noteworthy that less than a third of the participants indicate that they have trust in their management – they do not distrust them, but the largest group (nearly half of all the employees) reserve their judgement regarding their trust in management. It will be important to assess in future research, why the level of trust is not higher, despite employees' statement that they can communicate with management.

4.3.4. Table 4.4: I receive feedback about improvement since the changed happened from my manager.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	4	13.33%
Agree	4	13.33%
Neutral	16	53.33%
Disagree	2	6.67%
Strongly disagree	4	13.33%
	30	100%

Table 4.4 illustrates that a total of 26.66% (13.33% + 13.33%) of the participants agree that they receive feedback about any improvements since the changed happened, while 53.33% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 20% (6.67% + 13.33%) of the participants disagree. Continued feedback is important across the entire organisation in order to remain aligned to goals, create strategies, develop products and services improvement, and much more (DeFranzo, n.d). Thus, it is noteworthy that less than a third of all employees receive feedback on the results emanating from the organisational change. It is also noteworthy that such a large group of employees reserve their judgement regarding this question. It is possible that there is a lack of trust in management because of the low level of feedback from them.

4.3.5. Table 4.5: I understand that I should respect other member’s decisions even though we have different personal attributes.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	33.33%
Agree	17	56.67%
Neutral	3	10%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
	30	100%

Table 4.5 illustrates that a total of 90% (33.33% + 56.67%) of the participants agree that they should respect other member’s decisions, even when they hold different personal attitudes, while only 10% of the participants are neutral. No participants disagree. Respect has always been a requirement for successful workspaces (Leonard, 2019) and seems to be an important element at the CRL Commission, and is acknowledged as such.

4.3.6. Table 4.6: Change practices are used at the CRL Commission.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	6.66%
Agree	5	16.67%
Neutral	17	56.67%
Disagree	2	6.66%
Strongly disagree	4	13.33%
	30	100%

Table 4.6 illustrates that a total of only 23.33% (6.66% + 16.67%) of the participants agree that change practices are used at CRL Commission, while 56.67% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 20% (6.67%+13.33%) of the participants disagree. It is again noteworthy that a significant percentage of the participants reserve their judgement regarding the change practices used at the CRL Commission. It needs to be assessed whether they are unsure, do not know whether they are used at the Commission or whether they do not want to commit to an answer.

4.3.7. Table 4.7: A Positive attitude improves my level of motivation.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	14	46.67%
Agree	12	40%
Neutral	4	13.33%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
	30	100%

Table 4.7 illustrates that a total of 86.67% (46.67% + 40%) of the participants agree that a positive attitude improves the employees' level of motivation, while 13.33% of the participants are neutral. No participants disagree. When employees come to work with a positive attitude, they are usually more productive, produce better work and can influence the attitudes of those around them. Regardless of the role on a team, they can help people feel valued and respected, affecting their attitude and likely motivating them to want to add their best contribution to the organisation. Using the power of positive emotions to motivate team members requires the individual to be intentional in changing how people think (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021). This result is in line with the first question that established that a positive attitude has a major role to play in the organisation.

4.3.8. Table 4.8: The CRL Commission makes a concerted effort to address their objectives.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	4	13.33%
Agree	8	26.67%
Neutral	15	50%
Disagree	1	3.33%
Strongly disagree	2	6.67%
	30	100%

Table 4.8 illustrates that a total of 40% (13.33% + 26.67%) of the participants agree that the CRL Commission makes a concerted effort to address their objectives, while 50% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 10% (3.33% + 6.67%) of the participants disagree. This indicates that the Commission's drive towards achieving their objectives do not seem to be fully recognised by the employees, and more work should go into effective communication of such efforts and their results.

4.4. Section C: Organisational Strategic Change

4.4.1. Table 4.9: There's cooperation between workers of the company.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	1	3.33%
Agree	13	43.33%
Neutral	8	26.67%
Disagree	6	20%
Strongly disagree	2	6.67%
	30	100%

Table 4.9 illustrates that a total of 46.66% (3.33% + 43.33%) of the participants agree that there is cooperation between the employees of the organisation, while 26.67% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 26.67% (20% + 6.67%) of the participants disagree. It is noteworthy that less than 50% believe that there is cooperation between the employees, and more than a quarter actually believe that there is no cooperation. This is particularly important, as participants had stated earlier in the questionnaire that teamwork and a positive attitude were very important, but this does not seem to translate into actual cooperation.

4.4.2. Table 4.10: Communication helps in building trust because I can rely on my co-workers.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	30%
Agree	12	40%
Neutral	8	26.67%
Disagree	1	3.33%
Strongly disagree	0	0
	30	100%

Table 4.10 illustrates that a total of 70% (30% + 40%) of the participants agree that communication helps in building trust, while 26.67% of the participants are neutral. Only 3.33% of the participants disagree. Conley (2015) states that communication with others is a primary way to build trust. Along with the appropriate behaviours and actions, communication serves as the vehicle for building trust in relationships. What one says, how one says it, and how one responds to what others communicate can make or break trust. Rainey (2013) agrees that the most essential requirement necessary to develop a healthy and positive relationships is trust.

4.4.3. Table 4.11: Effective organisational change forms an integral part of the company.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	6.67%
Agree	16	53.33%
Neutral	10	33.33%
Disagree	2	6.67%
Strongly disagree	0	0
	30	100%

Table 4.11 illustrates that a total of 60% (6.67% + 53.33%) of the participants agree that organisational change forms an integral part at the CRL Commission, while 33.33% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 6.67% disagree. This implies that most participants accept that change is part of life and that they have to accept it at the organisation.

4.4.4. Table 4.12: Organisational change has a positive impact at the CRL Commission.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	6.67%
Agree	16	53.33%
Neutral	9	30%
Disagree	3	10%
Strongly disagree	0	0
	30	100%

Table 4.12 illustrates that a total of 60% (6.67% + 53.33%) of the participants agree that organisational strategic change has a positive impact at the CRL Commission, while 30% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 10% of the participants disagree. Similar to the previous question and participants' answers, the CRL Commission's employees accept that organisational has been taking place and that it has made a positive impact at or on the Commission. However, this is not accepted at an enthusiastic "strongly agree" level.

4.4.5. Table 4.13: Change improves overall performance of the organisation.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	30%
Agree	11	36.67%
Neutral	9	30%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	1	3.33%
	30	100%

Table 4.13 illustrates that a total of 66.67% (30% + 36.67%) of the participants agree that change improves overall performance, while 30% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 3.33% of the participants strongly disagree. Syal (n.d) highlights that in times of uncertainty, organisations and individuals alike are compelled to accept that change is the only constant. While discomfort and resistance are neutral consequences of any change, planning and preparation can help smooth the transition. Performance change management is a critical tool to help your organisation sustain performance during periods of change. The fact that only about a third of the participants strongly agree that such change improves performance, they may regard change as inevitable, but not necessarily leading to improved performance. This might also indicate that other factors have a greater influence on improved performance (for example, improved cooperation between employees).

4.4.6. Table 4.14: it's difficult to communicate with manager.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	6.67%
Agree	3	10%
Neutral	6	20%
Disagree	9	30%
Strongly disagree	10	33.33%
	30	100%

Table 4.14 illustrates that a total of 16.67% (6.67% + 10%) of the participants agree that it is difficult to communicate with the manager, while 30% of the participants are neutral. The largest group, comprising 63.33% (30%+33.33%) of the participants disagree and thus believe that it is easy to communicate with their manager.

4.4.7. Table 4.15: I am satisfied with the communication in my department.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	16.67%
Agree	11	36.67%
Neutral	13	43.33%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	1	3.33%
	30	100%

Table 4.15 illustrates that a total of 53.33% (16.67% + 36.67%) of the participants agree that they are satisfied with the communication in their department, while 43.33% of the participants remain neutral. Only 3.33% of the participants strongly disagree. It is noteworthy that while participants state that it is easy to communicate with their manager, they are less convinced that the level of communication in their department is satisfactory. Again, this could be a further reflection of lacking cooperation between employees in the department.

4.4.8. Table 4.16: Emphasis on positive attitude may improve job productivity.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	33.33%
Agree	15	50%
Neutral	4	13.34%
Disagree	1	3.33%
Strongly disagree	0	0
	30	100%

Table 4.16 illustrates that a total of 83.33% (33.33% + 50%) of the participants agree that a positive attitude may improve job productivity, while 13.34% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 3.33% of the participants disagree. Demers (2020) mentions that the most positive employees are at least twice as productive as their counterparts. These results are in line with the answers to the earlier question regarding the important role of a positive attitude to performance.

4.5. Section D: Employee Perception, Organisational Strategic Change and the CRL Commission

4.5.1. Table 4.17: I am satisfied with the overall evaluation of the organisation.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	3	10%
Agree	8	26.67%
Neutral	16	53.33%
Disagree	2	6.67%
Strongly disagree	1	3.33%
	30	100%

Table 4.17 illustrates that a total of 36.67% (10% + 26.67%) of the participants agree that they are satisfied with the overall evaluation at CRL Commission, while 53.33% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 10% (6.67% + 3.33%) of the participants disagree. Gartenstein (2019) comments that strategic evaluation is an important tool for assessing how well a business has performed, relative to its goals. It is an important way to reflect on achievements and shortcomings, and is also useful for re-examining the set goals, which may have been set at a different time, under different circumstances. Considering the importance of employees' buy-in into set goals and their achievement, The fact that only just more than one third of the participants agree that the overall evaluation at the Commission is satisfactory should be cause for concern.

4.5.2. Table 4.18: Monitoring organisational change is definitely not an easy task.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	6	20%
Agree	16	53.34%
Neutral	7	23.33%
Disagree	1	3.33%
Strongly disagree	0	0
	30	100%

Table 4.18 illustrates that a total of 73.34% (20% + 53.34%) of the participants agree that monitoring organisational change is not an easy task, while 23.33% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 3.33% of the participants disagree. Monitoring, according to Simister (2017), is the systematic and ongoing gathering and analysis of data on the intervention's progress. Monitoring is carried out to ensure that all those who need to know about an intervention are appropriately informed, and that timely decisions can be made. Financial monitoring, process monitoring, and effect monitoring are all examples of distinct forms of monitoring. Once specific goals and targets have been set, it is imperative to monitor the organisation's performance against the set goals and targets and to address any deviations or shortcomings.

4.5.3. Table 4.19: Compared to a year ago, production of the CRL Commission has increased.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	7	23.33%
Agree	3	10%
Neutral	14	46.67%
Disagree	3	10%
Strongly disagree	3	10%
	30	100%

Table 4.19 illustrates that only 33.33% (23.33% + 10%) of the participants agree that compared to a year ago, production (and productivity) at the CRL Commission has increased, while 46.67% of the participants reserve their judgement. The remaining 20% (10% + 10%) of the participants disagree. This neutral response to the achievement of increased performance indicates that the targets and goals had either been set too high, and therefore were not fully achieved, or there are other factors that contribute to holding the organisation back from increasing production or productivity to its fullest.

4.5.4. Table 4.20: There’s a clear reason why change is needed at the CRL Commission.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	30%
Agree	12	40%
Neutral	4	13.34%
Disagree	3	10%
Strongly disagree	2	6.66%
	30	100%

Table 4.20 illustrates that a total of 70% (30% + 40%) of the participants agree that there is a clear reason why change is needed at the CRL Commission, while 13.34% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 16.66% (10% + 6.66%) of the participants disagree. Mcculloch (2019) observes that change in an organisation can lead to many positive aspects that in turn, lead to creating or retaining a competitive edge. Change should encourage innovation, develop skills and employees’ performance, and lead to the identification, adoption and implementation of better business opportunities, and improve staff morale.

4.5.5. Table 4.21: There's an open-communication policy in my company.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	3	10%
Agree	7	23.33%
Neutral	10	33.33%
Disagree	4	13.34%
Strongly disagree	6	20%
	30	100%

Table 4.21 illustrates that a total of 33.33% (10% + 23.33%) of the participants agree that there is an open communication policy at the CRL Commission, while 33.33% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 33.34% (13.34% + 20%) of the participants disagree. Health (2020) reports that when people do not communicate with each other in an open manner, it can hinder productivity and performance. According to Health (2020), the benefits to open communication at work include that it avoids conflicts; promotes productivity; encourages innovation and the sharing of ideas; keeps employees loyal to the organisation; and addresses problems before they arise. Again, while there seems to be good communication with the manager, such communication is probably missing among the employees, where there is also not the desired level of cooperation.

4.5.6. Table 4.22: Negative attitude hinders my working relationship with co-employees.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	40%
Agree	11	36.67%
Neutral	5	16.67%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	2	6.66%
	30	100%

Table 4.22 illustrates that a total of 76.67% (40% + 36.67%) of the participants agree that negative attitudes hinder the working relationship with co-employees, while 16.67% of the participants are neutral. Only 6.66% of the participants disagree. Negativity brings down the morale in any group or team. It does not need much more than a single employee who has a negative attitude towards the organisation, their work or their colleagues, and who complains about everything, to create a negative atmosphere in the department. Employees who feel and express their negative attitude tend to spend time creating and raising the matter of issues in their day-to-day life, without solving them (Shah, 2020). The emphasis participants place on the importance of a positive attitude and the rejection of a negative attitude by employees in the organisation could also indicate that there is a sense of someone (or more) in the organisation who does not fit in because of their attitude.

4.5.7. Table 4.23: The CRL Commission builds positive impact by applying organisational change.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	6.66%
Agree	8	26.67%
Neutral	17	56.67%
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	3	10%
	30	100%

Table 4.23 illustrates that a total of 33.33% (6.66% + 26.67%) of the participants agree that change practices are used at the CRL Commission, while 56.67% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 10% of the participants strongly disagree. This implies that most employees are not yet convinced that the change practices have had a positive impact on the organisation.

4.5.8. Table 4.24: Communication is an essential factor for workers to perform effectively.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	14	46.67%
Agree	16	53.33%
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
	30	100%

Table 4.24 illustrates that all (46.67% + 53.33%) participants agree that communication is an essential factor for workers to perform effectively. No participants disagree. According to Kashyap (2019), one of the major concerns in the workplace for creating and maintaining a positive work environment is effective and open communication. Page (n.d) confirms that good communication is an essential tool in achieving productivity and maintaining strong working relationships at all levels of an organisation. Employees who communicate effectively with their colleagues, and with managers and customers tend to also exhibit increased productivity.

4.6. Summary of Findings

4.6.1. Demographics

This section profiled the staff of the CRL Commission and added an understanding of the nature of the participants to the questions in sections B, C and D. The 30 employees who participated in the study out of the total staff component of 33 employees represent 90.91% of the staff component of the CRL Commission. Three individuals could not be reached for participation in the survey.

A total of 86.67% of the participants who participated in this study were permanent employees and thus, more regularly exposed to any change in the organisation, while 13.33% participants were working on contract. The nature of employment was included in the questionnaire to determine the overall condition of employment in the organisation and indicated that the CRL Commission's staff compliment is largely permanent and thus, enjoys a great deal of job security.

A total of 76.67% of the participants held a line function in the organisation, and 23.33% participants worked in a support function. This implies that most of the employees deal directly with the core-business of the CRL Commission compared to a lower number who provide support to the line function employees. Line function employees are more likely to be affected by organisational change than those who are working in a support role, because they are the main drivers of what the change is meant to achieve in and for the organisation.

The number of female employees (56.67%) surpassed that of their male colleagues (43.33%). Including both male and female participants can inform the researcher if gender plays a role in the topic their researching. Gender was seen to have had an influence on the length of tenure and the level of seniority in the organisation.

Regarding the age of the participants, the data shows that the CRL Commission did not employ anyone younger than the age of 25 years, and only 6.67% of the employees were between the ages 26-30 years. Most of the employees were aged between 31 and 50 years (23.33% between the ages 31-35 years; 20% between the ages 36-40 years; and

33.34% between the ages 41-50 years). Only 16.66% of the employees were aged 51 years and above. The purpose of including age in the staff profile was to analyse if there was a correlation between age and subsequent opinions and behaviour. Overall, this means that 70% of the participants were above the age of 35 years.

Regarding the length of service, 36.66% of the employees had worked at the organisation between 11-15 years while 33.34% of the participants were between 6-10 years and 30% of the participants who participated in this study had between 1-5 years of service. Thus over 70% of the participants had over five years of service, which is a positive reflection of loyalty shown towards the organisation.

Most of the employees have either an Honours/B.Tech (40%) degree or a Diploma/Bachelors (36.67%) degree, with a further 10% holding a Master's degree as the highest level of qualification. The remaining 13.33% have a matric. This indicates that the employees of the CRL Commission are well qualified to be able to understand the importance of organisational change, efficient communication and a positive attitude at work to enhance productivity.

4.6.2. Questionnaire results

4.6.2.1. Responses from section B: Employees' perceptions

Overall, most employees stated that they respected other people's decisions (90%), they agreed that a positive attitude improved the motivation to work (87%) and such positive attitude ensured the organisation's competitiveness (83%), while the department working together as a team was needed to achieve the organisation's goals.

While employees acknowledged that change had taken place in their organisation, and the importance of efficient communication and cooperation as well as a positive attitude among all employees was highlighted; however, such acknowledgement of the factors' importance did not automatically translate into the important elements being inculcated in the organisation.

Many employees reserved their judgement or remained neutral regarding the successful

implementation of change management practices (57%) that had taken place. While they believed they found communication with the managers to be easy, there did not seem to be constructive communication and cooperation between the employees, and there were indications that not all employees displayed a positive attitude towards their job, their colleagues or the organisation (see section C findings).

Ratings remained mostly neutral regarding any feedback from management (53% neutral, 20% negative); they were not convinced that the CRL's objectives had been addressed (50% neutral, 10% negative) and they reported a low level of trust in their management (47% neutral and 23% negative).

While the employees seemed to understand the fundamental concepts of change management, they also seemed to reserve judgement or be sceptical of the correct use of change management in their organisation. Such change management obviously did not have an impact on the inter-staff cooperation, positive communication and increased productivity or their trust in management, partially blamed on a lack of feedback from management.

4.6.2.2. Responses from section C: Organisational strategic change

Overall, employees mostly agreed that a positive attitude would improve job productivity (83%); effective communication would build trust (70%); and organisational change improves overall performance (67%), forms an integral part (60%) and has a positive impact (60%) on the organisation. They also believed that it was easy to communicate with their managers (63%).

However, only 47% of the employees believed that there was cooperation between the employees and only 53% were satisfied with the communication in their department. As Davis (2020) states, cooperation allows employees to exchange valuable information that helps everyone to improve their knowledge base and work in a time and resource efficient manner. Employees understood that change was an ongoing process and adaptation was needed. This is in line with what Richards (2019) says about the world changing on a daily basis. However, the CRL employees did not seem to be aware that change was

meant to improve their productivity and performance. They either did not see such enhanced performance having taken place, or they were unsure (67%) whether change could actually improve overall performance of the organisation. While the majority of the participants (63%) found it easy to communicate with their managers, only just more than half of the participants (53%) were satisfied with the communication in their department. The lacking feedback from management and the low trust in management (see section B) could also have contributed to the limited perception held by employees as to whether there was an improvement as a result of the implemented change.

Scholars like Beatson et al. (2008) stated that organisational strategic change has a certain employee component, and if positively executed, it can lead to employees' contentment, loyalty, and dedication.

In the previous section, results showed that participants were not aware that their level of performance and productivity could be related to their positive attitude, while they were also not aware of the change management practices used, probably caused by the lack of feedback. This is in line with the results in this section where participants were neutral about change improving overall performance of the organisation. Instead, they understood performance to be the catalyst of change and not vice versa.

4.6.2.3. Responses from section D: Employees' perceptions, organisational strategic change and the CRL Commission.

Overall, employees believed that effective communication was an essential factor to be able to perform effectively (100%). They also admitted that negative attitudes hindered good working relationships to be formed (77%); monitoring change was not an easy task (73%); and that there was a clear reason why change was needed (70%).

However, they were not convinced that a positive impact was created by the organisational change (57% neutral, 10% negative); or that they were satisfied with the overall evaluation of the organisation (53% neutral, 10% negative); whether productivity had increased compared to a year ago (47% neutral, 20% negative), and whether there was an open communication policy in the organisation (33% neutral, 33% negative).

While most employees (70%), independently of hierarchical positions, believed that there was a clear reason why change was necessary, and employees were generally supportive of the need for change, their beliefs about such change may be more positive than their actual reactions to it. It was also interesting to note that 70% of the participants agreed that communication built trust, yet only 30% had trust in management, most probably because they were not content with the amount of feedback they received about the change or any improvements. This factor may have negatively influenced the employees' perceptions of leadership and management as shown in the results from the two sections discussed above.

In essence, despite the change employees had noticed, they did not relate this change to any improved performance of the organisation. As stated above, they seem to believe that change is good to alter certain systems in the organisation for it to remain competitive, but being competitive does not necessarily mean that employees improve their performance.

Incorrect perceptions held by employees could thus affect the employees' behaviour and consequently the organisation in more than one way. Managers will have to understand that organisational success can follow only if the employees' perceptions are understood and addressed. If the employees have a favourable perception of their job, the likelihood of organisational success is high. All participants agreed that communication is an essential factor for employees to perform effectively. This means that effective two-way communication plays a vital role and is an integral part of the workplace. Cheng (n.d) concluded that workplace communication refers to streamlining internal communication. Maintaining effective communication ensures that management and the team below them are working towards a common goal. That means that employees are confident with the work at hand and managers are assured that team members are correctly undertaking that work. If employees receive more feedback about their performance and productivity levels, their achievement of the set goals, they should also develop more trust in management, as long as communication is on an open basis.

Therefore, even though results showed that organisational change as a concept is not

communicated adequately, participants showed a positive perception towards the importance of such communication, especially used as a tool by change management and related to improved performance. However, they did not seem to believe that the changes in their organisation were properly managed or communicated.

4.7. Limitations of the Study

All research studies are bound to have some limitations. For example, perceptions were only assessed at a single point in time. It is entirely feasible that perceptions could shift as the transition process progresses. Many change management experts, such as Lewin and Kotter, agreed that during a change process, change recipients move through a sequence of stages. This study was limited to employees of the CRL Commission in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, in Gauteng Province. Caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdowns and regulations, numerous employees were forced to work from home and worked at the offices only on a rotational basis, resulting in the marginally lower response rate to the questionnaire. Other components of the study were hampered by time constraints, since the researcher had to travel to Braamfontein to gather the completed questionnaires, which took more than three months to obtain.

4.8. Conclusion

The survey results were compared to the conclusions discussed in this chapter's literature review, and fresh information from author sources was included to round out the discussion of the findings. SPSS version 15 for Windows was used to analyse the data received from the replies. Figures and tables were used to present the information. The results can only be applied to this Chapter 9 sector, because the study was an internal study conducted at the CRL Commission in Braamfontein. The study's results and recommendations are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The study's conclusion and recommendations are presented in this chapter. The CRL Commission is one of the organisations that has taken steps to reform its organisational structure in recent years. The primary goal of this study was to determine how the CRL Commission employees felt about the organisation's strategic transformation during the previous five years. At the CRL Commission, it was discovered that organisational transformation can have a favourable impact on organisational productivity and employee performance, although such achievement depends on the buy-in by all employees. The conclusions were drawn in accordance with the study's objectives and in an attempt to address the primary research questions about employees' perceptions of organizational change. The study's recommendations will be made available to senior management and published in the form of a journal article.

The research was quantitative in nature, with data being collected using a standardised structured questionnaire. The data was analysed using the SPSS version 15 for Windows, and the results were presented using figures and tables. The target participants were provided with a closed-ended, pre-coded questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. In this survey, only employees of the CRL Commission, based in Braamfontein, Johannesburg in Gauteng Province took part. Based on the limited number of participants, the survey approach was used in this study. The surveys were administered to all employees working at the CRL Commission, using the personal method of data collection, and a high response rate of 90% was attained.

5.2. Conclusion

The impact of employees' views on organisational change was investigated at the CRL Commission. It was discovered that there is a substantial link between employees' perceptions and organisational strategic change, implying that well-informed and

favourable employee perceptions regarding the need for change, the manner in which such change is implemented and monitored, and providing regular feedback on the progress of such change process contribute to successful organisational strategic change.

The conclusion, as shown in section B of the questionnaire, is that employees' perceptions about organisational strategic change can be negative or positive. In the CRL Commission, employees believe that positive attitudes have an impact on the competitiveness of the organisation and that by working together, their organisation can achieve better results. There are various reasons that can create positive employee perceptions towards organisational change, and employees can embrace change if they know it will make their organisation not only competitive and sustainable, but that it can assist the employees in their work, their performance and their interaction between the individual employees, teams and management.

However, employees did not necessarily relate such change to the actions of management, where there was limited trust and limited feedback reaching the employees. Instead, they may tend to credit themselves on the implemented change. The role of managers in organisational change is therefore separated from the role of employees themselves.

The meaning of competitiveness may differ between that understood by the employees and that seen by management. This was shown in this study, where the impact of organisational strategic change on the CRL Commission was linked to competitiveness, but competitiveness was not necessarily linked or equated to improved performance. To the participants, the organisation remaining competitive and employees improving their performance was not necessarily equated. This may mean that in certain instances, employees may seek to retain their same level of performance instead of improving it, with the understanding that as long as their performance did not drop, it kept the organisation competitive.

Overall, organisational strategic change can have a negative or positive impact on an organisation, depending on how it is accepted and supported by the employees. It could

be inferred here that in the CRL Commission, organisational strategic change was said by some to have a positive impact on the organisation, because of the positive perception by the employees on the change in this organisation. Therefore, employees' perceptions are important in ensuring that organisational change yields the intended positive impact on the organisation.

Change management practices play an important role in employees' perceptions on organisational change. In this study, efficient communication between management and employees and among the various departments within the CRL Commission were identified to be key change practices at the organisation. Although such communication did not seem to have improved the level of trust between management and the employees, and did not include the essential feedback to employees regarding the achievement of targets or the improvements made, it seems to have improved somewhat the collaboration and information sharing among staff members and between employees and management. However, such cooperation and internal communication between individual employees must still improve as communication and cooperation are essential factors of an effective change management practice in an organisation.

Overall, therefore, positive perceptions held by employees on organisational strategic change will yield a positive impact on the organisation. The same applies to any negative perceptions, which will yield a negative impact on the organisation. It should also be investigated where in the organisation there is less cooperation, or where there are negative "complaining" individuals who tend to create barriers to positive or enhanced performance. HR should find ways to solve any potential problems that may have filtered through to the department.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the empirical investigation, this study recommends to examine the level of monitoring and feedback provided for the set objectives regarding the change management. To achieve a higher level of trust in management and a buy-in into the change strategies, the organisation should consider the possibility of involving employees

in management's decision-making process. Employees should become more involved in any issues that may arise at work.

Second, to boost organisational effectiveness, management should foster better teamwork and cooperation inside the organisation. This would allow various departments in an organisation to share information and thereby reduce duplication of efforts, and increase efficiencies.

Further, participants in this study believed that management did not provide them with helpful feedback or comments. Based on this, it is suggested that management expand their relationships with their employees by implementing regular feedback sessions. Also, to enhance the feeling of "belonging", management should consider workplace activities that bring management and employees together at the same table, thereby investing in a positive and more trusting working relationship.

Another recommendation is that the organisation's various units conduct weekly sessions that would allow them to discuss information, experiences, and concerns that should be a priority for management. It is possible that by doing so, employees will also have more faith in management. By cultivating change intelligence in the organisation, management may also encourage people to realise their ability to adapt to organisational change.

5.4. Suggestions for Further Research

This study employed a quantitative approach, with questionnaires utilised to obtain data from the participants. However, qualitative methods could be used to conduct further in-depth research in this topic. In so doing, open-ended questionnaires and in-depth interviews could be used by the researcher to acquire rich data from the participants to augment the findings of this kind of research. Further, qualitative research can be used to investigate the reasons for the survey's rating scores to gain a better understanding of the motives and so add value to the body of information. Future research could benefit from a rigorous examination of each management level's contribution or involvement in

change management and performance, and the targets to achieve relevance and sustainability.

Similar studies can also be conducted on other entities of this nature, including comparative studies in this regard. These could further help to explore various other aspects pertaining to the relationship between organisational strategic change and employees' perceptions and enhance the body of knowledge on the subject. There is also the opportunity to use quantitative research with the same set of employees to examine the situation in the organisation after the change process has been completed, where the current study can be used as a benchmark.

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ANNEXURE A

Dear Sir/Mam

I am a registered student at the Durban University of Technology in the Department of Management. I am currently pursuing the MTech in Human Resource Management in the Faculty of Management Sciences. My topic is titled: **Formulating an investigation on the impact of employee perception on the strategic organisational change**. In order to successfully complete the latter part of my research, the secondary component deals with the empirical investigation. This involves the completion of a structured close ended questionnaire. You have been identified as one of the respondents that formed the sample for this study.

I'm writing to ask your permission to be allowed access to your facility with a questionnaire to fill out. This should not take a large amount of time and can be conducted at a convenient time and date to be arranged. All I will need is to arrange a suitable time with you to come and provide the questionnaires to the employees. I will also be asking team members if they want to take part.

All answers and results from the questionnaires are kept strictly confidential and the results will be reported in a research paper available to all participants on completion.

If this is possible please could you E-mail me at pupuzile@gmail.com to confirm that you are willing to allow access to the employees providing they agree to take part.

Yours sincerely

Phumzile Mnguni

082 654 6907

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

ANNEXURE B

Note: For this study, organisation refers to the CRL Commission and all its staff members, unless otherwise stated.

INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:

1. Please select **ONLY ONE** response with a tick ✓ for each question.
2. Answer **ALL** the pre-coded questions in this section.
3. Please **DO NOT** leave any question blank.

1. Please indicate whether you are a permanent or contract staff member at the CRL Commission

1.1	Permanent	1
1.2	Contract	2
1.3	Any other:	3

2. Please indicate which ONE of the following is applicable to you:

2.1	Line function	1
2.2	Support function	2

3. Please indicate your gender:

3.1	Male	1
3.2	Female	2

4. Please indicate your age group:

4.1	20-25 years	1
4.2	26-30 years	2
4.3	31-35 years	3
4.4	36-40 years	4
4.5	41-50 years	5
4.6	> 51 years	6

5. For how long have you been employed at the CRL Commission?

5.1	1-5 years	1
5.2	6-10 years	2
5.3	11-15 years	3

6. Please indicate your highest level of qualification:

6.1	Matric	1
6.2	Diploma / Bachelor's degree	2
6.3	Honours degree / B.Tech	3
6.4	Masters	4
6.5	Doctorate	5

SECTION B: Employee perception

Employee perception can be defined as a process by which employee’s organise and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their work environment.

<p>INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please select ONLY ONE response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below. 2. Answer ALL the pre-coded statements in this section. 3. Please DO NOT leave any statement blank.
<p>KEY: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree</p>

		SD	D	N	A	SA
7.	Positive attitude ensure that the CRL Commission remains competitive in the industry.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	My department works together to achieve common goals.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Employees have trust in management.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I receive feedback about improvement since the changed happened from my manager.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I understand that I should respect other member’s decisions even though we have different personal attributes.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Change practices are used at the CRL Commission.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	A positive attitude improves my level of motivation.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	The CRL Commission makes a concerted effort to address their objectives.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: Organisational strategic change

A restructuring of an organisation’s business or marketing plan that is typically performed in order to achieve an important objective.

INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:				
1. Please select ONLY ONE response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below.				
2. Answer ALL the pre-coded statements in this section.				
3. Please DO NOT leave any statement blank.				
KEY: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree				

		SD	D	N	A	SA
15.	There’s cooperation between the workers of the company.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Communication helps in building trust because I can rely on my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Effective organisational change forms an integral part of the company.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Organisational strategic change has a positive impact at the CRL Commission.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Change improves overall performance of the organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	It’s difficult to communicate with the manager.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	I am satisfied with the communication in my department.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Emphasis on positive attitude may improve job productivity.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: Employee perception, organisational strategic change and CRL Commission.

INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:

1. Please select **ONLY ONE** response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below.
2. Answer **ALL** the pre-coded statements in this section.
3. Please **DO NOT** leave any statement blank.

KEY: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

		SD	D	N	A	SA
23.	I am satisfied with the overall evaluation of my company.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Monitoring organisational change is definitely not an easy task.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Compared to a year ago, production of the CRL Commission has increased.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	There's a clear reason why change is needed at the CRL Commission.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	There's an open-communication policy in my company.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Negative attitude hinders my working relationship with co-employees.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	The CRL Commission builds positive impact by applying organisational change.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	Communication is an essential factor for workers to perform effectively.	1	2	3	4	5

ANNEXURE C



Benny Motjopye 16 Aug

to me, Edward, Reitumetse ▾



Dear Ms Mnguni

The Commission would like to assist you where possible in respect of your study however we currently have skeleton staff reporting to office due to Covid19 measures that we are implementing to limit the spread of the pandemic. I have also noted that you have a sample size of 40 questionnaires to be completed but our staff establishment is only limited to 33. I am not sure if this will assist you to meet your criteria or if you would want to explore other chapter 9 institutions with a much bigger establishment. .

In the meantime, we can place the questionnaire at our Reception area and make staff who visit office on rotational basis aware to assist in completing the questionnaire. We can give a turn around time of 4 days after which you can come and collect at Reception.

Please advise if the above arrangement will assist or if you need contact of any of the Chapter 9 institutions for further engagement.

Regards,

Benny

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY 1.1. Introduction In today's growing global business environment, change has become the norm for organisations to sustain their existence and success. Amit (2018:3) describes organisational change as the process during which an organisation changes its structure, strategies, technologies, operational methods or organisational culture. Thus, when change occurs in any part of the organisation, it tends to disturb the old equilibrium, and necessitates the development of a new one (Aishu, n.d). The type and extent of the new equilibrium depends on the degree of change and its impact on the organisation. Studies show that the success rate in the implementation of large-scale organisational change initiatives ranges between 25% and 35% (Cmoe, 2018). This low success rate calls makes it imperative that any intended change initiatives must be carefully planned and executed by the management team, beginning with the clear perceptive of the categories of change and the preferred outcomes that fit with the competitive landscape (Smith, 2002). A thorough understanding of the categories of change and awareness of when best they apply will aid leadership in determining the correct route the business should follow. Marshak (1993) classified change into three types: Developmental change, transitional change and transformational change. Developmental change enhances already existing processes and procedures, where the change is not necessarily large-scale. Since it is generally not a significant change, it is the most common of all organisational changes. This form of change is seen by businesses as incremental improvements in response to a desire to increase efficiencies, rectify a discovered flaw, build on previous success, or widen the scope of the business offerings. Because developmental changes are usually gradual and non-disruptive, there is less resistance to them inside an organisation. These small improvements add up over time to provide favourable returns for the company, 1 which can compound to become a big value driver. Failure to respond to the need for improvement may have the reverse impact, resulting in market share loss over time (Marshak, 1993). Transitional change, according to Marshak (1993), recognises that in order to remain competitive in their industry, organisations must adapt frequently. The way the business runs today must be adapted or changed on a regular basis and in a way that is understood by the organisation's leadership. Allen (2007) suggested that in this kind of organisational change, the company is not charting unknown waters, but the change is bigger than those enhancements or improvements made during developmental change and therefore, may cause disruptions. Marshak (1993) added that these changes may also include acquisitions and mergers, or restoring and introducing major new systems and processes in the organisation. Thus, this kind of change may frequently have an impact on relationships within the organisation or with external stakeholders, the organisational culture, and job functions. Transitional change can also lead to and or involve substantial retraining in the organisation. Based on the the significance of this type of change, management must have clear strategies in place and proceed cautiously, while not becoming locked in a cycle of indecision that will lead to lost market opportunities. Transformational change, according to Marshak (1993), is a radical organisational strategy that usually involves major shifts in the organisation's underlying values and operating principles. When organisations launch a new range of products or enter new markets, encounter dramatic developments in technology, or new leadership ushers in structural and organisational culture overhauls, radical transformations occur (Marshak, 1993). Using a transformational change process, the organisation may decide to pursue a new mission, vision, or new values. As a result, a major disruption to the business will occur, and addressing it will require extraordinary management skills and expertise. Ultimately, the changes result in an organisation with a different identity and corporate culture (Marshak, 1993). According to Marshak (1993), transformational change is the less common of the types of organisational change in that organisations do not frequently undergo radical transformational change. 2 This is in line with the observation by McPheat (2009) that most changes in organisations are either developmental or transitional. Kelchner (2019) suggests that transitional changes may be the most common or the more obvious changes. Apart from these three change categories, which focus mainly on the drivers of change, organisational change can also be differentiated according to the content of the change. Amit (2018) identifies three main types of change: Business process re-engineering, technological change and incremental change. BPR (business process re-

engineering) is a business management strategy that was initially introduced in the early 1990s and focuses on the analysis and design of workflows and processes within a company. BPR attempts to assist businesses in rethinking how they operate or carry out their work in order to substantially increase customer service and become world-class competitors (Amit, 2018). As a result, BPR assists businesses in reorganizing their operations by focusing on the entire business process and how it functions from the ground up (Amit, 2018). The total process of creation, innovation, and diffusion of technology or processes is referred to as technological change (TC). The phrase is synonymous with technological advancement, achievement, and progress (Amit, 2018). In essence, TC refers to the creation of a technology (or a process or system), the continuing process of improving that technology (often making it cheaper or delivering an enhanced way of functioning), and its widespread adoption in industry and society. In a nutshell, technological advancement is recognised as being achieved by better and more technology being incorporated into existing operating processes (Amit, 2018). Incremental change, on the other hand, is a way of introducing numerous modest, incremental (and often unplanned) modifications to a project rather than a few major, quick (and meticulously planned) improvements (Amit, 2018). Thompson (2019) likens the rapid change in many organisations to a hurricane season, stating that it is always known to everybody that it is coming, but the only unknown is 3 "who it will hit this time". In today's fast-moving environment, any organisation that still hopes for the pace of change to slow down is likely to be confronted by the reality of being forced to change at one stage of the organisation's life cycle. The world is changing everyday, and so are customer trends, the population composition, technology and the economy. According to Agote, Aramburu, and Lines (2016), organisation's strategic transformation and development are challenging and complex topics that can be a difficult undertaking for many businesses. From micro businesses to giant corporations, all businesses will have to make changes at some point, and the best way to navigate these changes is through strong leadership, positive attitudes, and the ability to follow a change model. All three of these characteristics, according to Giauque (2015), are equally important when dealing with change and must be implemented. Management will not be able to encourage employees to accept and support change, if they there is a low staff morale, and it will be difficult to progress through change without motivated personnel. Employees and management must provide each other with the skills and motivation they need to follow a change model and accomplish the organisational shift.

1.2. Background to the Study

Change has become an integral aspect of the business world, and human activities are now surrounded by change in a variety of ways (Samuel-David, 2016). Traditional managers believe that their organisations are functioning in a relatively steady manner. They concentrate on how to rationalise and stabilise organisational knowledge to achieve optimal organisational performance. Organisational theory, on the other hand, has evolved to include more dynamic theories that applaud organisational transformation processes (Samuel-David, 2016). Caused by the global pressures on economies and businesses, strategic transformation within organisations has become unavoidable, and reaction to shifting needs becomes a significant issue (Weber and Camerer, 2003). Competition, technological advancement, innovation, expansion, product quality maintenance, mergers, changes in leadership and management styles, and a variety of other variables all contribute to the factors that have 4 an impact on change in today's organisations. Overall, the ability of an organisation to deal with change in an effective manner gives the organisation a competitive advantage (Madsen, Miller, and John, 2005). In progressive environments and agile organisations, employees see organisational change as an opportunity for growth rather than a risk. The extent to which individuals will personally gain or lose as a result of the change, as well as their perceptions of the actual substance and outcomes of the change initiative, are major predictors of their attitudes towards change and their level of resistance towards or acceptance of the change (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005).

1.3. Definitions of Key Terms

1.3.1. Employee perception

According to Robbins (2004:132), employee perception can be defined as a process by which employees organise and interpret their sensory impressions to give meaning to their working environment. Therefore, perception is not necessarily based on reality, but is merely a perspective from a particular employee's view of a situation. In dealing with the concept of organisational behaviour, perception becomes important, because people's behaviour is based on their perception of their sense of reality, and not on an abstract or objective reality.

1.3.2. Organisational strategic change

Moullin and Torres (2017) define organisational strategic change as the restructuring of an organisation's business or marketing plan that is typically designed to achieve an important objective. Such planned-for change might cause a shift in the organisation's policies, target market, mission or structure. Commented [MM1]: Beef up with sources

1.4. Problem Statement

Most past research studies on employees' reactions to organisational change had the propensity to focus on the negative elements or the rejection of change. Oreg (2006) underlined that there was a need to examine employees' subjective perceptions of change, but that this should include both, the positive and the negative perceptions. According to Ashford (1988), insights from prior studies will aid change agents in personalising their intervention efforts by revealing the precise aspects that contribute to employees' acceptance of, as well as opposition to, change. One of the drawback of past studies on organisational change was that researchers did not adequately account for individuals within different groups' perspectives and responses to organisational change, or the intergroup nature of organisational change (Jones, Gallios, Bordia, and Callan, 2004). Organisations offer members the opportunity to join several groups (for example, work units and divisions) that all contribute towards the employees' voice, where different groups of employees discuss the intended or executed change (Veldsman, 1995). Change is critical for any organisation (Rebeka and Indradevi, 2015), because fresh ideas stimulate growth for the organisations and their stakeholders. Employees' perceptions of change may be similar or dissimilar (Amit, 2018). Therefore, taking cognisance of employees' perception is a critical aspect in ensuring that organisational changes are implemented swiftly and effectively. Management, as well as all other stakeholders, benefit from an assessment of employees' perceptions and attitudes towards the change process. Therefore, studies on the relationship between employees' perceptions and corporate strategic change have gained popularity.

1.5. Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to assess the perceptions of employees in the CRL Commission (The Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Rights Commission) on the organisational strategic change in the past five years.

1.6. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows: ? To assess the attitude of employees belonging to different work experience groups towards strategic organisational change; ? To study employees' perceptions of organisational change with regard to their gender; ? To assess employees' perception of different designations towards organisational change.

1.7. Research Questions

The research questions of the study were as follows: ? ? ? What are the employees' perceptions about the organisational change? What is the impact of strategic change at the CRL Commission? What is the importance of employees' perceptions in an organisation such as the CRL Commission? ? ? ? What change practices are used at the CRL Commission? How does the CRL Commission ensure that the change practices are effective? How does changing the organisation ensure that the CRL Commission remains competitive? What are the effects experienced by the CRL Commission regarding employees' negative perceptions about the organisational changes?

1.8. Significance of the Study

This study has relevance to organisational change management, which considers the whole organisation and what needs to change. Organisational change management practices and principles include change management as a tool for change focused mostly on the individual, and how individuals and groups are affected by the organisation's transition. Managing organisational change is the process of foretelling and recognising change in an organisation in such a way as to lessen employee combat and cost to the organisation, while at the same time intensifying the value of the eventual change. Employees are an organisation's most essential and beneficial resource. Unlike previous eras when employees were considered merely a factor of production in the whole equation of organisations, today employees are recognised that they fulfil much more than such limited role. They present the organisation as its immense asset, and if managed properly, they can contribute to the effective transformation and long-term development of an organisation and its sustainability. Considering the important role employees hold in the organisations, it has to be borne in mind that their perceptions also affect their working relationship relating to the factors of organisational behaviour as individual, or as part of a group or structure (Robbins, 2004:2).

1.9. Scope of the Study

The focus of this study was on a selected constitutional body, namely the CRL Commission. The organisation is based in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. In this study, the focus was on the total organisation, including employees from top management, management and other employees.

1.10. Background and Definition of Terms

1.10.1. Strategic organisational change

An overview of literature agreed that there is inevitable change sweeping across the world which compels organisations to undergo strategic change. Richards (2019) suggests that the world is changing on a daily basis, and so are the population compositions,

the economy, and technology and customer trends. Powell and Mandell (2017) equate organisations that fail to embrace change to dinosaurs – out of touch and unable to compete under current trading conditions. Christensen and Tryggestad (2019) believe that acceptance of change is important to organisations, while Thompson (2019) states that without change, organisations would lose their competitive edge and fail to meet the ever-changing needs of customers. Agboola (2014) also points out that organisational change is necessary to meet consumers' needs. Organisational change happens in all the areas of an organisation. Organisational change in organisations that must compete in competitive marketplaces includes the introduction of new technology, job designs, workforce rearrangements, and downsizing. As a result, how an organisation manages change has a direct impact on the behaviour of its employees (Samuel-David, 2016).

1.10.2. Organisational strategic change at the CRL Commission in the past five years Section 181(1)(c) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides for the establishment of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities. (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996). The Commission was established in 2002 and is known as the CRL Commission. The CRL Commission's Annual Report (2019) highlights that the apartheid-era system had led to South Africa being divided on racial, ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic lines, and elevated ethnicity and race as instruments of division rather than being celebrated as a diverse and artistic tapestry of common humanity. As a result of the past apartheid system, the diverse religious, linguistic, cultural customs, experiences and expressions of African people were not freely expressed in the past, until the system was replaced by a full democracy in 1994. In its initial stages, that the CRL Commission struggled to fulfil its mandate and could have veered towards obscurity. However, in the past five years, the CRL Commission has increasingly become the point of entry on issues of culture, religion and language in South Africa Mkhwanazi-Xaluva (2019). The author suggests that the CRL Commission has increased its oversight work, made great improvements in the manner in which it implements its mandate, and increased its visibility to local communities and the broader South African nation. Mosoma (2019) suggests this was done through "a review of organisational vision, values and strategies, which include the identification of objectives and outcomes". This speaks to the implementation of transitional change and business process re-engineering as the type of change involved in the organisational strategic change that took place at the CRL Commission.

1.10.3. Employee's perceptions In the study of organisational strategic transformation, employees' perceptions and inferences have grown increasingly relevant (Benoy, 1996; Schneider and Bowen, 1995). Human resource (HR) practices have adapted accordingly, to include communication between the company and the employees (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). Such communication indicates an organisation's willingness to invest in its personnel, the employees' contribution to the company's added value, and how much the company cares about its employees' well-being. Employees should thus feel compelled to display positive attitudes and behaviours if they have a positive opinion of these HR procedures. Employees constantly construct perceptions and feel various emotions in the workplace, according to Amabile and Kramer (2007). These perceptions, emotions and beliefs have an impact on their motivation to work and, as a result, their performance. When employees' daily experiences include more positive experiences and attitudes, a higher 10 intrinsic drive, and more favourable opinions of their leaders, their job, teams, and organisations as a whole, their performance will be at its peak. Other scholars also stated that the HR department has a critical role to play in the employees' well-being, which should consist of guarding against management's indifference (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Francis and Keegan, 2006; Harris, 2007). According to Beatson et al. (2008), employees' fulfilment, devotion, and commitment can all be affected by organisational strategic change. Schneider and Bowen (1985) state that there is a documented positive association between how organisational strategic change is implemented and the employees' attitudes and behaviour. Extant literature, therefore, suggests that organisational strategic change and the manner in which the change takes place has a great influence on the employees' perceptions and attitudes in an organisation. Even though change is implemented for positive reasons, employees could respond negatively towards change and resist change efforts (Jones, 2015). It is thus important to understand employees' perceptions during organisational strategic change. Commented [MM2]: Add as much literature as possible to beef up this chapter.

1.11. Research Methodology and Design This section briefly deals with the methodology, with an emphasis on the study's research design, data collection technique, target population, questionnaire design, sample selection, and data analysis. The subject is, however, discussed in detail in Chapter 3 in this report.

1.11.1. Research design The methods used to gather data, the instruments used, and the data analysed are all part of a research design. Bhat (2019:1) describes research design as a researcher's choice of methodologies and procedures to combine varied components of research in a logical manner in order to efficiently solve the research issue. It elucidates 'how' to do research using a particular approach. The research design has a significant impact on 11 the dependability of the results obtained. It provides a firm foundation for the entire research, allowing the research operations to go smoothly, and it makes the research as efficient as possible by delivering maximum information with the least amount of effort, money, and time spent. According to Bhat (2019), a research design may be divided into two types: quantitative and qualitative. In circumstances where a researcher wants to gather multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations and documents, a qualitative research approach is used. Researchers rely on qualitative research design, with the goal of determining "why" a theory exists as well as "what" participants have to say about it. When it is critical for a researcher to have statistical conclusions to collect actionable insights, a quantitative research design is used. Numbers offer a clear viewpoint on which to base crucial business decisions. As is elaborated in the relevant chapter, the quantitative research design was chosen for this study, because it quantifies behaviours, opinions, attitudes and other variables and makes generalisations from a larger population (Formpl, 2019).

1.11.2. Data collection method A structured questionnaire was used as the primary method of data collection in this study. However, secondary data in the form of literature review was also used to guide paradigms, theories and approaches (see Chapter 3).

1.11.2.1. Primary data The two most widely used primary data gathering procedures refer to the use of a questionnaire and interview (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). Questionnaires and interviews allow researchers to ask participants questions to get answers to their research topics. Both questionnaires and interviews have unique characteristics that influence how they should be used for certain data collection purposes. The use of close-ended questions by primary sources is the first step or an empirical investigation. A questionnaire is an efficient data collection technique if the researcher understands the required outcomes and measures the variables of interest (Sekaran, 2003:89). According to Debois (2019), the benefits of using a questionnaire include that it is a practical and inexpensive tool, it allows for comparability, easy analysis and scalability, validity and 12 reliability. Constraints of the questionnaire include the lack of personalisation or in-depth interpretation, survey fatigue, and accessibility issues (Debois, 2019).

1.11.2.2. Secondary data collection Secondary data refers to data that was collected by someone other than the researcher. Common sources of secondary data for social science include censuses, information collected by government departments, organisational records and data that was originally collected for other research purposes (Johnson and Sylvia, 2018). Secondary data from other sources, which may already have been used in previous research, makes it easier to carry out further research. Administrative data and census data may cover both larger and much smaller samples of the population in detail. However, secondary data can present problems, because it may be out of date or inaccurate. In this research, secondary data pertains mainly to the reviewed literature.

1.11.3. Target population The target population for this study, constituted of all employees of the CRL Commission, which is based in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, in the Gauteng Province. Lavrakas (2008:1) stated that for a survey, the target population is the set of units for which the survey data are to be used to make inferences. The target population defines those units that the findings of the survey are meant to generalise. For this study, the target population was obtained from the HR department at the CRL Commission and it equated to (N = 33).

1.11.4. Sampling technique Trochim (2006:n.d.) stated that sampling is the process of selecting units such as people or organisations from a population of interest, so that by studying the sample one may generalise the results back to the population from which they were chosen. Surbhi 13 (2016:n.d.) categorizes sampling methods into two types: probability sampling and non- probability sampling. Probability sampling is a sampling technique in which all members of the target population have an equal chance of being included in the sample. This is based on the randomization rule, which states that every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen. Masteller (2014:n.d.) states that non-probability sampling is more commonly used for qualitative research, when the chances of being selected as a participant are not known. This leaves the selection at the discretion of the researcher and may not accurately represent the target population. Olorunfemi (2020) adds the census method, also called a complete enumeration survey method, wherein

the entire population is studied to collect the detailed data about every unit. Poudel (2017) suggests that this method ensures a higher degree of accuracy than the other techniques. It provides complete and is a very reliable method of data collection. This method was the chosen method for the CRL Commission, based on the organisation's small population. 1.11.5. Measurement instrument design and protocols The primary data was collected by the researcher using a structured questionnaire, which contained a series of questions for which the participants had to provide the answers (Bell, 2003:533). Kerwin (1999:1) provides a relatively restrictive definition of surveys, emphasizing the importance of respondents recording their own responses. A questionnaire can serve as an inductive method with the aim to formulate new theory, where open-ended questions are used to 'explore a substantive area' (Fournier and Gray, 2000:7). The questionnaire's development took into consideration the necessary guidelines from reputable sources (Edwards, 2000:1), which included closed-ended questions, using clear instruction that the participants may select more than one response option. The Likert scale format was used for the answer options, balanced on both sides of a neutral option, thus creating a less biased measurement (George, 2000:10). 1.11.6. Analysis of the data The replies to the closed-ended structured quantitative questionnaire were used to produce a data set. The raw data for the demographic factors was translated into descriptive statistics. The information was organized and summarized in graphs, and descriptive statistics were used to examine the sample's makeup and characteristics (De Vos et al., 2007:169). (For the full detail, see the chapter that presents the findings). 1.11.7. Reliability and validity According to McLeod (2013:1), the consistency of a research study or measuring test is referred to as dependability in research. Kelly (1927:14) argues nearly a century ago that a test is valid if it measures what it claims to measure. In this study, the principles of reliability and validity were used to assess the research's quality. They describe how precisely a method, approach, or test measure something. The accuracy of a measurement is referred to as validity. Validity is more crucial to a study's conclusions than dependability, despite the fact that it is more difficult to assess. The researcher ensured reliability by checking the consistency of results over time, across different observers, and across different parts of the test. The validity of the results was determined by examining how well they corresponded to established theories and other measures of the same concept. (Middleton, 2019). 1.11.8. Ethical considerations and confidentiality According to Grady (2010:1122), social research entails the interaction of ideas and evidence. Researchers utilise evidence to extend, amend, and test ideas, and ideas assist social researchers to make sense of evidence. These include the following: ? Participation is voluntary, and participants have the option to withdraw either partially or completely from the procedure; ? Participants' consent and the possibility of deception; ? Maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of data provided by individuals or identifiable participants; ? Privacy of potential and actual participants; ? Effects on participants of how one uses, analyses, and reports one's data; and ? Behaviour and objectivity of participants. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by placing the questionnaires at the reception area of the CRL Commission, where the employees completed them without supervision or assistance. They did not record their names, thus remained anonymous to the researcher, allowing the researcher to remain unbiased and objective. 1.12. STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTERS Chapter 1 presented the introduction of the study. This included the background to the research problem and a brief review of the literature investigated. The purpose of the study, the problem statement, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, the research objectives, the research questions, and the research methodology and design were also presented in this chapter. Chapter 2 comprises the literature review. It covers an overview of the relevant literature pertaining to the variables identified in Chapter 1 in the problem statement. The researcher used secondary sources to compile the literature review. Chapter 3 explains the research methodology employed in the study in detail. It explains the relevant methodology for the study, the target population and the way in which the sample was drawn. The chapter provides an overview of the study's quantitative components. Chapter 4 presents a discussion of the results of the study. Chapter 5 comprises a summary and discussion of the study, conclusions and recommendations. 1.13. CONCLUSION This chapter served as an introduction and overview to the research. It offered a context for the survey by concentrating on the CRL Commission's specific issues in terms of the importance of their employees' views. In addition, the research's problem statement was examined, underlining the necessity for studies on strategic change in emerging economies. The study's justification was presented in terms of its possible future relevance for informed strategic change implementation in a South African setting. The research objectives were stated with reference to both theoretical and empirical goals. The study's scope and delimitations established the variables that would influence the outcome. In conclusion, the structure of the chapters was provided to demonstrate how the information and findings will be reported. 17 CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW 2.1. Introduction The study's literature review is discussed in this chapter. The chapter examines existing and available information on the impact of employees' perceptions of organizational strategic change as covered by various scholars. Organisational strategic change, employees' views, and specifically, organisational strategic change at the CRL Commission in the last five years are all addressed in the literature. 2.1.1. Organisational strategic change The concept of 'organizational change' has been described as clearly conceptualized in terms of both its method, which refers to how change occurs, and its content, which refers to what changes occur in the organization (Arsaelsson, 2013, citing Barnett and Carroll, 1995). It refers to the process of constantly renewing an organization's direction, structure, and human resource management in a changing environment, in order for the business and organizational changes to be successful and the desired outcomes to be achieved (Berns, 2007). Numerous aspects play a role in successful organisational transformation. Change is an ever-present characteristic of organisational life, both at an operational and a strategic level. Thus, it is critical for a company to be able to have clear strategic goals and plans in place and how to manage the change required to get there (Theodorsdottir, 2013). Much of the work on organisational transformation in organisational theory has concentrated on the content of change rather than the method of change (Arsaelsson, 2013). Scholars such as Rafferty (2013) argues that in an increasingly fast-changing environment, organisations can no longer afford not to change, and are obliged to change in order to survive. Acquisitions and mergers, restructuring and downsizing, expansions, organisational culture shifts and technological shifts are all examples of these developments. Rebeka and Indradevi (2015) suggest that organisational transformation occurs when an organisation evolves from its current state to a preferred opportunity. Managing organizational change is the act of anticipating and implementing change in an organization in such a way that costs and employee frustration are minimized while the benefits of the change are maximized. Organisational change occurs frequently as a consequence to an ever-changing environment or as a response to a present pressing problem (Rebeka and Indradevi, 2015). Employees might experience both positive and negative feelings as a result of organisational change, since companies that undergo organisational change are either constantly reorganising or re-engineering themselves, or even downsizing, and deploying new technologies to survive and remain competitive. According to Vakola (2004), these ongoing and seemingly infinite efforts can place a significant strain on the performance of these organizations as well as the individuals who work within them. The reviewed literature appears to concur that change is unavoidable, forcing organisations to take stock of where they are and where they wish to be in future, and then make the necessary strategic changes. According to Richards (2019), the world is changing on a daily basis: the population compositions, customer patterns, technology, and the economy are all changing. Thus, organisations that refuse to adapt to change or even initiate change and become agile, can easily wind up as dinosaur – out of touch and unable to compete in today's market. Scholars agree that change and transformation are vital and necessary for the organisations' sustainability. Thompson (2019) states that change is critical for any organisation, otherwise they would lose their competitive edge and be unable to meet the ever-changing needs of their client base. Agboola (2014) also emphasises the importance of change within an organisation in order to match consumer demands. Theories about how organizations evolve over time are frequently based on a lifecycle or development paradigm, which assumes that as organizations grow in size, a specific transformation, such as a shift in managerial control from direct to informal, must occur (Barnett and Carroll, 1995). According to Theodorsdottir (2013), organisational routines are an internal component that defines what the organisation knows. She goes on to say that routine-based management and transformation models have a tendency to focus on the consequences of routine changes, such as disruption and loss of competency. As a result, if stable and repeatable routines are the foundation for dependable performance, organizational change can increase the likelihood of failure because such routines fall away. According to the literature, the net consequences of organisational change are highly dependent on time (Amburgey et al., 1993). Studies on organisational change also demonstrate that change can be adaptive, but only when the organisation had enough time to

rectify the problems caused by disruption. If change occurs too frequently, this recovery may never occur, and then the organisations that change frequently will repeatedly have to reset their newness liability (Amburgey et al., 1993). It is apparent that organisational change has an impact not only on strategies and other strictly organisational issues, but also on the personnel. Therefore, during an organisational transition, the attention will also have to be on managing employees' emotions about the changes taking place. 2.1.2. Employees' perceptions Smit (2007) defines perception as a process through which people organise and interpret sensory experiences to make sense of their immediate environments. He emphasised the importance for a manager to understand that what employees see differs from objective truth, and that individuals react to what they perceive as reality rather than to facts. He adds that no two persons are the same, and that differences in age, gender, mental status, or the number of dependents can make a visible difference to perceptions, while disparities in emotional intelligence, intellectual capacity, personality, learning experiences, values, attitudes and motivation are difficult to distinguish. Therefore, he concludes that managers must understand people's complexities and, as a result, their various interpretations of reality. Johnson and Scholes (2007) state that change begins with the impression of its necessity, and the first barrier to change is a faulty view. Managers in change of change vastly underestimate the level according to which employees comprehend the need for change, 20 what such change is meant to accomplish and what is involved in the change or what it will cause. In their study on change perception, Prasad and Sayeed (2006) discover a link between individual and organisational change by establishing that individuals' effective states and positive perceptions of organisational characteristics directly control the very foundation of transformational processes. Therefore, employees are at the core of the success or failure of every organisation, and as a result, it is critical for management to appropriately and effectively understand their employees' emotions and motivate them to buy-in to any intended change. In a study on organisational strategic transformation, employees' perceptions and inferences have grown increasingly relevant (Benoy, 1996; Schneider and Bowen, 1995). According to Guzzo and Noonan (1994), HR practices include the important aspect of communication between the organisation and the employees. These send a message to the employees about how much the organisation is willing to invest in its employees, whether they perceive them as a valuable asset to the organisation, and care about their well-being. When employees have a favourable opinion of their employer and HR practices, they feel obligated to respond fairly by exhibiting favourable attitudes and behaviour. Employees hold a range of views and feel various emotions in the workplace (Amabile and Kramer, 2007). From time to time, these perceptions and emotions have an impact on their motivation to work and consequently, their performance. When employees have more positive emotions, stronger intrinsic motivation, and more positive perceptions of their work, leaders, teams, and organizations as a whole, their performance will be at its peak. In his study, Min (2006) found that in order for change to be successful, managers must be aware of their employees' reactions to change at all times. Managers must also understand their employees' acceptance and desire to adapt and support change (Min, 2006) if they wish to avoid poor customer service. 21 Other authors confirmed that the HR department has a crucial role to play in the lives of employees, which should not only deal with contracts and grievances or promotions, but also consist of protecting employees from management's indifference (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Francis and Keegan, 2006; Harris, 2007). Beatson et al. (2008) claim that organisational strategic change has an impact on employees' happiness, loyalty and commitment. According to Schneider and Bowen (1985), there is a proven positive association between the manner in which organisational strategic change is implemented and the employees' attitudes and behaviour. These debates on change and employees' perceptions regarding such change suggest that change can sometimes begin with an incorrect initial impression regarding the necessity of such change, and that the first barrier to change is a faulty initial perspective or interpretation of what had been communicated. As a result, management's better understanding of how employees develop certain perceptions of and reactions to change can lead to the development of a strategy that motivates everyone to work towards the organisation's common goals. Developing a sense of unity across all levels of the organisation that allows all staff members to see things the same way is critical, because it can result in the organisation's desired objectives being met, which in turn, can contribute to the successful change implementation. Burnes (2004) refers to it as the "critical mass" of individuals or groups whose active commitment is required to generate the energy for change to take place. The extant literature implies that organisational strategic change has a significant impact on employee views, and in turn, their interpretations, perceptions and views will have an impact on their behaviour and actions. Employees may react negatively to change and reject change attempts, even if it is implemented for constructive reasons (Jones, 2015). This emphasises the need of comprehending employees' attitudes throughout any planned organisational change. 22

2.1.3. Organisational strategic change at the CRL Commission in the past five years The CRL Commission has only been in existence for 15 years. Yet, it is increasingly becoming the focal point on cultural, religious and language conflicts in South Africa. There is not much literature available on the CRL Commission, owing to its relatively short existence. However, the available literature suggests that the past five years have seen it grow in status among the Chapter 9 institutions. Mkhwanazi-Xaluva (2019) suggests that the CRL Commission has increased its oversight work in the past five years, made great improvements in the manner in which it implements its mandate, and increased its visibility to local communities and the broader South African nation. Mosoma (2019) suggests this was done through a review of the organisational values, vision, mission and strategies, which include the identification of goals and outcomes. Mafadza (2019) outlines the five strategic objectives of operational excellence, including a number of sub-components. Among them are: Putting community councils into operation; increasing marketing; effective investigation and conflict resolution; and research and development. The organisation's ultimate purpose is to enable all citizens and communities to work together in peace and harmony. The CRL Commission developed a scorecard that would help it become more service delivery oriented and help to meet the expectations of the community. Mafadza (2019) also suggested that the CRL Commission should split its leadership into organisational and operational functions, each of which took a distinctive approach (Mafadza, 2016). As a result, the Commission formed strategic collaborations with a number of institutions of higher learning. Some of these collaborations were formalised through the signing of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) that required colleges to develop cultural, religious and linguistic rights chapters. The Commission helps these colleges bridge the gap between theory and practice through these partnerships, so that research is not simply theoretical but also practical regarding concerns of culture, religion, and languages in all their forms (Mafadza, 2019). All these changes speak to the business process re-engineering as a category of change involved in the organisational strategic change that took place at the CRL Commission. 23

2.2. Theoretical Framework According to HR scholars, the following theories can explain the causes of organizational change: The social exchange theory, the model of planned change theory, Kotter's 8-step model theory and the rational choice theory. 2.2.1. The social exchange theory The main proponent for this theory was Blau (1964), who described the social exchange theory as a valuable framework for analysing social relationships. This theory underpins many trust theories, because it assumes that trust develops through the frequent exchange of advantages between two people. This theory can be used to investigate the motivating mechanisms that lead to the start of trustworthy behaviour. A social exchange occurs when one person freely delivers a benefit to another, triggering the other party's obligation to reciprocate by delivering a benefit in return. When developing such social exchange ties, demonstrating one's trustworthiness can be difficult. Blau (1964) claims that trust can be built in two ways, by fulfilling responsibilities on a regular basis (for example, reciprocating for advantages obtained from others) or by gradually expanding exchanges over time (Blau, 1964). There are both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards in a social interaction (for example, getting information or advice from someone). Extrinsic rewards include pay raises, bonuses, and benefits, while intrinsic rewards include a sense of proud, personal fulfilment from completing an activity ad feeling like an important part of a team. Social interaction is casual, and benefits are rarely discussed. According to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), subordinates who have faith in their superiors are more likely to have a positive exchange relationship. These conversations instil a sense of obligation in the subordinates toward their superior, and the subordinates expect the same from their superior. 24

2.2.2. The model of planned change theory Lewin's endeavour to comprehend the complexities of group behaviour resulted in his development of this model. He saw behaviour as a collection of intentions and forces that influenced both collective and individual behaviour. Any change in behaviour, he claimed, was due to changes in these forces (Lewin, 1946). This model of planned change defines social institutions as a balance of forces, some driving change and others impeding it (Lewin, 1951). Within organizations, these two forces interact in a dynamic way, eventually reaching an equilibrium. An imbalance in this equilibrium can

cause tension, which can lead to change. Unfreezing, changing, and refreezing are the three different operations in the model. Unfreezing is prompted by a dissatisfaction with one's current behaviour and a desire to change it. Human behaviour is stabilised by a quasi-stationary equilibrium supported by driving and restraining forces (Lewin, 1951). This balance is critical, since transformation requires it to be destabilised under difficult psychological situations, resulting in a state of instability, according to Lewin (1951). The insecurity of current behaviour, on the other hand, aids in the reduction of resistance to change. To put it another way, unfreezing the tradition would be enough to overcome internal opposition to further forces of change or reduce resistance (by educating employees on the need for change). When there is enough unhappiness with the current situation, change occurs. It is then time to assess what needs to change and thereafter put the change or changes in place to achieve a new standard of behaviour. This is where the real transformation happens. Training new behaviour patterns, changing managerial methods, and modifying reward systems can all help to influence the direction of change. When change continues until a new balance between driving and restraining forces is achieved, this is referred to as refreezing. The quasi-stationary equilibrium is re-established in this final phase. The new behaviour becomes established, stable, or habitual. The new processes are expected to be adopted, and what was learned in the previous steps will then be put into practice on the job (Durmaz, 2007). This theory functions as a step guide to describe the organisational transformation process and provides a basic foundation for it. 25

2.2.3. Kotter's 8-step model As the name implies, Kotter (1996) is the proponent of this theory and he claims that in order to maximise the likelihood of successful transition, organisations must go through a succession of changes. The first step is to create a sense of urgency, which is crucial, especially early on in the process, in persuading employees that change is necessary. A lack of this, according to Kotter (1996), will lead to resistance, making the implementation process more difficult. It is critical to effectively communicate the need for change as well as the potential advantages to employees in order to motivate and enhance the employees' support for the change endeavour. As the second step, it is necessary to form a guiding coalition, which emphasises the necessity for change strategists to assemble a group of individuals whose role it will be to articulate the goal, plan and prospective advantages of the change. They must be individuals, also referred to as champions, who are devoted to the change and can pass that commitment on to others. This stage emphasises the need of finding the correct combination of competence and status, as elements such as hierarchy, area of specialty, leadership, and perceived integrity all play a role in communicating with the rest of the organisation. The third step refers to the importance of working with clearly defined goals and objectives when it comes to the change process, emphasised by the requirement to build a vision and strategy. In reality, according to Kotter (1996), most change programmes fail because of ambiguous objectives, a lack of planning, and a failure to implement contingency plans. The fourth step states that the change vision must be conveyed so that everyone understands why the proposed change is required. Employees' commitment is required, which can only be achieved through effective and clear communication as well as participation. Fifth, action must be enabled, empowered and supported to promote change, overcome obstacles, and establish a channel of communication among members of the organisation. This necessitates top-level support as well as an incentive for staff to provide constructive comments. 26 Sixth, because a change process can be a long and difficult experience for employees, defining short-term goals is essential. Victories in the short term can assist build momentum in the early stages by indicating that progress is being accomplished. It can also boost staff morale, because completing modest goals gives individuals a sense of success, which encourages them to complete the assignment. Seventh, it is critical to gauge success by consolidating gains and thereby achieve greater change, but it is also critical to reconsider your aims and ambitions once the existing ones have been fulfilled. If goals are not accomplished, the causes behind this failure or shortcoming must be investigated, and a new plan of action must be implemented. Finally, it involves establishing new approaches as cultural norms. Kotter highlights the importance of cementing a successful change, similar to Kurt Lewin's "freeze" concept. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, but the most important, according to Kotter, is to try to integrate the changes into the organisation's culture (Kotter, 1996). According to this theory, organisational change has an impact not only on strategies and other strictly organisational issues, but also on the individual employees. As a result, during organisational change, the attention should not only be on change implementation challenges, but also on managing employees' perceptions and emotions.

2.2.4. The rational choice theory The proponent of this theory is George Homans, who first proposed it in 1961. It propagates that people act in certain ways, because they believe the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs. Individuals must calculate, which course of action is best for them, based on the outcomes of other courses of action, according to this notion. According to rational choice theorists, the same general principles apply to understanding human interactions as they do to economic theories that examine how commodities and services are produced, distributed, and consumed using money. The rational choice theory is based on the assumption that all acts are inherently 'rational'. It differs from other theories in that it denies the reality of any actions other than those 27 that are completely logical and calculative. It claims that all social behaviour is logically driven. Rational choice theory also claims that complex social events can be explained in terms of individual acts, which leads to methodological individualism, and holds that individual human activity is the fundamental unit of social life. However, the theory fails to explain collective behaviour; that is, if individuals make decisions based solely on personal profit, it is difficult to understand why they would choose something that benefits others more than themselves. As a result, this theory is overly individualistic and falls short of adequately explaining and accounting for the emergence of larger social institutions. This theory also fails to explain why some people appear to embrace and obey social norms of behaviour, causing them to act selflessly or to feel a sense of obligation that outweighs their self-interests. (Kang'ethe, 2015).

2.3. Application of the Theory to the Study The goal of this study was to determine the influence of organisational change on employees' perceptions, using the planned change theory paradigm. In many ways, the theory guided this study. First, the theory considers that when employees believe that their employer recognises their efforts, the employees will respond with a positive attitude and behaviour that will benefit the company (Goulder, 2005). It also takes into account the fact that employees are motivated to strike a balance between what they perceive to be their inputs or assistance and what they perceive to be their outputs, such as applying a lot of effort, their skill level, tolerance, and excitement, and what they see as their rewards, such as salary, benefits, and so forth (Robbins, 2005). Finally, the theory proposed that employees who have favourable impressions of their employer and the organisation will feel the need to respond by displaying positive attitudes and behaviour. Overall, the theory proposed that if an employer provides pleasant working environment that make employees happy, they will be more dedicated to going above and beyond what is expected of them from their employer as a form of reciprocity. 28 Lewin's change management theory (1946) helps account for both the uncertainty and resistance to change that can be felt at all levels of an organisation. Employees' resistance to change, a general suspicion of unproven methods, and the fear of abandoning what has worked in the past are just a few of the barriers to change implementation (Lucid Content Team, n.d). To ensure that everyone involved understands the need for change, organisations' management must first 'unfreeze' the existing processes and examine how it may be improved. Thereafter, the organisation can implement the planned modifications and assist staff with the transition. Management must consolidate or 'refreeze' the new status quo once modifications have been implemented and refined in response to employee feedback (Sharma, 2019).

29 CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 3.1. Introduction The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the methodology chosen for the study, the quantitative component of the study.

3.2. Research Design There are two well recognised techniques to research design, namely qualitative research and quantitative research (Saunders et al., 2003:97). The quantitative method was employed in this study in order to acquire relevant and accurate data. Quantitative research is an investigation into a specific subject based on the testing of a hypothesis, which is then quantified and analysed using statistical methods. The goal of this type of research is to collect a measurable amount of data about a social or human concern. To investigate social phenomena, quantitative techniques include the use of numerical measures and measurement statistical analysis (Hussey and Collis, 2007:56).

3.3. Research Method Quantitative research is based on the use of numbers and measures, and includes a well-defined data collection procedure (Edwards, 2010:8). Gil and Johnson (2001:1) explain that quantitative research aims to build informal associations. The researcher in the quantitative paradigm requires a well-defined plan for completing the research and is more involved in the data collection process (Brannen, 2005:173). Because of the nature of the investigation, a quantitative descriptive technique was used to collect, code, analyse, and characterise the huge amounts of data obtained. Quantitative research is widely used in psychology, sociology, and marketing as a way to

provide evidence that a hypothesis is correct. This method of research seeks out facts before suggesting an outcome (Garage, 2020). The quantitative technique enables the results of the analysed surveys to be confidently generalised to the intended audience as a whole (Brannen, 2005:179). Benefits of quantitative research include that this method allows the researcher to reach a larger sample size, one can collect information quickly when using quantitative research, especially if the survey is conducted online. The approach uses randomised samples, it can focus on facts or a series of information, the research performed with quantitative approach is anonymous and quantitative research does not require direct observation to be useful (Miller, 2020).

3.4. Research Strategy According to Krishnaswami and Ranganatham (2007:45), the adequacy of the method used determines the quality of a research project. As a result, when choosing a research approach for a topic, caution has to be exercised. According to Bhattacharyya (2003:107), a survey is a fact-finding investigation and a research approach that involves gathering data directly from a population or a sample of that population at a specific period. This information can be gathered in a variety of methods, such as by observation, interviews, or the use of questionnaires. Closed-ended structured questionnaires were a reasonably reliable approach for collecting data from the CRL Commission's staff. Such questionnaires consist of a set of questions that are sent to or handed to a group of people for answers, and the results are tabulated and statistically tested (Shajahan, 2004:86). McBurney (2001:96) states that in order to meet the objectives of the study, the researcher should use a quantitative design that allows the research to be carried out as efficiently as possible, providing the most information with the least amount of work, time, and money spent.

3.5. Data Collection

3.5.1. Primary data

Primary data is obtained through direct observation of the phenomenon under investigation or through personal collection (Welman, Kruger, and Mitchell, 2005). After the researcher has gained some insight into the problem by reviewing secondary data or analyzing previously collected data, primary data is frequently sourced (Creswell, 2003:170). According to Andrew and Halcomb (2009), the researcher is in charge of gathering primary data for a specific purpose. Creswell (2003:171), on the other hand, claims that primary data is costly to collect and manage. Interviews, personal or telephone contacts, emailed surveys, and self-administered surveys are all examples of primary data collection methods (Welman et al., 2005:88). In this study, a closed-ended structured quantitative questionnaire was used. A quantitative research method is closed-ended or structured questionnaires (Durkheim, 1858-1917). It is a positivist research approach with a minimal level of researcher engagement and uses a large number of participants. People are more likely to answer questions on sensitive topics when self-administering questionnaires. These questionnaires inspire less irrelevant or clouded answers, and they inspire less articulate participants to partake in the survey, and do not rely on prior knowledge and feelings of the interviewees (Debois, 2019).

3.5.2. Secondary data

According to Hussey and Collis (2007:198), secondary data is information gathered by the researcher while conducting research. Secondary data analysis allows the researcher to save time that would otherwise be spent gathering information. The fact that most of the underlying work has already been done by others, such as literature reviews, case studies, published texts, scrolling the internet, and studying certified publications, is an obvious advantage of using secondary data. Secondary data is information that has previously been gathered from other sources by others. This data is less expensive and easier to collect than original data (Sekaran, 2003:75). According to Hussey and Collis (2007:199), secondary data is inexpensive, saves time and effort, helps to make primary data collection more specific and in line with other secondary data, aids in improving understanding of the problem, and provides a basis for comparison for the data collected by the researcher. This type of material was mostly used as a literature review in this investigation.

3.6. The Administration of the Questionnaires

Before the administration of questionnaire, the researcher sent a letter to the CRL Commission requesting permission to conduct the research. A few weeks later, permission was granted by the CRL Commission for the researcher to conduct the study. Thereafter, the researcher sent out the questionnaire to the employees to complete via email. However, because a large number of employees were working from home, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic's regulations, the researcher was advised to hand deliver the questionnaires to the CRL Commission's offices in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, together with a clear instruction to the Receptionist that turnaround for collection of the completed questionnaires was four days. However, as employees were working on a rotational basis, necessitated by the Covid-19 regulations, it took longer than the stipulated days to receive all completed questionnaires back.

3.7. Questionnaire

Tashakkori and Teddie (2010:803) define a questionnaire as a group of questions on a form that participants fill out in response to a research project, designed to enable the researcher to implement scientific methods and collect data from the participants. Bergmen (2008:192) define it as a data collection approach, the most widely utilised instrument of all is the questionnaire. Closed-ended questions have a limited set of possible answers. They are often suitable for surveys, because they lead to higher response rates when users do not have to type or write out answers, but are able to 'tick' their chosen answer among pre-stated options. Also, answers to closed-ended questions can easily be analysed statistically (Farrell, 2016). For these reasons, the researcher developed a closed-ended structured quantitative questionnaire.

3.7.1. Brief perspectives on the use of questionnaires

According to Bryman (2012:1), a questionnaire is used to collect data for a study, and the process is guided by the study's objectives. Alexander et al. (2008:38) state that a questionnaire is one of the most prevalent data collection instruments. Rowley (2014:308) describes a questionnaire as a structured series of questions for acquiring information from participants, which Rowley considers the primary method of collecting quantitative primary data. Bakker et al. (2013:464) emphasise that the questionnaire should also meet the assumptions that surveys are built on, such as the participants' ability to read and comprehend the questions; their ability to supply the information required to answer the questions; their willingness to answer the questions; and their interest in the research's outcome and its implications for the betterment of society.

3.7.2. Guidelines followed in developing the questionnaire

While Thompson and Seber (1996:106) state that responding to a questionnaire is entirely voluntary, a questionnaire must be well-designed, because it is extremely rare for the researcher to be able to repeat the survey if the researcher later discovers that the questionnaire was incomplete or that an important topic was missed (Cameron, 2011:245). According to Bazeley (2010:431), good questionnaires accomplish the research objectives, gather valid and trustworthy data from participants, enable data processing, and attain and retain the participants' involvement. Shields and Rangarjan (2013:156) contend that a good questionnaire should be developed to keep participants interested; thus, the questionnaire in this study was designed to be professional and provide exact and clear instructions on how to respond to the questions. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014:1) recommend that to make a questionnaire easier to read, it must be separated into logical sections. Ernest (2011:223) asserts that when creating a questionnaire, the researcher has to avoid questions that are double-barrelled, biased, sensitive, leading, or negative in nature.

3.7.3. Advantages of a structured questionnaire

According to Thompson and Seber (1996:108), a structured questionnaire permits the researcher to contact a large number of participants quickly. Lieber and Weisner (2010:560) add that structured questionnaires with closed-ended questions are reasonably simple to construct, code, and understand. Ivankova, Creswell, and Stick (2006:9) state that the structured questionnaire is simple to standardize because each participant is asked the same question in the same way. The researcher can be confident that all of the sample participants will answer the same questions, making this a reliable research method (Harden and Thomas, 2010:749). Combs and Onwuegbuzie (2010:1) contend that a structured questionnaire places a smaller cognitive load on the participant and minimises the amount of thinking required, resulting in higher levels of replies and more accurate data. A closed-ended structured questionnaire was constructed for this study, taking into account the target population and the sample size chosen.

3.7.4. Design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire's architecture and design underwent multiple revisions prior to its finalisation, requiring a significant amount of time for modification before the final research instrument was produced. This study's questionnaire included a mix of structured and open-ended questions. The questions were designed to focus on a specific topic in order to get precise data that could be analysed statistically. The questionnaire included single response statements with nominal and ordinal categories, as well as scaled questions. Participants were given a variety of options to choose from when answering the single response questions. For the scaled questions, a five-point Likert scale was used to elicit the degree of agreement or disagreement, with a neutral column provided for each of a series of statements relating to the main theme. According to Ivankova et al. (2006:15), the Likert scale is widely used because of its ability to examine attitudes, beliefs, and views. The Likert scale was used to connect the study objectives and the exploratory model.

3.7.5. An overview of the final questionnaire

This study's instrument was a pre-coded structured questionnaire that was carefully designed to elicit as many responses as possible, while also obtaining complete data. The questionnaire (

[Annexure B](#)) consisted of 30 [statements and comprised](#) the following [sections](#): ? [Section A](#): Demographic [questions](#); ? [Section B](#): Employees' perceptions; ? [Section C](#): Organisational strategic change; ? [Section D](#): Employees' perceptions, organisational strategic change and the CRL Commission. For sections B to D, a brief definition by an author was highlighted on the top to reinforce the understanding of the concepts. 3.8. Target Population [According to Patton \(2015:1\)](#), [the actual specification of a sample must start with the identification of a population to be surveyed](#). Corbin (2015:1) [clarifies that the target population refers to the group of people who form the object of the survey and from which conclusions are drawn. A population can also be described as finite or infinite \(Patton, 2015:1\). A finite population has a limited or fixed number of individuals or objects, while an infinite population has an unlimited or non-fixed number of individuals or objects \(Corbin and Strauss, 2015:1\). Caracelli and Greene \(1997:23\) state that during the sample selection process, the researcher must anticipate decisions that are likely to arise and participants must have the information and specific features or characteristics for their responses to be meaningful. A population is a mass of individual units that is homogeneous \(Greene, 2008:12\). Corbin \(2015:1\) states that while the population is divided into multiple strata, the units within each stratum should be as homogeneous as feasible. Because of time and financial constraints, it is often not practical to investigate the entire population. However, if the population is smaller in size, as was the case in this study, then it is feasible to cover the complete population \(Lowenthal and Leech, 2009:205\). The target population for this study comprised all line workers and support staff members of the CRL Commission based in Braamfontein, Johannesburg. This is referred to as the total population \(Glen, 2018\). It is also referred to as survey \(Lavrakas, 2008:1\) or census \(Olorunfemi, 2020\). The total population provides the researcher with the opportunity to obtain better \[insights into a target population than partial samples would be\]\(#\) capable of. This \[also eliminates the risk of a biased sample selection that is often encountered in random study samples\]\(#\) \(Glen, 2018\). \[The source list of the target population was obtained from an internal staff list provided by the HR department at the CRL Commission. The identified total target population equated to \\(N = 33\\). The census method was the most accurate and suitable for the CRL Commission, because of the organisation's manageable population.\]\(#\) 3.9. Validity \[Blumberg et al. \\(2005:56\\) define validity as the degree to which a measuring instrument achieves its intended purpose. It also refers to how well it corresponds with a criterion that is not related to the instrument. Validity is the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it was supposed to measure. The research questionnaire's validity decides whether the study measures what it claims to measure \\(Saunders et al., 2009:95\\). Asking the proper questions in a clear way is critical to a questionnaire's validity and this has to ensure that questions measure the important components of the investigation's goal. Terms must be carefully defined so that all participants understand what they mean \\(Cohen and Marion, 2003\\). Researchers can never be confident that an educational or psychological measuring instrument will measure what it is supposed to measure accurately and consistently. \\(Norval, 2006\\), thus they have to take all steps to test the questions and carefully analyse all results. Shajahan \\(2004\\) states that validity is an essential property of the measuring equipment. The closed-ended questionnaire was written in plain English so that any member of the team could understand it. The questionnaire's questions were written in such a way that the responses could be collated and statistically tested \\(Shajahan, 2004:86\\).\]\(#\) 3.10. Reliability Trochim \(2006:109\) defines measuring instrument dependability as whether or not the \[results of the measuring processes are consistent when they should be consistent\]\(#\). According to \[Burns and Bush \\(2010:73\\), reliability is a statistical concept associated with consistency and dependability, or the consistency in obtaining the same relative answer when measuring constant events. According to Norval \\(2006:13\\), questionnaires serve a certain function. Questionnaires are often one-time data collecting methods with a short lifespan that are given to a small group of people. The questionnaire was structured into four sections, and each section was meant to produce consistency, while addressing the aim of the study. The closed-ended nature of questions made answers by the participants easier to complete, which inspired fewer irrelevant or clouded answers.\]\(#\) 3.11. \[Data Collection Method The researcher had intended to hand-deliver questionnaires to the participants, using the personal method for data collection. According to De Vos et al. \\(2007:154\\), when using the personal method, a questionnaire is handed to the participants who will complete it in their own time, but the researcher is available to assist in case problems are experienced.\]\(#\) However, in this study, the questionnaire was placed at the reception area of the CRL Commission, because staff members were in the office on a rotational basis. The 38 researcher collected the completed questionnaires a number of days later. 3.12. Data Analysis De Vos et al. \(2007:169\) describe that \[the process of giving order, structure and meaning to a large amount of data is known as data analysis. The collected data was edited or cleaned, coded, classed, and evaluated for completeness and consistency of information, and descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse it. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences \\(SPSS\\) version 15 for Windows.\]\(#\) 3.13. Ethical Considerations Yip et al. \(2016:684\) state that \[there are various reasons why it is critical to follow ethical guidelines in research. First, set norms foster research goals such as knowledge, truth, and error avoidance. Second, because research frequently entails considerable collaboration and coordination among different persons from various fields, ethical norms encourage values such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness, which are critical to collaborative work.\]\(#\) Finally, numerous ethical protocols aid in the researcher's ability to be held accountable to the public. According to Dich, McKee, and Porter \(2013:1\), participants may have a variety of queries about the research that they have been requested to participate in. To address such potential concerns, a covering letter was assigned to each questionnaire to introduce the participant to the research and the questionnaire for this purpose. George \(2016:15\) identifies a number of aspects, for example, the topic, the need for the investigation, anonymity, confidentiality and ethical protocols, which have to be included in the covering letter to address ethical considerations and transparency. According to Andrew and Halcomb \(2009:217\), participants' \[rights to self-determination and full disclosure should be reinforced by the researcher. Participants were fully informed about the nature and importance of the research and each participant was in a position to decide whether or not to participate in the study.\]\(#\) Participants also had leverage 39 to withdraw from the study at any time without any reason. Participants were not asked to write their names when filing in the questionnaire to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. By completing the questionnaire on a voluntary basis, participants gave their informed consent. 3.14. \[Conclusion The quantitative research design was chosen as the relevant research approach for this study.\]\(#\) This chapter described \[the research design, methodology, target population, and census sample selection.\]\(#\) The chapter that follows provides a summary of the analysis and its findings. 40 \[CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS 4.1. Introduction The design and method employed in this study were described in Chapter 3. This chapter presents the information gathered from the participants' responses to the questionnaire. The major goal of this survey was to determine how the CRL Commission employees feel about the organisation's strategic change during the last five years. The study's specific objective was to determine how employees from various work experience groups feel about strategic organisational change. This was analysed according to their gender and various designations. The research questions of the study were structured in a manner that would extract information on the employee's perceptions about the organisational change, the impact of strategic change at the CRL Commission, the importance of employee's perceptions in an organisation such as the CRL Commission, and the change practices used at the CRL Commission. Questions were also posed to assess how the CRL Commission ensures that the change practices are effective, how changing the organisation ensures that the CRL Commission remains competitive and the effects experienced by the CRL Commission regarding the employees' perceptions about the organisational changes. In this study, the data was gathered through a personal way. The study's target population included all of the CRL Commission's personnel, translating to 33 employees in the target population. The survey method was used for this study, and a five-point Likert scale was used to format the questionnaire. The SPSS version 15 for Windows was used to analyse the data. In this chapter, the results show the "strongly agree" and "agree" responses in a combined format, and the "strongly disagree" and "disagree" percentages were calculated by combining the responses.\]\(#\) 41 Section A in this chapter deals with the participants' demographics. \[Demographic questions in a survey allow researchers to gain background information on their participants. These questions provide context for the collected survey data, allowing researchers to describe their participants and better analyse their data \\(Allen, 2017\\).\]\(#\) Section B deals with the employees' perceptions by analysing the employees' attitudes towards organisational change in their organisation. Section C deals with organisational strategic change and seeks to determine the levels of understanding among the employees working at the CRL Commission regarding the concept of organisational change and their readiness to participate in it. Section D deals with a combination of the employees' perceptions, organisational](#)

strategic change and the manner in which these concepts are applied at the CRL Commission. The study was quantitative in nature, and a high response rate of 90% was obtained from the 33 questionnaires distributed. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The statistical test was used to determine whether or not the variables had a significant relationship. 4.2. Section A: Analysis of the Demographic Data This part uses appropriate baseline computations to analyse the participants' demographic information. This section provides a broad understanding of the different employees in the organisation. The demographic data includes the nature of employment, function of employment, gender, age, length of service, and qualification. According to the CRL Commission's Annual Report (2015/16), the researcher had initially estimated that the staff component of the CRL Commission comprised 40 members. However, at the time the research was conducted, the CRL Commission employed only 33 employees and by the time fieldwork was conducted, only 30 which is 90% of all employees were able to respond to the questionnaire. This was attributed to the fact that the three employees were only working from home and did not come to the office at all. Arrangements were made to visit them in their homes, but they preferred not to be visited, 42 fearing a potential Covid-19 infection. 4.2.1. Figure 4.1: Nature of employment (N = 30) The nature of employment includes the educational requirements, as well as job security and social protection (Nayyar, 2012). This question was asked to establish how many of the employees are working on contract or whether they are permanently employed, because their opinions of organisational change could differ, according to their job security. NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT Permanent Contract Figure 4.1: Nature of employment As illustrated in Figure 4.1 above, a total of 86.67% of the participants who participated in this study are permanent employees, while 13.33% participants are working on contract. This indicates that the greatest group comprises permanent employees with relative job security. 4.2.2. Figure 4.2: Function of employment (N = 30) The aim of the support function and the line function is to ensure that the organisation meets its business objectives. The line function involves the actual core work to meet the business objectives, while the support function assists the line function in meeting these objectives, reporting to the line function, who report to senior management. FUNCTION OF EMPLOYMENT 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 Line Support Figure 4.2 Function of employment (N = 30) As illustrated in Figure 4.2 above, a total of 76.67% of the participants are part of the line function, while 23.33% participants are part of the support function. This indicates that most participants have more influence on the decisions taken at the CRL Commission. 4.2.3. Figure 4.3: Gender of participants (N = 30) To establish if there are any differences in attitudes regarding organisational change between men and women, it was important to include both gender, as gender identity can influence a participant's perspective on a topic (Si, 2015). GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS Male Female Figure 4.3 Participants' gender (N = 30) Chart 4.3 above illustrates the participants' gender. A total of 43.33% of the participants are male employees and 56.67% of participants are female employees, indicating a slight bias towards female employees. 4.2.4. Figure 4.4: Participants' age (N = 30) Measurement of age can be of interest to researchers in trying to understand the different age groups' reactions towards change and their own change in behaviour, belief, attitudes and lifestyles. Given the differences in experience and possibly different attitudes towards change, and because people within a particular generation tend to share some similar characteristics and ways of thinking, marketers often segment their target market based on age. Therefore, age was also included as a measurement in this study. PARTICIPANTS' AGE 20 18 16 14 12 10 8 6 4 2 0 Male Female 20 - 25 26 - 30 31 - 35 36 -40 41 - 50 > 51 Figure 4.4 Participants' age (N = 30) As illustrated in Figure 4.4 above, none of the participants in this study are between the ages of 20 and 25, while 6.67% are between the ages of 26 and 30, according to the results. A total of 23.33% of those polled are between the ages of 31 and 35. Only 20% of those who responded are between the ages of 36 and 40, while 33.34% are between the ages of 41 and 50, and the remaining 16.66% are between the ages of 51 and above. Most of the male participants are over the age of 40, while the female sample is younger. 4.2.5. Figure 4.5: Length of service (N = 30) Employees who have worked for the company for a long time have a wealth of knowledge about the company's organisational culture and service. They have also experienced more changes in the workplace. However, employees who are still new in the organisation could have a different perception of the organisation, because they might not have experienced the change yet. LENGTH OF SERVICE 25 20 15 10 5 0 Male Female 1 - 5 years 6 -10 years 11- 15 years Figure 4.5 Length of service (N = 30) As illustrated in Figure 4.5 above, a total of 30% of the participants record between 1-5 years of service, while 33.34% of the participants have worked at the Commission for between 6-10 years, and the remaining 36.67% of the participants have worked there for between 11-15 years. Results show that in line with their age, the older male participants tend to have a longer service record than their female colleagues. It could be hypothesised that the Commission hired younger (and often female) employees as the organisation grew to its current staff complement. 4.2.6. Figure 4.6: Level of qualification (N = 30) The question regarding the participants' level of education provides an insight into the level of qualification the employees have. Academic qualifications often lead to more senior appointments and thus line functions or senior management and decision-making, which would influence how higher qualified participants will help shape the change in the organisation. LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION Matric Diploma/B degree Honours/ Btech Masters Doctorate 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 Male Female Figure 4.6 Level of education (N = 30) As illustrated in Figure 4.6 above, a total of 13.33% of the participants have matric as their highest level of qualification, while 36.67% of participants have a Diploma/Bachelor's degree as the highest level of qualification. A total of 40% have an Honour's/BTech degree and only 10% of the participants have a Master's degree as the highest level of qualification. It is interesting to note the differences in qualifications achieved between the two genders, which may also have an influence on their perceptions of change, as they may have accepted change through their studies. 4.3. Section B: Employees' Perceptions This section deals with the analysis of the response related to the employees' perceptions of organisational strategic change. 4.3.1. Table 4.1: Positive attitude ensure that CRL Commission remains competitive in the industry. Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 9 30% Agree 16 53.3% Neutral 3 10% Disagree 1 3.33% Strongly disagree 1 3.33% 30 100% Table 4.1 illustrates that a total of 83.3% (30% + 53.3%) of the participants agree that a positive attitude ensures that the CRL Commission remains competitive in the industry, while 10% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 6.66% (3.33% + 3.33%) of the participants disagree that a positive attitude among employees ensures competitiveness. However, it implies that a positive attitude among employees is an essential component for a successful change. 4.3.2. Table 4.2: My department works together to achieve a common goal. Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 5 16.67% Agree 14 46.67% Neutral 5 16.67% Disagree 2 6.66% Strongly disagree 4 13.33% 30 100% Table 4.2 illustrates that a total of 63.34% (16.67% + 46.67%) of the participants agree that the department works together to achieve common goals, while 16.67% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 19.99% (6.66% + 13.33%) of the participants disagree. Working towards common goals is one of the defining traits of a team, according to Hartman (n.d.). Thus, teamwork across the department is important when change takes place, although not as highly ranked as a positive attitude by the employees. 4.3.3. Table 4.3: Employees have trust in management Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 1 3.33% Agree 8 26.67% Neutral 14 46.67% Disagree 3 10% Strongly disagree 4 13.33% 30 100% Table 4.3 illustrates that a total of 30% (3.33% + 26.67%) of the participants agree that they have trust in management, while 46.67% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 23.33% (10% + 13.33%) of the participants disagree. Blog (2020) states when employees trust their employers, they are more likely to work together towards achieving the same goal. Gray (2000) agrees that the need for trust in the workplace is a fundamental factor for any organisation. It is noteworthy that less than a third of the participants indicate that they have trust in their management – they do not distrust them, but the largest group (nearly half of all the employees) reserve their judgement regarding their trust in management. It will be important to assess in future research, why the level of trust is not higher, despite employees' statement that they can communicate with management. 4.3.4. Table 4.4: I receive feedback about improvement since the changed happened from my manager. Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 4 13.33% Agree 4 13.33% Neutral 16 53.33% Disagree 2 6.67% Strongly disagree 4 13.33% 30 100% Table 4.4 illustrates that a total of 26.66% (13.33% + 13.33%) of the participants agree that they receive feedback about any improvements since the changed happened, while 53.33% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 20% (6.67% + 13.33%) of the participants disagree. Continued feedback is important across the entire organisation in order to remain aligned to goals, create strategies, develop products and services improvement, and much more (DeFranzo, n.d). Thus, it is noteworthy that less than a third of all employees receive feedback on the results emanating from the organisational change. It is also noteworthy that such a large group of employees reserve their judgement regarding this question. It is possible that there is a lack of trust in management

because of the low level of feedback from them. 52 4.3.5. Table 4.5: I understand that I should respect other member's decisions even though we have different personal attributes. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 10 33.33% Agree 17 56.67% Neutral 3 10% Disagree 0 0 Strongly disagree 0 0](#) 30 100% [Table 4.5 illustrates that a total of 90% \(33.33% + 56.67%\)](#) of the participants agree that they should respect other member's decisions, even when they hold different personal attitudes, while only 10% of the participants are neutral. No participants disagree. Respect has always been a requirement for successful workspaces (Leonard, 2019) and seems to be an important element at the CRL Commission, and is acknowledged as such. 53 4.3.6. Table 4.6: Change practices are used at the CRL Commission. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 2 6.66% Agree 5 16.67% Neutral 17 56.67% Disagree 2 6.66% Strongly disagree 4 13.33%](#) 30 100% Table 4.6 illustrates that a total of only 23.33% (6.66% + 16.67%) of the participants agree that change practices are used at CRL Commission, while 56.67% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 20% (6.67%+13.33%) of the participants disagree. It is again noteworthy that a significant percentage of the participants reserve their judgement regarding the change practices used at the CRL Commission. It needs to be assessed whether they are unsure, do not know whether they are used at the Commission or whether they do not want to commit to an answer. 54 4.3.7. Table 4.7: A Positive attitude improves my level of motivation. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 14 46.67% Agree 12 40% Neutral 4 13.33% Disagree 0 0 Strongly disagree 0 0](#) 30 100% [Table 4.7 illustrates that a total of 86.67% \(46.67% + 40%\)](#) of the participants agree that a positive attitude improves the employees' level of motivation, while 13.33% of the participants are neutral. No participants disagree. [When employees come to work with a positive attitude, they are usually more productive, produce better work and can influence the attitudes of those around them. Regardless of the role on a team, they can help people feel valued and respected, affecting their attitude and likely motivating them to want to add their best contribution to the organisation. Using the power of positive emotions to motivate team members](#) requires the individual [to be intentional in changing how people think](#) (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021). This result is in line with the first question that established that a positive attitude has a major role to play in the organisation. 55 4.3.8. Table 4.8: The CRL Commission makes a concerted effort to address their objectives. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 4 13.33% Agree 8 26.67% Neutral 15 50% Disagree 1 3.33% Strongly disagree 2 6.67%](#) 30 100% [Table 4.8 illustrates that a total of 40% \(13.33% + 26.67%\)](#) of the participants agree that the CRL Commission makes a concerted effort to address their objectives, while 50% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 10% (3.33% + 6.67%) of the participants disagree. This indicates that the Commission's drive towards achieving their objectives do not seem to be fully recognised by the employees, and more work should go into effective communication of such efforts and their results. 56 4.4. Section C: Organisational Strategic Change 4.4.1. Table 4.9: There's cooperation between workers of the company. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 1 3.33% Agree 13 43.33% Neutral 8 26.67% Disagree 6 20% Strongly disagree 2 6.67%](#) 30 100% [Table 4.9 illustrates that a total of 46.66% \(3.33% + 43.33%\)](#) of the participants agree that there is cooperation between the employees of the organisation, [while 26.67% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 26.67% \(20% + 6.67%\)](#) of the participants disagree. It is noteworthy that less than 50% believe that there is cooperation between the employees, and more than a quarter actually believe that there is no cooperation. This is particularly important, as participants had stated earlier in the questionnaire that teamwork and a positive attitude were very important, but this does not seem to translate into actual cooperation. 57 4.4.2. Table 4.10: Communication helps in building trust because I can rely on my co-workers. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 9 30% Agree 12 40% Neutral 8 26.67% Disagree 1 3.33% Strongly disagree 0 0](#) 30 100% [Table 4.10 illustrates that a total of 70% \(30% + 40%\)](#) of the participants agree [that communication helps in building trust](#), while 26.67% of the participants are neutral. Only 3.33% of the participants disagree. Conley (2015) states that communication [with others is a primary way to build trust. Along with the appropriate behaviours and actions, communication serves as the vehicle for building trust in relationships. What one says, how one says it, and how one responds to what others communicate can make or break trust](#). Rainey (2013) agrees that the most essential requirement necessary to develop a healthy and positive relationships is trust. 58 4.4.3. Table 4.11: Effective organisational change forms an integral part of the company. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 2 6.67% Agree 16 53.33% Neutral 10 33.33% Disagree 2 6.67% Strongly disagree 0 0](#) 30 100% [Table 4.11 illustrates that a total of 60% \(6.67% + 53.33%\)](#) of the participants agree [that organisational change forms an integral part at the CRL Commission](#), while 33.33% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 6.67% disagree. This implies that most participants accept that change is part of life and that they have to accept it at the organisation. 59 4.4.4. Table 4.12: Organisational change has a positive impact at the CRL Commission. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 2 6.67% Agree 16 53.33% Neutral 9 30% Disagree 3 10% Strongly disagree 0 0](#) 30 100% [Table 4.12 illustrates that a total of 60% \(6.67% + 53.33%\)](#) of the participants agree [that organisational strategic change has a positive impact at the CRL Commission](#), while 30% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 10% of the participants disagree. Similar to the previous question and participants' answers, the CRL Commission's employees accept that organisational has been taking place and that it has made a positive impact at or on the Commission. However, this is not accepted at an enthusiastic "strongly agree" level. 60 4.4.5. Table 4.13: Change improves overall performance of the organisation. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 9 30% Agree 11 36.67% Neutral 9 30% Disagree 0 0 Strongly disagree 1 3.33%](#) 30 100% Table 4.13 illustrates that a total of 66.67% (30% + 36.67%) of the participants agree that change improves overall performance, while 30% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 3.33% of the participants strongly disagree. Syal (n.d) highlights that [in times of uncertainty, organisations and individuals alike are compelled to accept that change is the only constant. While discomfort and resistance are neutral consequences of any change, planning and preparation can help smooth the transition. Performance change management is a critical tool to help your organisation sustain performance during periods of change](#). The fact that only about a third of the participants strongly agree that such change improves performance, they may regard change as inevitable, but not necessarily leading to improved performance. This might also indicate that other factors have a greater influence on improved performance (for example, improved cooperation between employees). 61 4.4.6. Table 4.14: it's difficult to communicate with manager. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 2 6.67% Agree 3 10% Neutral 6 20% Disagree 9 30% Strongly disagree 10 33.33%](#) 30 100% [Table 4.14 illustrates that a total of 16.67% \(6.67% + 10%\)](#) of the participants agree that it is difficult to communicate with the manager, while 30% of the participants are neutral. The largest group, comprising 63.33% (30%+33.33%) of the participants disagree and thus believe that it is easy to communicate with their manager. 62 4.4.7. Table 4.15: I am satisfied with the communication in my department. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 5 16.67% Agree 11 36.67% Neutral 13 43.33% Disagree 0 0 Strongly disagree 1 3.33%](#) 30 100% Table 4.15 illustrates that a total of 53.33% (16.67% + 36.67%) of the participants agree [that they are satisfied with the communication](#) in their department, while 43.33% of the participants remain neutral. Only 3.33% of the participants strongly disagree. It is noteworthy that while participants state that it is easy to communicate with their manager, they are less convinced that the level of communication in their department is satisfactory. Again, this could be a further reflection of lacking cooperation between employees in the department. 63 4.4.8. Table 4.16: Emphasis on positive attitude may improve job productivity. [Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 10 33.33% Agree 15 50% Neutral 4 13.34% Disagree 1 3.33% Strongly disagree 0 0](#) 30 100% [Table 4.16 illustrates that a total of 83.33% \(33.33% + 50%\)](#) of the participants agree that a positive attitude may improve job productivity, while 13.34% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 3.33% of the participants disagree. Demers (2020) mentions that the most positive employees are at least twice as productive as their counterparts. These results are in line with the answers to the earlier question regarding the important role of a positive attitude to performance. 64 4.5. Section D: Employee Perception, Organisational Strategic Change and the CRL Commission 4.5.1. Table 4.17: [I am satisfied with the overall evaluation of the organisation. Frequency Percentage Strongly agree 3 10% Agree 8 26.67% Neutral 16 53.33% Disagree 2 6.67% Strongly disagree 1 3.33%](#) 30 100% [Table 4.17 illustrates that a total of 36.67% \(10% + 26.67%\)](#) of the participants agree that they are satisfied with the overall evaluation at CRL Commission, while 53.33% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 10% (6.67% + 3.33%) of the participants disagree. [Gartenstein \(2019\) comments that strategic evaluation is an important tool for assessing how well a business has performed, relative to its goals. It is an important way to reflect on achievements and shortcomings, and is also useful for re-examining the set goals, which may have been set at a different time, under different circumstances](#). Considering [the importance of employees' buy-in into set goals and their achievement](#), The fact that only just more than one third of the participants agree that the overall evaluation at the Commission is satisfactory

should be cause for concern. 65 4.5.2. Table 4.18: Monitoring organisational change is definitely not an easy task. Frequency Percentage [Strongly agree 6 20%](#) [Agree 16 53.34%](#) [Neutral 7 23.33%](#) [Disagree 1 3.33%](#) [Strongly disagree 0 0 100%](#) Table 4.18 illustrates that a total of 73.34% (20% + 53.34%) of the participants agree that monitoring organisational change is not an easy task, while 23.33% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 3.33% of the participants disagree. Monitoring, according to Simister (2017), is the systematic and ongoing gathering and analysis of data on the intervention's progress. Monitoring is carried out to ensure that all those who need to know about an intervention are appropriately informed, and that timely decisions can be made. Financial monitoring, process monitoring, and effect monitoring are all examples of distinct forms of monitoring. Once specific goals and targets have been set, it is imperative to monitor the organisation's performance against the set goals and targets and to address any deviations or shortcomings. 66 4.5.3. Table 4.19: Compared to a year ago, production of the CRL Commission has increased. Frequency Percentage [Strongly agree 7 23.33%](#) [Agree 3 10%](#) [Neutral 14 46.67%](#) [Disagree 3 10%](#) [Strongly disagree 3 10%](#) 100% Table 4.19 illustrates that only 33.33% (23.33% + 10%) of the participants agree that compared to a year ago, production (and productivity) at the CRL Commission has increased, while 46.67% of the participants reserve their judgement. The remaining 20% (10% + 10%) of the participants disagree. This neutral response to the achievement of increased performance indicates that the targets and goals had either been set too high, and therefore were not fully achieved, or there are other factors that contribute to holding the organisation back from increasing production or productivity to its fullest. 67 4.5.4. Table 4.20: There's a clear reason why change is needed at the CRL Commission. Frequency Percentage [Strongly agree 9 30%](#) [Agree 12 40%](#) [Neutral 4 13.34%](#) [Disagree 3 10%](#) [Strongly disagree 2 6.66%](#) 30 100% Table 4.20 illustrates that a total of 70% (30% + 40%) of the participants agree that there is a clear reason why change is needed at the CRL Commission, while 13.34% of the participants are neutral. The remaining 16.66% (10% + 16.66%) of the participants disagree. McCulloch (2019) observes that change in an organisation can lead to many positive aspects that in turn, lead to creating or retaining a competitive edge. Change should encourage innovation, develop skills and employees' performance, and lead to the identification, adoption and implementation of better business opportunities, and improve staff morale. 68 4.5.5. Table 4.21: There's an open-communication policy in my company. Frequency Percentage [Strongly agree 3 10%](#) [Agree 7 23.33%](#) [Neutral 10 33.33%](#) [Disagree 4 13.34%](#) [Strongly disagree 6 20%](#) 30 100% Table 4.21 illustrates that a total of 33.33% (10% + 23.33%) of the participants agree that there is an open communication policy at the CRL Commission, while 33.33% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 33.34% (13.34% + 20%) of the participants disagree. Health (2020) reports that when people do not communicate with each other in an open manner, it can hinder productivity and performance. According to Health (2020), the benefits to open communication at work include that it avoids conflicts; promotes productivity; encourages innovation and the sharing of ideas; keeps employees loyal to the organisation; and addresses problems before they arise. Again, while there seems to be good communication with the manager, such communication is probably missing among the employees, where there is also not the desired level of cooperation. 69 4.5.6. Table 4.22: Negative attitude hinders my working relationship with co- employees. Frequency Percentage [Strongly agree 12 40%](#) [Agree 11 36.67%](#) [Neutral 5 16.67%](#) [Disagree 0 0](#) [Strongly disagree 2 6.66%](#) 30 100% Table 4.22 illustrates that a total of 76.67% (40% + 36.67%) of the participants agree that negative attitudes hinder the working relationship with co-employees, while 16.67% of the participants are neutral. Only 6.66% of the participants disagree. Negativity brings down the morale in any group or team. It does not need much more than a single employee who has a negative attitude towards the organisation, their work or their colleagues, and who complains about everything, to create a negative atmosphere in the department. Employees who feel and express their negative attitude tend to spend time creating and raising the matter of issues in their day-to-day life, without solving them (Shah, 2020). The emphasis participants place on the importance of a positive attitude and the rejection of a negative attitude by employees in the organisation could also indicate that there is a sense of someone (or more) in the organisation who does not fit in because of their attitude. 70 4.5.7. Table 4.23: The CRL Commission builds positive impact by applying organisational change. Frequency Percentage [Strongly agree 2 6.66%](#) [Agree 8 26.67%](#) [Neutral 17 56.67%](#) [Disagree 0 0](#) [Strongly disagree 3 10%](#) 30 100% Table 4.23 illustrates that a total of 33.33% (6.66% + 26.67%) of the participants agree that change practices are used at the CRL Commission, while 56.67% of the participants remain neutral. The remaining 10% of the participants strongly disagree. This implies that most employees are not yet convinced that the change practices have had a positive impact on the organisation. 71 4.5.8. Table 4.24: Communication is an essential factor for workers to perform effectively. Frequency Percentage [Strongly agree 14 46.67%](#) [Agree 16 53.33%](#) [Neutral 0 0](#) [Disagree 0 0](#) [Strongly disagree 0 0](#) 30 100% Table 4.24 illustrates that all (46.67% + 53.33%) participants agree that communication is an essential factor for workers to perform effectively. No participants disagree. According to Kashyap (2019), [one of the major concerns in the workplace for creating and maintaining a positive work environment is effective and open communication](#). Page (n.d) confirms that [good communication is an essential tool in achieving productivity and maintaining strong working relationships at all levels of an organisation. Employees who communicate effectively with their colleagues, and with managers and customers tend to also exhibit increased productivity](#). 72 4.6. Summary of Findings 4.6.1. Demographics This section profiled the staff of the CRL Commission and added an understanding of the nature of the participants to the questions in sections B, C and D. The 30 employees who participated in the study out of the total staff component of 33 employees represent 90.91% of the staff component of the CRL Commission. Three individuals could not be reached for participation in the survey. A total of 86.67% of the participants who participated in this study were permanent employees and thus, more regularly exposed to any change in the organisation, while 13.33% participants were working on contract. The nature of employment was included in the questionnaire to determine the overall condition of employment in the organisation and indicated that the CRL Commission's staff compliment is largely permanent and thus, enjoys a great deal of job security. A total of 76.67% of the participants held a line function in the organisation, and 23.33% participants worked in a support function. This implies that most of the employees deal directly with the core-business of the CRL Commission compared to a lower number who provide support to the line function employees. Line function employees are more likely to be affected by organisational change than those who are working in a support role, because they are the main drivers of what the change is meant to achieve in and for the organisation. The number of female employees (56.67%) surpassed that of their male colleagues (43.33%). Including both male and female participants can inform the researcher if gender plays a role in the topic their researching. Gender was seen to have had an influence on the length of tenure and the level of seniority in the organisation. Regarding the age of the participants, the data shows that the CRL Commission did not employ anyone younger than the age of 25 years, and only 6.67% of the employees were between the ages 26-30 years. Most of the employees were aged between 31 and 50 years (23.33% between the ages 31-35 years; 20% between the ages 36-40 years; and 73 33.34% between the ages 41-50 years). Only 16.66% of the employees were aged 51 years and above. The purpose of including age in the staff profile was to analyse if there was a correlation between age and subsequent opinions and behaviour. Overall, this means that 70% of the participants were above the age of 35 years. Regarding the length of service, 36.66% of the employees had worked at the organisation between 11-15 years while 33.34% of the participants were between 6-10 years and 30% of the participants who participated in this study had between 1-5 years of service. Thus over 70% of the participants had over five years of service, which is a positive reflection of loyalty shown towards the organisation. Most of the employees have either an Honours/B.Tech (40%) degree or a Diploma/Bachelors (36.67%) degree, with a further 10% holding a Master's degree as the highest level of qualification. The remaining 13.33% have a matric. This indicates that the employees of the CRL Commission are well qualified to be able to understand the importance of organisational change, efficient communication and a positive attitude at work to enhance productivity. 4.6.2. Questionnaire results 4.6.2.1. Responses from section B: Employees' perceptions Overall, most employees stated that they respected other people's decisions (90%), they agreed that a positive attitude improved the motivation to work (87%) and such positive attitude ensured the organisation's competitiveness (83%), while the department working together as a team was needed to achieve the organisation's goals. While employees acknowledged that change had taken place in their organisation, and the importance of efficient communication and cooperation as well as a positive attitude among all employees was highlighted; however, such acknowledgement of the factors' importance did not automatically translate into the important elements being inculcated in the organisation. Many employees reserved their judgement or remained neutral regarding the successful 74 implementation of change management practices (57%) that had taken place. While they

believed they found communication with the managers to be easy, there did not seem to be constructive communication and cooperation between the employees, and there were indications that not all employees displayed a positive attitude towards their job, their colleagues or the organisation (see section C findings). Ratings remained mostly neutral regarding any feedback from management (53% neutral, 20% negative); they were not convinced that the CRL's objectives had been addressed (50% neutral, 10% negative) and they reported a low level of trust in their management (47% neutral and 23% negative). While the employees seemed to understand the fundamental concepts of change management, they also seemed to reserve judgement or be sceptical of the correct use of change management in their organisation. Such change management obviously did not have an impact on the inter-staff cooperation, positive communication and increased productivity or their trust in management, partially blamed on a lack of feedback from management.

4.6.2.2. Responses from section C: Organisational strategic change Overall, employees mostly agreed that a positive attitude would improve job productivity (83%); effective communication would build trust (70%); and organisational change improves overall performance (67%), forms an integral part (60%) and has a positive impact (60%) on the organisation. They also believed that it was easy to communicate with their managers (63%). However, only 47% of the employees believed that there was cooperation between the employees and only 53% were satisfied with the communication in their department. As Davis (2020) states, cooperation allows employees to exchange valuable information that helps everyone to improve their knowledge base and work in a time and resource efficient manner. Employees understood that change was an ongoing process and adaptation was needed. This is in line with what Richards (2019) says about the world changing on a daily basis. However, the CRL employees did not seem to be aware that change was 75 meant to improve their productivity and performance. They either did not see such enhanced performance having taken place, or they were unsure (67%) whether change could actually improve overall performance of the organisation. While the majority of the participants (63%) found it easy to communicate with their managers, only just more than half of the participants (53%) were satisfied with the communication in their department. The lacking feedback from management and the low trust in management (see section B) could also have contributed to the limited perception held by employees as to whether there was an improvement as a result of the implemented change. Scholars like Beatson et al. (2008) stated that organisational strategic change has a certain employee component, and if positively executed, it can lead to employees' contentment, loyalty, and dedication. In the previous section, results showed that participants were not aware that their level of performance and productivity could be related to their positive attitude, while they were also not aware of the change management practices used, probably caused by the lack of feedback. This is in line with the results in this section where participants were neutral about change improving overall performance of the organisation. Instead, they understood performance to be the catalyst of change and not vice versa.

4.6.2.3. Responses from section D: Employees' perceptions, organisational strategic change and the CRL Commission. Overall, employees believed that effective communication was an essential factor to be able to perform effectively (100%). They also admitted that negative attitudes hindered good working relationships to be formed (77%); monitoring change was not an easy task (73%); and that there was a clear reason why change was needed (70%). However, they were not convinced that a positive impact was created by the organisational change (57% neutral, 10% negative); or that they were satisfied with the overall evaluation of the organisation (53% neutral, 10% negative); whether productivity had increased compared to a year ago (47% neutral, 20% negative), and whether there was an open communication policy in the organisation (33% neutral, 33% negative). 76 While most employees (70%), independently of hierarchical positions, believed that there was a clear reason why change was necessary, and employees were generally supportive of the need for change, their beliefs about such change may be more positive than their actual reactions to it. It was also interesting to note that 70% of the participants agreed that communication built trust, yet only 30% had trust in management, most probably because they were not content with the amount of feedback they received about the change or any improvements. This factor may have negatively influenced the employees' perceptions of leadership and management as shown in the results from the two sections discussed above. In essence, despite the change employees had noticed, they did not relate this change to any improved performance of the organisation. As stated above, they seem to believe that change is good to alter certain systems in the organisation for it to remain competitive, but being competitive does not necessarily mean that employees improve their performance. Incorrect perceptions held by employees could thus affect the employees' behaviour and consequently the organisation in more than one way. Managers will have to understand that organisational success can follow only if the employees' perceptions are understood and addressed. If the employees have a favourable perception of their job, the likelihood of organisational success is high. All participants agreed that communication is an essential factor for employees to perform effectively. This means that effective two-way communication plays a vital role and is an integral part of the workplace. Cheng (n.d) concluded that workplace communication refers to streamlining internal communication. Maintaining effective communication ensures that management and the team below them are working towards a common goal. That means that employees are confident with the work at hand and managers are assured that team members are correctly undertaking that work. If employees receive more feedback about their performance and productivity levels, their achievement of the set goals, they should also develop more trust in management, as long as communication is on an open basis. Therefore, even though results showed that organisational change as a concept is not 77 communicated adequately, participants showed a positive perception towards the importance of such communication, especially used as a tool by change management and related to improved performance. However, they did not seem to believe that the changes in their organisation were properly managed or communicated.

4.7. Limitations of the Study All research studies are bound to have some limitations. For example, perceptions were only assessed at a single point in time. It is entirely feasible that perceptions could shift as the transition process progresses. Many change management experts, such as Lewin and Kotter, agreed that during a change process, change recipients move through a sequence of stages. This study was limited to employees of the CRL Commission in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, in Gauteng Province. Caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdowns and regulations, numerous employees were forced to work from home and worked at the offices only on a rotational basis, resulting in the marginally lower response rate to the questionnaire. Other components of the study were hampered by time constraints, since the researcher had to travel to Braamfontein to gather the completed questionnaires, which took more than three months to obtain.

4.8. Conclusion The survey results were compared to the conclusions discussed in this chapter's literature review, and fresh information from author sources was included to round out the discussion of the findings. SPSS version 15 for Windows was used to analyse the data received from the replies. Figures and tables were used to present the information. The results can only be applied to this Chapter 9 sector, because the study was an internal study conducted at the CRL Commission in Braamfontein. The study's results and recommendations are presented in the next chapter. 78 CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 5.1. Introduction The study's conclusion and recommendations are presented in this chapter. The CRL Commission is one of the organisations that has taken steps to reform its organisational structure in recent years. The primary goal of this study was to determine how the CRL Commission employees felt about the organisation's strategic transformation during the previous five years. At the CRL Commission, it was discovered that organisational transformation can have a favourable impact on organisational productivity and employee performance, although such achievement depends on the buy-in by all employees. The conclusions were drawn in accordance with the study's objectives and in an attempt to address the primary research questions about employees' perceptions of organizational change. The study's recommendations will be made available to senior management and published in the form of a journal article. The research was quantitative in nature, with data being collected using a standardised structured questionnaire. The data was analysed using the SPSS version 15 for Windows, and the results were presented using figures and tables. The target participants were provided with a closed-ended, pre-coded questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. In this survey, only employees of the CRL Commission, based in Braamfontein, Johannesburg in Gauteng Province took part. Based on the limited number of participants, the survey approach was used in this study. The surveys were administered to all employees working at the CRL Commission, using the personal method of data collection, and a high response rate of 90% was attained.

5.2. Conclusion The impact of employees' views on organisational change was investigated at the CRL Commission. It was discovered that there is a substantial link between employees' perceptions and organisational strategic change, implying that well-informed and 79 favourable employee perceptions regarding the need for change, the manner in which such change is implemented and monitored, and

providing regular feedback on the progress of such change process contribute to successful organisational strategic change. The conclusion, as shown in section B of the questionnaire, is that employees' perceptions about organisational strategic change can be negative or positive. In the CRL Commission, employees believe that positive attitudes have an impact on the competitiveness of the organisation and that by working together, their organisation can achieve better results. There are various reasons that can create positive employee perceptions towards organisational change, and employees can embrace change if they know it will make their organisation not only competitive and sustainable, but that it can assist the employees in their work, their performance and their interaction between the individual employees, teams and management. However, employees did not necessarily relate such change to the actions of management, where there was limited trust and limited feedback reaching the employees. Instead, they may tend to credit themselves on the implemented change. The role of managers in organisational change is therefore separated from the role of employees themselves. The meaning of competitiveness may differ between that understood by the employees and that seen by management. This was shown in this study, where the impact of organisational strategic change on the CRL Commission was linked to competitiveness, but competitiveness was not necessarily linked or equated to improved performance. To the participants, the organisation remaining competitive and employees improving their performance was not necessarily equated. This may mean that in certain instances, employees may seek to retain their same level of performance instead of improving it, with the understanding that as long as their performance did not drop, it kept the organisation competitive. Overall, organisational strategic change can have a negative or positive impact on an organisation, depending on how it is accepted and supported by the employees. It could be inferred here that in the CRL Commission, organisational strategic change was said by some to have a positive impact on the organisation, because of the positive perception by the employees on the change in this organisation. Therefore, employees' perceptions are important in ensuring that organisational change yields the intended positive impact on the organisation. Change management practices play an important role in employees' perceptions on organisational change. In this study, efficient communication between management and employees and among the various departments within the CRL Commission were identified to be key change practices at the organisation. Although such communication did not seem to have improved the level of trust between management and the employees, and did not include the essential feedback to employees regarding the achievement of targets or the improvements made, it seems to have improved somewhat the collaboration and information sharing among staff members and between employees and management. However, such cooperation and internal communication between individual employees must still improve as communication and cooperation are essential factors of an effective change management practice in an organisation. Overall, therefore, positive perceptions held by employees on organisational strategic change will yield a positive impact on the organisation. The same applies to any negative perceptions, which will yield a negative impact on the organisation. It should also be investigated where in the organisation there is less cooperation, or where there are negative "complaining" individuals who tend to create barriers to positive or enhanced performance. HR should find ways to solve any potential problems that may have filtered through to the department.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the empirical investigation, this study recommends to examine the level of monitoring and feedback provided for the set objectives regarding the change management. To achieve a higher level of trust in management and a buy-in into the change strategies, the organisation should consider the possibility of involving employees in management's decision-making process. Employees should become more involved in any issues that may arise at work. Second, to boost organisational effectiveness, management should foster better teamwork and cooperation inside the organisation. This would allow various departments in an organisation to share information and thereby reduce duplication of efforts, and increase efficiencies. Further, participants in this study believed that management did not provide them with helpful feedback or comments. Based on this, it is suggested that management expand their relationships with their employees by implementing regular feedback sessions. Also, to enhance the feeling of "belonging", management should consider workplace activities that bring management and employees together at the same table, thereby investing in a positive and more trusting working relationship. Another recommendation is that the organisation's various units conduct weekly sessions that would allow them to discuss information, experiences, and concerns that should be a priority for management. It is possible that by doing so, employees will also have more faith in management. By cultivating change intelligence in the organisation, management may also encourage people to realise their ability to adapt to organisational change.

5.4. Suggestions for Further Research

This study employed a quantitative approach, with questionnaires utilised to obtain data from the participants. However, qualitative methods could be used to conduct further in-depth research in this topic. In so doing, open-ended questionnaires and in-depth interviews could be used by the researcher to acquire rich data from the participants to augment the findings of this kind of research. Further, qualitative research can be used to investigate the reasons for the survey's rating scores to gain a better understanding of the motives and so add value to the body of information. Future research could benefit from a rigorous examination of each management level's contribution or involvement in change management and performance, and the targets to achieve relevance and sustainability. Similar studies can also be conducted on other entities of this nature, including comparative studies in this regard. These could further help to explore various other aspects pertaining to the relationship between organisational strategic change and employees' perceptions and enhance the body of knowledge on the subject. There is also the opportunity to use quantitative research with the same set of employees to examine the situation in the organisation after the change process has been completed, where the current study can be used as a benchmark.