

**INVESTIGATING THE EXPERIENCES OF GRATITUDE DURING
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE**

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A catholic priest once said: “I can choose to be grateful even when I am feeling resentful or hurt or when I am criticized and my heart feels bitter...I can choose to forgive and to look at the faces that smile...”. It is important to note that “gratitude is an approach to life that can be chosen” (Cameron et al., 2003, p. 82).



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WESTERN CAPE

DECLARATION

“I declare that this research study of investigating the experiences of gratitude during organisational change is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.”

.....

Shirleen Titus



ABSTRACT

The interest of what are the positive stimuli in organisations has been an observation in the field of positive psychology as well as industrial psychology. Experiences of gratitude, a positive emotion have been investigated through experiments, analysis and interpretations which involved students, children and very few organisations.

Psychologists have viewed gratitude as an emotion after work produced by McDougall in 1929, and during this time gratitude was subject to both a positive and a negative perspective (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). Even though gratitude has potentially important consequences for individuals and societies, very little research is available on gratitude in the organisational context (Cameron et al., 2003). Several research articles suggest that people are yearning to feel good through positive emotions such as joy or happiness. This is accompanied by a belief that enhancing people's positive emotions holds intellectual, social and physical benefits.

The perceptions of gratitude in the organisational context have been woven into the theory of gratitude through content analysis. Content analysis was employed to analyse the experiences of 16 respondents during organisational change. An adapted version of the Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6) which included several probing questions were used to gain these rich experiences shared by participants. Two additional questionnaires, the Gratitude Resentment and Appreciation, GRAT 44 Item Scale and Psychological Capital (PsyCap) questionnaire also known as the PCQ-24 were used so that the researcher could

provide further insight into how participants experienced gratitude. Results indicate that individuals view self-efficacy and intrinsic strengths as core factors in their expression of gratitude. Other important themes which emerged during the interpretation pertain to opportunities for personal growth and the realisation of personal goals; well-being and a sense of purpose; leadership, trust, decision-making, empowerment, recognition and reward; competence; teamwork, social exchange, relationships, reciprocity, amplifying effect and diversity; and adversity, resilience and counting blessings.

The interpretation of this qualitative study indicates that individuals, teams and the organisation can benefit through allowing focus of unlocking that which provides a positive stimulus during challenging times in organisational settings. For social scientists, and in particular behavioural scientists, including industrial psychologists that are interested in positive psychology, it is hoped that there is an invitation to grow this area of research further and to gain new insights and direction for what are the enablers to experience positive change and gratitude.

KEY WORDS

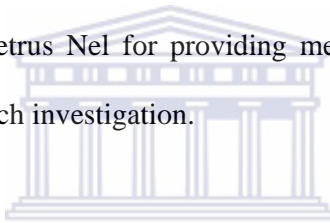
Gratitude, grateful disposition, positive emotions, self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience, organisations, Big Five, well-being, prosocial traits, psychological capital, strengths

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am so grateful to so many people who supported and encouraged me on this journey. Choosing a qualitative study raised the eyebrows of several of my fellow students and I got the sense that the task I chose would require my sincere interest.

Building on the positive and showing gratitude is something that has an intrinsic purpose for my paradigm as an industrial psychology student.

My sincere thanks go to Dr. Petrus Nel for providing me with the initial confidence and impetus to embark on this research investigation.



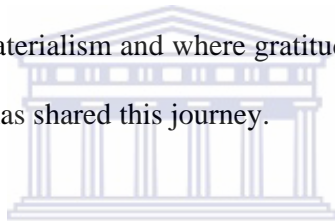
It was Mr. Karl Heslop's faith in my ability that allowed me to become unstuck and to progress to this level of completion. I am particularly grateful to Mr. Heslop's insight, his wisdom and participation when direction was required and needed by the novice qualitative researcher. Mr. Heslop allowed me to grow in confidence and to trust in my own ability. Through his encouragement and enthusiasm, he demonstrates incredible support, commitment and professionalism. What stuck with me were his words "I find my joy in seeing how students realise their dreams when they are able to complete their thesis".

I am grateful to the organisation, the leadership and the participants who allowed me the time and the space to conduct my research. The participants made my task of conducting the interviews extremely meaningful and a few of them shared their appreciation of the

experience long after the interview had taken place. Feedback from one participant is as follows: “The gratitude interview was such an energizing experience. It is really necessary to reflect on the things one is grateful for and I believe each and everyone in my department should have an opportunity to participate in the same interview”.

A great thank you to my husband Emilio, my son Marco and daughter Larissa, parents and siblings who have been my biggest supporters on this journey of discovery and personal growth.

Lastly, I thank God for allowing me an opportunity to live my best possible life as I journey along in this natural world of materialism and where gratitude has had a transforming impact in my life as well as those who has shared this journey.



“I felt like shouting with joy
It was my last interview

The dream of me and you

Will now be a greater joy

Gratitude is a tingle from my heart to my toes

It definitely helps to remove my woes

I stand, I listen, I think, I feel, I forget

Gratitude is indeed the next best bet”

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT



1.1 Introduction

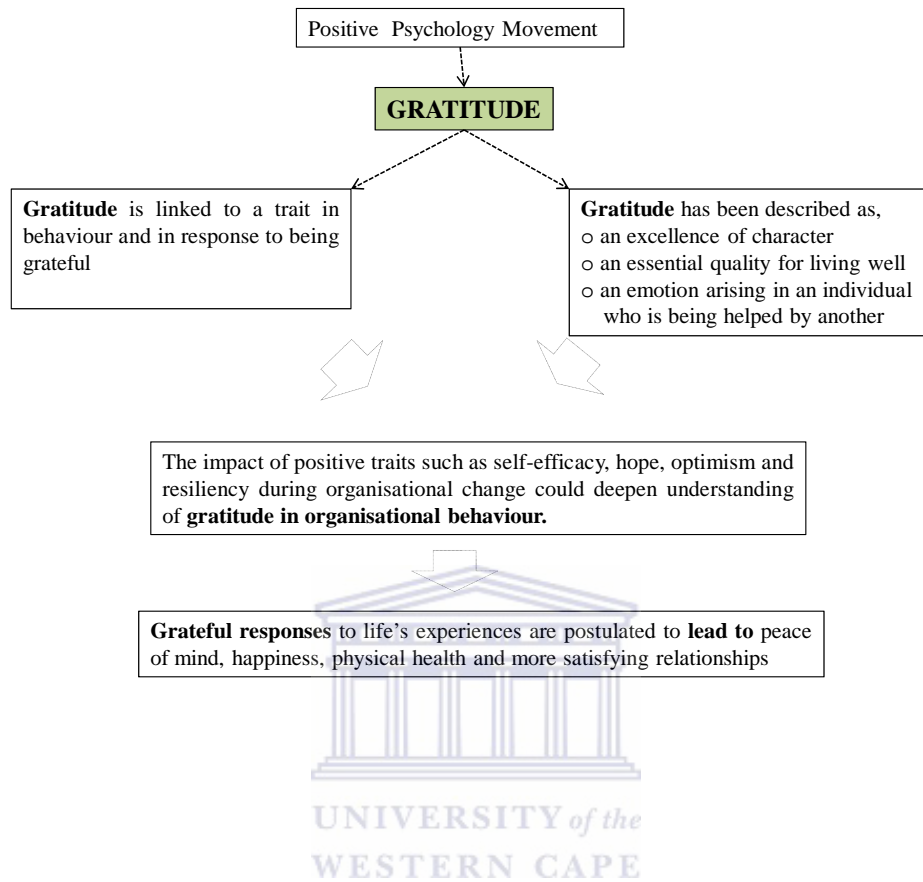
Today's organisations and their employees, systems, resources, goals and strategies require that positive aspects such as gratitude and optimism should be increased in order for organisations to flourish (Emmons & McCullough, 2004; McCullough, Emmons & Tsang, 2002). Factors leading to an increased focus on gratitude are the positive psychology movement, the renewed interest by social scientists in people's spiritual and religious lives and the interest in virtue ethics by philosophers. Over the past 25 years significant progress has been made in understanding the biological, psychological and social bases of human emotions. As psychologists further unravel the complexities of emotions, gaps in

understanding are revealed. One of the gaps concerns the psychology of gratitude. Gratitude has been described by many as “an excellence of character” and “an essential quality for living well” (Emmons & McCullough, 2004, p. 3).

Several classifications of positive traits have resulted from previous research. Gratitude is linked to a positive trait in behaviour and in response to being grateful (McCullough et al., 2002). The impact of positive traits such as Self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resiliency and the relationship it has with gratitude (Luthans & Youssef, 2007) during organisational change could deepen understanding of gratitude in organisational behaviour.

Grateful responses to life’s experiences are postulated to lead to peace of mind, happiness, physical health and more satisfying relationships (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Negative emotions appear to limit the scope of an individual’s thinking capacity, whilst experiencing positive emotions leads to enhanced cognitive processing. Positive emotions may unlock both cognitive and behavioural resourcefulness which can be accessed during stressful periods or a need for creativity (Wood, Froh & Geraghty, 2010). The above is summarized in Figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1 - Overview of gratitude

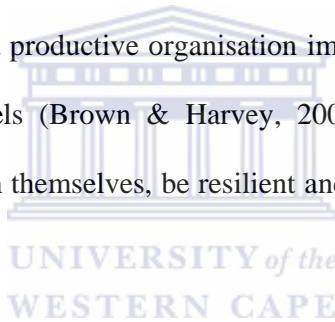


1.2 Rationale

The workplace is increasingly becoming a place where survival, let alone success, is crucial to above average performance. Success can be attained by challenging the traditional assumptions through appreciative (grateful) inquiry and building on the strengths of the individual as well as the organisation (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

According to the research in philosophy, people are socialized towards gratitude which in turn serves as a reminder for them to be grateful towards others (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). McCullough and other psychologists have theorized gratitude as an emotion – by experiencing gratitude a person is motivated to carry out prosocial behaviour. Relating to organisational functioning, Park and Petersen (2003) define gratitude as “being aware of and thankful for the things that happen” (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005, p. 412; Cohen, 2006).

Grateful individuals grow constantly in an upward spiral of optimal functioning and improved coping with stress and adversity in social groups, communities or organisations. In organisational change, leading a productive organisation implies employees are creative and perform beyond the usual levels (Brown & Harvey, 2006). Through positive emotions, individuals are able to transform themselves, be resilient and socially integrated (Emmons & McCullough, 2004).

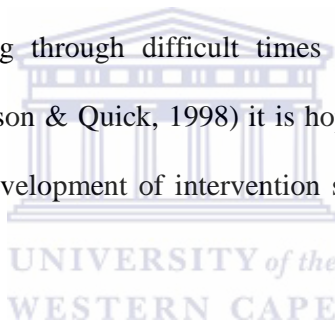


People are familiar with receiving gifts, feel grateful towards the person who has been kind towards them, and realise that this person did not have to do this for them (Cameron, Dutton & Quinn, 2003). Applying this concept to the workplace, reference is made to the fact that more balance between the positive acts of people and the negative aspects is needed and therefore an approach that looks at both the positive and the negative is needed (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

Research suggests that employees with *high core self-evaluations*, conceptualized gratitude as a *higher order trait* on the same level as *generalized Self-efficacy*. They are motivated to

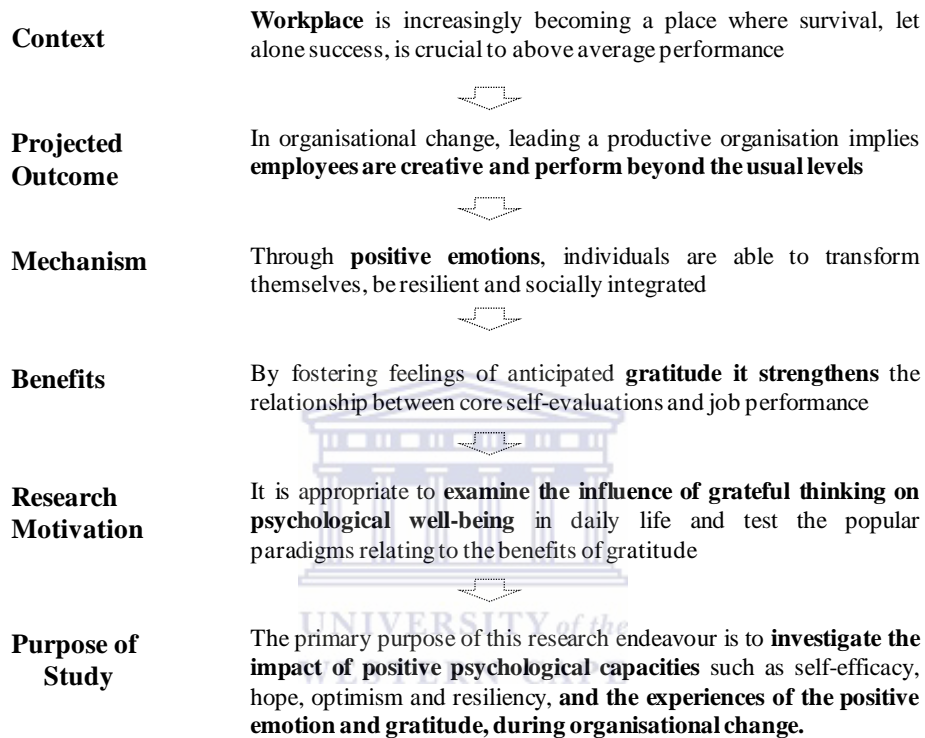
achieve higher performance and see themselves functioning in the real world. By fostering feelings of anticipated gratitude it strengthens the relationship between core self-evaluations and job performance (Grant & Wrzesniewski, 2010). As a higher order factor, it is recognized that showing gratitude towards both people and events, is having a positive orientation to life (Wood et al., 2010).

Grateful people see everything they have as a gift and may be more likely to veer towards positive circumstances over a period of time (McCullough et al., 2002). It is appropriate to examine the influence of grateful thinking on psychological well-being in daily life and test the popular paradigms relating to the benefits of gratitude (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). With the complexity of coping through difficult times both at the individual and the organisational level (Mack, Nelson & Quick, 1998) it is hoped that deeper understanding of gratitude may strengthen the development of intervention strategies to help employees and organisations in the future.



A simplified framework which shows the elements of the rationale for the study is shown below in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2 - Rationale of the study



1.3 Intention of the study

The primary purpose of this research endeavour is to investigate the impact of positive psychological capacities such as Self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resiliency (Luthans & Youssef, 2007) and the experiences of the positive emotion and gratitude, during organisational change. This study has potential to be a transformational stimulant which

could broaden people's actions and thinking during organisational change, thus helping both individuals and organisations to thrive (Cameron et al., 2003; Fredrickson, 2004).

Grateful people appear creative as they formulate actions that promote the well-being of other people. With the same scope of cognition, this flexible and creative thinking also facilitates coping with stress and adversity (Emmons & McCullough, 2004; Wood et al., 2010). Positive states and psychological capacities are open to development and change and it is particularly relevant to the workplace. The flexibility and growth is essential for individuals to adapt in a fast-paced and unpredictable work environment. When organisations are willing to invest in state-like development, they not only grow their resources but also they allow themselves a unique advantage with their competitors (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

They may be more likely to familiarize towards positive circumstances, which may help sustain their happiness and subjective well-being over a period of time (McCullough & Emmons, 2002). As an emotion, grateful states result from recognizing that (a) one has obtained a positive outcome; and (b) there is an external source for this positive outcome. Recognizing that the benefactor has expended effort to give them a gift further amplifies grateful feelings; for this reason, gratitude is also considered an empathic emotion (Froh, Yurkewicz & Kashdan, 2009).

Positive organisational change has been linked to positive organisation scholarship (POS) which investigates the effects of positive dynamics, positive attributes and positive outcomes in organisations. It is understood that owing to the word *positive*, these investigations are still creating some awkwardness amongst skeptics in organisational studies. This implies that the

organisational sciences have a potential to open up an area of research that may have been restricted in the past (Cameron et al., 2003). Typically in psychology and in this study, gratitude will be viewed as an emotion; more specific focus is placed on gratitude as a positive emotion (Luthans & Youssef, 2007; Tsang, 2006).

Positive psychology and Positive Organisation Behaviour (POB) emphasise the need to promote further research and explore theory so that the application of positive traits, states or behaviours is capable of assisting employees to become more effective in organisations. Positively oriented traits, human states or organisations may have substantial impact on performance, hence the need to celebrate and accelerate the positives and to manage, learn from or avoid the negatives (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

1.4 The evolution of gratitude and psychology

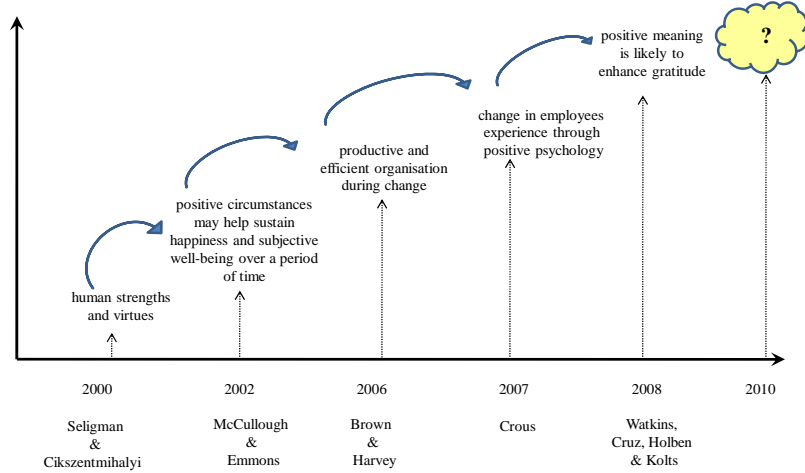
In 2000 two positive psychologists, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi veered attention towards human strengths and virtues – those inner traits and psychological processes that most cultures, philosophers and religions refer to as qualities that enable a good life (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). Seligman's vision was to bring about a new science of positive psychology that would provide impetus and change by building on positive qualities. This vision also inspired industrial and organisational psychologists to find meaning and greater understanding of this concept. This brought about a change in the employees experience on the individual, group and organisational level, all influenced alike by positive psychology (Crous, 2007).

Other factors which influenced the increased focus on gratitude are an interest in religion and spirituality by social scientists and philosophers in their endeavour to determine what would constitute a moral or ethical personality (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). According to Cameron et al. (2003, p. 82), “gratefulness is a highly prized human disposition in Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu thoughts”. It is suggested that anything that encourages pleasing mutual exchanges between human beings is likely to encourage social good. More important, from the perspective of evolution, an individual who is capable of gratitude, who is blessed with the propensity to engage others in gracious ways, may find that their disposition in the group is ultimately enhanced.

Uppermost during organisational change is leading a productive and efficient organisation where employees are encouraged to be creative, perform and innovate beyond the usual levels (Brown & Harvey, 2006). The likelihood of finding positive meaning through experiencing an unpleasant event may enhance one’s gratitude. Hence, it can be argued that a significant characteristic of improved well-being is gratitude. Two causal relationships are possible: i) focus on gratitude for beneficial consequences of unpleasant events which enhances positive meaning and ii) by enhancing positive meaning; it is likely to enhance gratitude (Watkins, Cruz, Holben & Kolts, 2008, p. 96).

Figure 1.4 below shows graphically the evolution of gratitude and psychology over the last 10 years, starting in the year 2000. It shows a steady growth in research activity to understand better this new focus on positive psychology.

Figure 1.4 - The Evolution of gratitude and psychology



1.5 Objectives of the study



The objective of the study is to investigate the experiences of gratitude during organisational change. To evaluate the data, the researcher hopes to identify emerging themes and possible linkages to existing theoretical models. The findings may help to clarify the phenomenon for further research progress or to make recommendations for application in the organisational context.

1.6 Overview of the chapters

Chapter 2 discusses various concepts of gratitude, such as, the history, definitions, links to psychological capital and prosocial exchange. The objective of this study is *to investigate the experiences of gratitude during organisational change*. The researcher wishes to establish

answers to the following research questions: What is the meaning of gratitude and why is it important in organisational change? How does gratitude, when compared with other positive emotions, such as happiness, joy and enthusiasm relate to Positive Organisational Behaviour? How is gratitude influenced by Self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience?

Chapter 3 addresses the research design. A cross sectional research design, using a combination of 16 qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) was utilized. Data was collected at a pharmaceutical company in 2 phases. Firstly, an interview was conducted using an adapted version of the GQ 6. Secondly, two standardized measures, the PsyCap questionnaire, PCQ 24 and GRAT 44-item scale were administered.

The interpretation of the study is qualitative using content analysis to transcribe the interviews. Qualitative content analysis is the preferred choice for novice researchers because it focuses on one level of meaning, the content of the data texts (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smith, 2010).

Chapter 4 uses the data from the interviews and the two questionnaires to interpret and analyse the results of the study. Transcriptions have been prepared from an initial audio digital recorder. All the information from the audio will be discarded after it has been used and integrated in this study. The results are expressed in narrative form as well as a diagrammatic representation of what had emerged from the data collection. After the transcriptions were prepared for this chapter, the researcher and the supervisor examined the raw data and analysed emerging themes which was necessary to build the validity of the study.

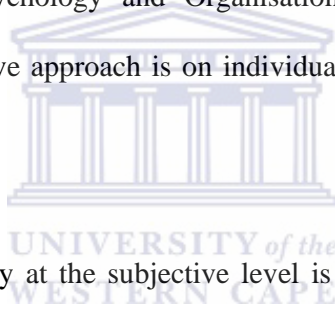
Chapter 5 provides the conclusion, limitations of the study and recommendations for further studies. This is based on the final diagnosis offered, from additional literature which supports the participants' views and experiences of gratitude during organisational change. This is integrated to provide a potential response to the organisation development strategies for the future.



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Since the beginning of Psychology as a science, three objectives were stated: repair psychological damage, prevent psychological problems, and build psychological strengths in people (Linley, Joseph, Harrington, & Wood, 2006; Luthans, 2002a, 2002b; Park & Peterson, 2003). Emphasis was placed on the negative impact of dysfunctional behaviour on organisations and employees – the emphasis of the first two objectives. This pathogenic perspective (Coetzee & Cilliers, 2001; Vaillant, 2003) is gradually being replaced by a positive approach to both Psychology and Organisational Behaviour (Luthans, 2002a, 2002b). The focus of the positive approach is on individual well-being and coping skills to effectively deal with changes.



The field of positive psychology at the subjective level is about valued experiences: well-being, contentment, and satisfaction (in the past); hope and optimism (for the future); and flow and happiness (in the present). At the individual level, it is about positive individual traits: the capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skill, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future mindedness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 5).

At the group level, Positive Psychology is about the civic virtues and the institutions that move individuals toward better citizenship: responsibility, nurturance, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 5). Recently,

studies have succeeded in enhancing positive emotions through introducing habitual activities such as ‘counting your blessings’ or ‘committing acts of kindnesses’. Using and identifying individual strengths and remembering oneself at ones best to achieve personal goals has also been successfully experimented in enhancing positive mood and well-being (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006, p. 74).

Evidence of variables’ relation to Positive Psychology are provided by Antonovsky (1979) and Strümpfer (1990, 1995, 2005). These authors identified constructs that are associated with Positive Psychology – more specifically salutogenesis (Kossuth & Cilliers, 2002; 2004) and fortigenesis. Strümpfer (1990, 2005) identified several constructs that describe psychological strengths, viz: (a) sense of coherence, (b) locus of control, and (c) Self-efficacy. It is also important to include resilience as a construct that describes psychological strengths (Bowman, 1999; Hutchinson, Stuart & Pretorius, 2010; Strümpfer, 200b). One such focal area, albeit, less researched refers to the phenomenon of gratitude, which forms the basis of this research.

2.2 The history of gratitude

Historically, theological as well as philosophical articles have viewed gratitude as integral to well-being. However, individual differences in gratitude have not received much attention (Wood, Joseph & Maltby, 2008). Gratitude is also referred to as “the parent of all virtues”, “the transformative force in the cosmos”, “the key that opens all doors” and “the quality that keeps us young”. However, in recent years, psychologists have started paying more attention to the term gratitude (Emmons & McCullough, 2004, p. 4). These psychologists are curious

about individual differences in how gratitude is understood, and are most likely able to bring clarity to the nature of gratitude and its place in human functioning (McCullough et al., 2002).

According to McCullough et al. (2002), academics in humanities have argued whether the disposition to be grateful is a trait that is commendable or not. Individuals such as Smith, Seneca and Simmel have a high regard for the value of a grateful disposition and social well-being. In contrast, theorists such as Aristotle, Epicurus and La Rochefourcauld have concluded that gratitude is no more than a smokescreen over self-interest or unfavourable emotional ties that make people gratuitously obliged towards their benefactors.

In exploring the behaviours of leaders who are influenced by both pride and gratitude, research suggests that it is critical for organisational leaders to balance the pursuit of self-interest with prosocial tendencies that promote the well-being and integrity of others (Michie, 2009). Contrasting the negative, the agonizing position of feeling obligated, gratitude is a positive, pleasing state associated with contentment, pride, and happiness (Goei & Boster, 2005).

According to research, Aristotle and other ancient psychologists did not believe gratitude was anything more than a vice, and a disposition of neediness and susceptibility to fear. How much gratitude actually contributed to well-being was questionable and would not be easily resolved in an empirical study. Assuming that most emotions have a positive and a negative element, a functional and dysfunctional position, empirical research may hypothesise that

gratitude promotes human well-being by extenuating dispositions of resentment, regret and envy (Emmons & McCullough, 2004).

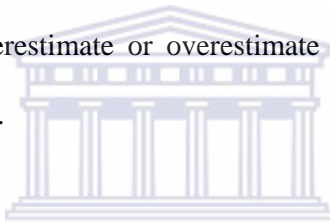
In more recent literature Lyubomirsky (2008, p. 25), concluded that happier people are more positive, more resilient and stronger physically and mentally. Applied to the workplace, more positive people, with applicable behaviours and attitudes are purported to impact positive organisational change.

An association which implies that gratitude is offered to another with an expectation of something in return has been tested by Seneca, a *Roman Philosopher*. Seneca, who held gratitude as the parent of all virtues, believed that slaves should feel gratitude to their masters and masters to their slaves. Gratitude is not a commodity in exchange between two individuals for equal benefit or through an obligatory act. Smith, who wrote the book on the *Theory of Moral Sentiment*, was one of the first scholars who had a deep ambition to identify with the part that gratitude could and should play in a modern economy (Emmons & McCullough, 2004).

Since the awareness of self-interest in commercial economics, gratitude is a necessary condition that allows self-interested people to act in ways that focus on the benefit of others and for society rather than themselves. Hence an individual is able to modify and adapt feelings of gratitude by judgements of others in society in acknowledgement of the following, “I learn to be grateful in socially appropriate and approved ways” (Emmons & McCullough, 2004, p. 31).

In his theory of moral sentiments, Smith showed that gratitude plays a vital role in making the world we live in a better place. Smith enabled a new perspective away from theological and hierarchical assumptions of medieval thought. He conveyed the framework that,

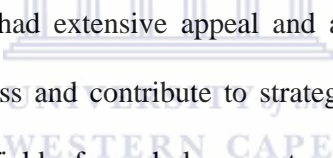
- 1) Gratitude is a human phenomenon that binds people together in society,
- 2) It is subject to frailties and tensions that threaten humanity, and
- 3) Feelings of gratitude are socialized through interactions with other people and can be improved by deeper appreciation of the psychological forces that give rise and sustain gratitude in the world.
- 4) Lastly, Smith identified that the forces that would lead to an absence of gratitude is self-interest. If individuals are unable to look through the eyes of the other person, and have an impartial stance they may underestimate or overestimate the gratitude that may be owed (Emmons & McCullough, 2004).



For Smith, learning to adopt the proper perspective for viewing moral questions is the key for giving gratitude its proper place in a modern commercial order. According to Smith, gratitude has a place in the modern world and should be defined against corrupting forces of modern life. Promoting sentiments of gratitude is not an easy task and could be more powerful if promoted through legislation, hence bringing about the psychological bonds that naturally tie one person to another (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). Gratitude is an interpersonal emotion that is felt toward other people or entities, and not toward oneself (Tsang, 2006). Non-virtuous responses typically include blaming, holding grudges, seeking retribution, and displaying self-interest (Cameron et al., 2004).

Before World War II, psychology had three distinct missions: curing mental illness, making the lives of all people more productive and fulfilling, and identifying and nurturing high talent (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 6). Since the hardship of the war, few people kept their kindness and even fewer held the key to what humans could be like at their best. For positive psychology, it serves as a reminder that psychology is not just the study of pathology, weakness, and damage; it is also the study of strength and virtue. Treatment is not just fixing what is broken; it is nurturing what is best in people. Positive psychology hopes to do this by applying a scientific method to the unique problems that human behaviour presents and to those who wish to understand its complexities (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

2.3 Definitions of gratitude

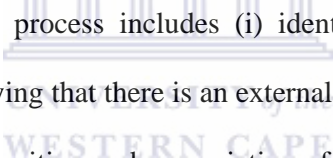


The construct of gratitude has had extensive appeal and a plethora of articles and books promote the value of gratefulness and contribute to strategies that cultivate the attitude of gratitude. Interestingly, in the field of psychology, not much work has been achieved or insights provided into the nature of gratitude. The definition of gratitude is not equivocal, and ambiguity and uncertainty concerning its relevance still exists (Emmons & McCullough, 2004, p. 4).

Gratitude has been conceptualised as an emotion, an attitude, a moral virtue, a habit, a personality trait, or a coping response. The word *gratitude* is derived from the Latin root *gratia*, meaning *grace, graciousness or gratefulness*. Although a variety of life experiences can elicit feelings of gratitude, primarily gratitude stems from the perception of a positive

outcome, not necessarily deserved or earned, that is due to the actions of another person (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

Gratitude has been defined as an emotion arising in an individual who is being helped by another, which causes a moral behaviour (Naito, Wangwan & Tani, 2005). Enhancing people's positive emotions as an experiential objective has been successful through an induction of habitual activities such as committing acts of kindness, identifying and using inherent strengths, sustaining the best self and working on personal goals (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006). Moreover, gratitude may be defined as "a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift, whether the gift is a tangible benefit from a specific other or a moment of peaceful bliss evoked by natural beauty" (Emmons, 2004, p. 554).



Gratitude as a 2-step cognitive process includes (i) identifying that one has achieved a positive outcome and (ii) identifying that there is an external source for this positive outcome. Fundamental to gratitude is recognition and appreciation of an altruistic gift. It is a complex state that is classified as affective cognitive conditions in which affect and cognition are both meaning components (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

Smith (1790) defines gratitude as the sentiment which most immediately and directly prompts us to reward. Similarly, Weiner and Graham (1989) define gratitude as a stimulus to return a favour to the other and thus reintroduce balance. Lazarus and Lazarus (1984) conceptualised gratitude as one of the "empathetic emotions" that reflects recognition or appreciation of an altruistic gift (McCullough, Emmons & Tsang, 2004, p. 295). "Gratitude is a universal human virtue", and was classified amongst the transcendent virtues (Cameron et al., 2003, p. 81).

Transcendent virtues are those character strengths and intrinsic qualities which strengthen bonds with entities beyond the self. As a virtuous process, gratitude is defined as “being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen” (Cameron et al., 2003, p. 82).

McCullough and Emmons (2002, p. 112) define the grateful disposition as “a generalized tendency to recognize and respond with grateful emotion to the roles of other people’s benevolence in the positive experiences and outcomes that one obtains”. It is applicable to examine the influence of grateful thinking on psychological well-being in daily life and test the popular paradigms relating to the benefits of gratitude (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

2.4 Psychological well-being (PWB)

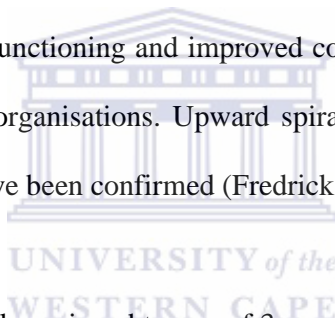
According to Wright and Cropanzano (2004) the prevailing belief of early organisational research was that the most profitable business techniques were those that focused on the negative, as opposed to positive, aspects of human motivation. PWB is usually thought of in terms of the overall effectiveness of an employee’s psychological functioning. Definitions of PWB (happiness) have at least three characteristics:

- 1) Happiness is a subjective experience - people are happy to the extent that they believe themselves to be happy.
- 2) Happiness includes both the relative presence of positive emotion and the relative absence of negative emotions.
- 3) Happiness is a global judgment - it refers to one’s life as a whole.

Psychological well-being and the positive effect of gratitude have been linked to improved quality in sleep (Wood, Joseph, Lloyd & Atkins, 2008). Stimulating positive thoughts prior to

going to sleep has a positive impact on the quality of your sleep. The same holds true for negative thoughts that impacts the quality of your sleep adversely (Wood et al., 2010). Research indicates that the grateful responses to life can lead to peace of mind, happiness, physical health and more satisfying relationships. People are morally obligated to feel and express gratitude in response to received benefits (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

The first evidence that gratitude promotes relationship formation and maintenance was provided by Algoe, Haidt and Gable (2008). Emmons and McCullough (2004) propose that through positive emotions, individuals are able to transform themselves, become more creative, knowledgeable, resilient and socially integrated. These individuals grow constantly in an upward spiral of optimal functioning and improved coping with stress and adversity in social groups, communities or organisations. Upward spirals stimulated specifically by the positive emotion of gratitude have been confirmed (Fredrickson, 2001).



In a study students were randomly assigned to one of 3 experimental groups, where each was required to record i) 5 major events, ii) 5 hassles or stressors and iii) 5 things they were grateful for over a period of one week. The results for the group and those who practised gratitude showed more benefits. Participants in the gratitude group reported fewer symptoms of illness and spent more time exercising. This group recorded more progress on their goals, fewer physical complaints, more frequent physical exercise, more optimism, and higher overall well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; 2004).

The significance of these 3 studies is that the gratitude intervention led to a reduction in negative affect. This was consistent with correlational research (McCullough et al., 2002) reporting that the trait gratitude, is associated with less negative affect (Emmons &

McCullough, 2003). Ratings of the grateful disposition were correlated with measures of positive emotionality and well being, vitality, happiness, satisfaction with life, lack of depressive and anxious symptoms, hope and optimism. (McCullough et al., 2002). Grateful people appear to be different from their counterparts who are less grateful and who are often in pursuit of materialistic goals (McCullough et al., 2002).

2.4.1 The influence of PWB on individuals

Psychological well-being (PWB) is not tied to any particular situation and it has been shown to exhibit consistency over time. Fortunately, this does not mean that PWB is immutable to change. PWB has been shown to be strongly influenced by any number of environmental events and is considered to be responsive to therapeutic interventions. As seen, recent research has consistently demonstrated that high levels of PWB can boost performance on the job, while simultaneously increasing each individual's capacity to appreciate new opportunities and experiences (Wright, & Cropanzano, 2004).

Based on Fredrickson's work, it is proposed that these positive emotions assist in "building" the individual's enduring personal resources, ranging from physical, psychological, intellectual and social in nature. This capacity to experience the positive seems to be crucial to one's capacity to thrive, mentally flourish and psychologically grow. This sense of flourishing appears to make psychologically well or happy people more proactive, resilient to adverse situations, and less prone to stress symptoms. As a result, a continued focus on these positive feelings expands (broadens) and builds on these positive urges, creating a potentially moderating "upward spiral" effect, which can further enhance employee character

development. This capacity to experience positive feelings is considered to be a fundamental human strength (Wright, & Cropanzano, 2004; Fredrickson, 2001).

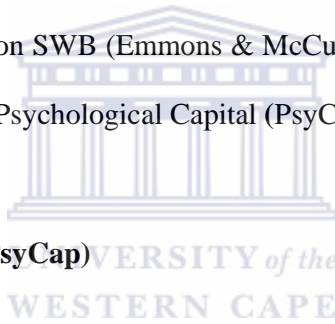
2.5 Subjective well-being (SWB)

Subjective well-being refers to what people think and how they feel about their lives and extends to the cognitive and affective conclusions they reach when they evaluate their existence. In practice, subjective well-being is a more scientific-sounding term for what people usually refer to as happiness. Even though subjective well-being research relies primarily on global self-ratings that could be criticized on various grounds, its findings are plausible and coherent (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Gratitude may help to avoid self-indulgence by ensuring a daily appreciation of events through counting one's blessings. The research which suggests that gratitude is correlated to well-being has mostly focused on psychological well-being (PWB) except for one study that has focused on subjective well-being (SWB). The difference between SWB and PWB was first discussed by Aristotle where he describes well-being as *hedonistic (SWB)* and *eudemonic (PWB)*. *Hedonistic* involves the experience of monetary pleasure and frequent experiences of positive effect, whereas *eudemonic* involves acting in a way which is constructive, socially beneficial, leads to personal growth, involves self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, purpose in life, environmental mastery and autonomy. Several factor analysis studies have indicated that PWB and SWB are correlated with distinct constructs of pleasant life (SWB) and meaningful life, productive activity and development

(PWB). One study has revealed that gratitude is correlated to daily self-regard, rewarding social activity and the pursuit of intrinsically motivating activity (Wood et al., 2008).

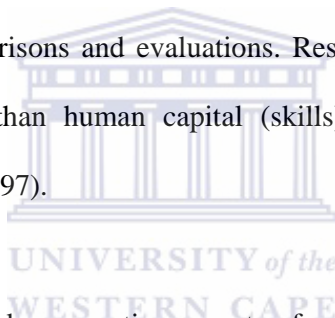
Gratitude is an important component of SWB. Three properties of SWB have been emphasized, that is 1) SWB is subjective as the name illustrates and everyone defines happiness unique to their experience, 2) SWB is not simply an absence of negative factors, but also a positive measure of a construct, and 3) SWB should cover all aspects of a person's life. SWB will mostly rely on self-report measures. Many people associate a grateful state with a happy state and most likely being grateful contributes to a positive mood. With a variety of emotional benefits and various studies and experiments, it has been indicated that gratitude has a causal influence on SWB (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). In addition to this, an emerging field of research is Psychological Capital (PsyCap).



2.6 Psychological capital (PsyCap)

Psychological capital (PCQ or PsyCap) is a positive state-like capacity that has undergone extensive theory-building and research and has been defined as "an individual's positive psychological state of development which is characterized by: 1) having confidence (self efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; 2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; 3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and 4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success" (Hutchinson et al., 2010; Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007).

Psychological Capital (PsyCap) is conceptualised, measured and developed through an integrated, multidimensional framework. With these 4 constructs in mind, Self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resiliency, presents management, researchers and practitioners with a high potential source of competitive advantage to explore and on which to capitalize (Luthans & Youssef, 2007, p. 335). It is cited that an individual's quantity and quality of work, motivation and general attitude towards work depend on their psychological capital. Referring to Erickson's (1959) theory of life span development, it is postulated that individuals who are psychologically healthy are those with high self-esteem and are also most productive. Self-esteem is multidimensional comprising of worth, goodness, health, appearance and social competence. According to research it is proposed that self-esteem changes by experiences, comparisons and evaluations. Results indicated that psychological capital had a greater impact than human capital (skills) on the wages that they earn (Goldsmith, Veum & Darity, 1997).

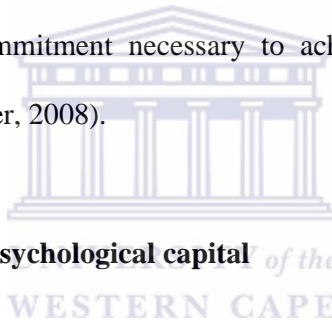


Several researchers have focused on negative aspects of organisations (Burke, Eddy, Ng & Fiksenbaum, 2009). Evidence suggests that negative states such as anxiety, depression or fear or failure lead to narrow biases which are consistent with narrowed attention. On the other hand, positive states such as subjective well-being, optimism and success lead to inclusive biases which are consistent with broadened attention (Fredrickson, 2004).

Based on Fredrickson's work Avey, Luthans and Wernsing (2008), proposes that positive emotions will result in higher levels of employee engagement attitudes and organisational citizenship behaviours that would facilitate positive organisational change. It is assumed that employees with high levels of PsyCap will also have higher levels of positive emotions and

will be less likely to experience deviant behaviours and resist change which would detract from positive change. Positive emotions are argued to be long-lasting, shape employee behaviours and flush out the dysfunctional effects of negative emotions.

In the absence of positive emotions, human beings are limited to apply thought-action resources to instinctive human functioning and this may stifle desirable organisational outcomes. Four positive constructs that has been identified to best meet the criteria for positive organisational behaviour are hope, efficacy, optimism and resilience. This has been conceptually and empirically demonstrated and is referred to as psychological capital, PsyCap (Avey et al., 2008). It is cited that optimism is one of those key attributes that leaders need to evoke energy and commitment necessary to achieve business results (Petersen, Waldman, Balthazard & Thatcher, 2008).



2.6.1 Human strengths and psychological capital *of the*

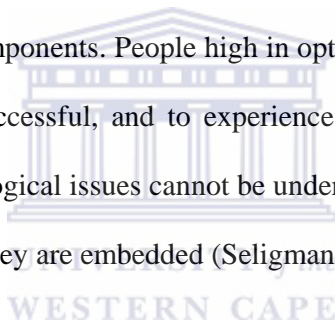
Recent progress in psychology has encouraged a new emphasis on human flourishing and individual strengths as characterized by the early stages of positive psychology (Fredrickson, 2001; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) positive organisational scholarship (Cameron et al., 2003) and positive organisational behaviour (Luthans, 2002a).

Researchers have discovered that there are human strengths such as courage, future mindedness, optimism, interpersonal skill, faith, work ethic, hope, honesty and perseverance that act as buffers against mental illness and that create capacity for flow and insight. The major psychological theories no longer view the individual as a passive vessel responding to

stimuli; instead, individuals are now seen as decision makers, with choices, preferences, and the possibility of becoming masterful, efficacious, or in malignant circumstances, helpless and hopeless. This science and practice may also re-orient psychology back to its two neglected missions - making normal people stronger and more productive and truly unlocking human potential (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

2.6.2. Optimism

One dispositional trait that appears to mediate between external events and a person's interpretation of them is optimism. Peterson (2000) considers optimism to involve cognitive, emotional, and motivational components. People high in optimism tend to have better moods, to be more persevering and successful, and to experience better physical health. Peterson maintains that complex psychological issues cannot be understood in isolation from the social and cultural contexts in which they are embedded (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).



Definitions of optimism provided by Carver and Scheier (2005, p. 75) and Carver and Scheier (2003, p. 231) focus on an individual's expectations for the future. Individuals set goals for themselves that they want to achieve. These goals must be valued by the individual. Thus, there must be a desire to achieve the set goal. The individual that has set a desirable goal must also be confident that the goal can be attained. Taking a generalised approach to optimism, emphasis is on an individual's general sense of confidence (Carver et al., 2005, p. 231; Carver et al., 2003, p. 76). This is in line with Schulman (1999) that suggested that there seems to be three factors that are likely to influence an individual's perception regarding the

achievement of personally important goals. These three factors are ability, motivation, and optimism.

Optimists will have more confidence and persistence when dealing with a challenging situation than pessimists. Individuals with high levels of Self-efficacy believe that their personal efforts are what will determine the outcome of the future. Viewing themselves as being in control, individuals with high levels of Self-efficacy assume that the positive outcome that they desire will be possible through their own personal efforts (Carver et al., 2003, p. 76). Optimism therefore focuses positively on the expected quality of future outcomes in general (Bryant & Cvengros 2004, p. 298).

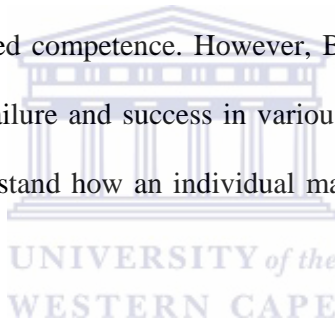
In general, optimism as a cognitive psychological construct has been referred to as *hopeful expectations in a given situation* (Scheier & Carver, 1988 as cited by Reivich & Gillham, 2003, p. 57). Optimism was later defined to include more general expectancies that are positive – not just related to a given situation (Lopez & Snyder, 2003; Lopez, Snyder & Pedrotti, 2003).

Optimism has been associated with a broad range of positive outcomes. It incorporates motivational, emotional as well as cognitive components and enhances well-being, coping, psychological health and recovery. Optimism can be defined as an attributional style that explains positive events through personal, permanent, and pervasive causes and negative events through external, temporary, and situation-specific ones. An optimistic explanatory style can be developed through focused interventions (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Optimists attribute their success to an enduring fact (Petersen et al., 2008). Undergraduates who were

asked to keep a gratitude journal, reported fewer physical symptoms and felt more optimistic about the days ahead (Cameron et al., 2003). Relevant to positive organisational behaviour, optimism has indicated a positive relationship with performance in various areas of an individual's life. Through more effective goal-setting, groups can become more optimistic (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

2.6.3 Self-efficacy

Bandura (1997, p. 3) defined Self-efficacy as *beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments*. Self-efficacy can be viewed as a concept of perceived competence. However, Bosscher and Smit (1998) argued that numerous experiences of failure and success in various domains of an individual's life may also be important to understand how an individual may generate general beliefs about Self-efficacy.



Generalised Self-efficacy is defined as *a judgement of how well one can perform across a variety of situations* (Judge, Erez, Bono & Thoreson, 2002, p. 96). General Self-efficacy is therefore a motivational state because it involves the individual's beliefs regarding his/her abilities to perform and succeed at task across different situations (Kanfer & Heggestad, 1997). It is therefore possible to distinguish between specific Self-efficacy (SSE) (which is task specific) and general Self-efficacy (GSE) (which is global in nature). However, both have self-confidence as the basis of self-evaluation. *The importance of the GSE construct to organisational research lies in its ability to (a) predict SSE across situations and tasks, (b) predict general and comprehensive performance criteria, and (c) buffer against the*

debilitating effects of adverse experiences on subsequent SSE (Chen, Gully & Eden, 2001, p. 67).

Based on Chen and colleagues' opinion (2001), it is thus possible to state that general Self-efficacy is able to predict performance on specific situations. Therefore, an individual's general perception of confidence spills over to specific situations and the associated levels of confidence. The latter provides support to explore general Self-efficacy in the current study and its ability to predict specific performance related confidence (Chen et al., 2001).

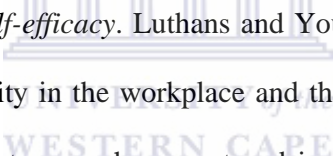
Self-efficacy leads to choosing appropriate behaviours to reach identified goals, putting in effort, persisting with the course of action despite obstacles, until eventual success is attained. Bandura was also of the opinion that Self-efficacy beliefs influenced resilience in adversity, as well as the presence of helpful or hindering cognitions (O'Brien, 2003).

Therefore, Self-efficacy suggests that two types of expectancies determine behavioural change, viz.: (a) outcome expectancies and (b) efficacy expectancies (Bandura, 1982). Outcome expectancies relate to the probability that the specified behaviour will lead to the specific desired outcome. In addition to outcome expectancies, efficacy expectations relate to an individual's belief that he has the capacity to exhibit the desired behaviour. Therefore, Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief that he/she is competent at producing the behaviour in question (Bandura, 1977).

Self-efficacy emphasises the individual's perception as to whether the individual can perform the behaviour necessary in a specific situation – the capacity to act (Snyder, 2002). Self-

efficacy therefore focuses on the individual's belief regarding competence in a specific task and context. An individual is likely to have high levels of Self-efficacy regarding certain tasks while having low levels of Self-efficacy in other tasks. Self-efficacy beliefs are not likely to impact overall self-esteem (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2003).

Where leaders have demonstrated high levels of positivity the impact on employees has been tangible. In the police force, a rather stressful profession, where interviews were conducted to establish the impact of PsyCap, one employee (sergeant) revealed the following: "I don't know what I would do without my lieutenant (leader). We see so much bad, but he's always optimistic that good will prevail. It's what gets me through the hard days" (Petersen et al., 2008).



Several factors are unique to *Self-efficacy*. Luthans and Youssef (2007) define Self-efficacy as confidence in one's own ability in the workplace and the precursor to execute a specific task successfully. It has the most research support and is most established as a theoretical construct. Self-efficacy and the relationship with many other performance dimensions have been measured and are particularly relevant to positive organisational behaviour. Desirable outcomes of Self-efficacy include work attitudes across cultures, leadership effectiveness, moral or ethical decision making, creativity and participation. Self-efficacy can be developed through mastery, learning from the success of others and modelling.

2.6.4 Hope

Emerging research has supported relevance of *hope* and its impact on performance (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). The meaning of “hope” goes beyond “hoping for the best”. Hope is a strategy for identifying goals, garnering the discipline to move towards goals, and remove obstacles that inhibits goals achievement. Hope is the individual’s ability to apply the best possible ways and to find the best cause of action to attain their goals (Petersen et al., 2008).

Evidence suggests the positive relationship between employee hope and performance and work attitudes and organisational profitability. Luthans and Youssef (2007) define hope as a “positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful goal-directed energy and plan to meet goals”. Individuals, who score high on gratitude as an affective trait, indicated a tendency to have a high degree of positive traits, such as hope (McCullough et al., 2004). Hope was recognized as a coping strategy, which is intelligently applied by a resilient person to achieve positive outcomes (Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh & Larkin, 2003). Hope involves the quality of the goals being set and the mechanisms used to reach challenging goals. The capacity of hope has been nurtured through an individual’s openness to growth and organisational initiatives. Valid and reliable measures of hope have been established and emerging research supports the relevance of hope in organisations and its relationship to employee performance and work attitudes (Luthans & Youssef, 2007, p. 330).

Hope is the capacity to see, expect, believe, or emotionally anticipate the best for an expected future and it is associated with numerous individual and social benefits. Optimistic individuals are argued to have better social relationships in organisational settings, as well as higher levels of physical health, academic and athletic performance, recovery from illness and trauma, pain tolerance, Self-efficacy, and flexibility in thinking. Hope-optimism is a learned virtue that varies with social circumstances. When fostered in organisational settings it produces especially positive social outcomes, such as goal achievement, empowerment, and agency (Bright, Cameron & Caza, 2005).

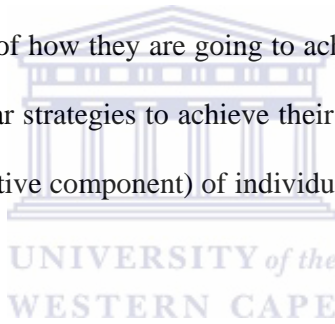
Definitions of hope focus on the construct being either emotion-based or cognitive-based (Lopez, Snyder & Pedrotti, 2003). However, both these approaches are being merged. Although some emotion-based theories of hope emphasise emotions (e.g. Averill, Catlin, & Chon, 1990), they do include cognitive aspects as well.

According to Snyder (2002, p. 249), hope is primarily a way of thinking. Snyder focuses on the cognitive. Individuals are likely to think in terms of goals and how to develop routes to attain those goals. Therefore, hope emphasises an individual's goal that was set and how that goal will be attained through different possible strategies. Hope can therefore be defined as *a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed energy), and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals)* (Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991, p. 287).

Hopeful thinking therefore requires both pathways and agency thinking in relation to goal attainment. Thus, hope is only possible if the individual has confidence in his/her ability to

produce multiple routes to achieve a specific goal, as well as the necessary motivation to use these different routes to achieve the stated goal. Snyder's hope theory incorporates both emotions and cognitions (Snyder, 1994, Snyder et al., 1991). When individuals experience barriers to goals that they have set, they experience these barriers as stressful. Positive emotions are experienced on the basis of the individual's past experiences of successful goal pursuit (Snyder, 1994, Snyder et al., 1991). Negative emotions are more likely to be experienced by individuals who have experienced unsuccessful goal pursuits in the past and when a "current" goal (e.g. passing an examination) is not reached.

Hope is therefore based on the goal-directed thought processes of individuals. Individuals think about their goals in terms of how they are going to achieve those goals, as well as their motivation to use those particular strategies to achieve their goals. Thus, hope is anchored in the thought processes (i.e. cognitive component) of individuals regarding their goals (Snyder, Rand, & Sigmon, 2005).



2.6.5 Resilience

Psychological *resilience* is viewed as a relatively stable trait and many people see resilience as a distinctive trait held by extraordinary people. Resilient people are referred to as optimistic, energetic, curious and open to new experiences and are argued to have very strong positive emotions and often use humour, optimistic thinking as ways of coping through crisis (Fredrickson et al., 2003; Hutchinson et al., 2010).

Luthans defines *resiliency* as the “capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure or even positive events, progress and increased responsibility” (Luthans & Youssef, 2007, p. 332). According to Petersen et al., (2008, p. 344), resiliency is one’s capacity to cope successfully in the face of significant change, adversity, risk, or even increased responsibility. Resilient people are able to thrive and grow through setbacks and difficult times. These resilient employees usually bounce back with even higher levels of performance.

The traditional belief holds that resilience can only be an admired attribute in another; however the positive organisational behaviour literature suggests that resilience can be a learnable attribute in most ordinary people (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Resilience cannot only be perceived as just a reactive strength that is demonstrated in times of adversity, but more so a proactive dimension that engages in creativity and flexible mechanisms even in the absence of external threats. Resilience is influenced by strong ethical values and beliefs toward the achievement of personal meaning and organisational goals (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

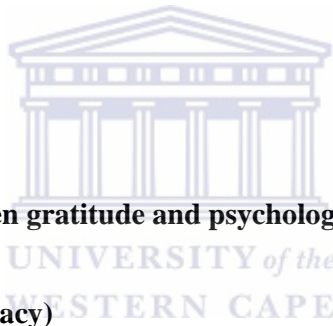
Resilience can be defined as *a class of phenomena characterized by patterns of positive adaptation in the context of significant adversity or risk* (Masten & Reed, 2005, p. 75). Thus, for an individual to be considered as resilient, he/she must firstly do better than expected given the expectations of the situation. In addition, the individual can be identified as being resilient when he/she has been exposed to very challenging situations that posed a threat to good outcomes – and successfully dealt with those challenging situations (Hutchinson et al., 2010).

Resilience can also be defined as a *pattern of psychological activity which consists of a motive to be strong in the face of inordinate demands, which energizes goal-directed behaviour to cope and rebound, as well as accompanying emotions and cognitions* (Strümpfer, 2001b, p. 36). Factors that contribute to an individual's ability to successfully manage stressors include specific skills and psychological resources (Lustig & Strauser, 2002, p. 2).

Antonovsky (1987) conceptualised resilience as sense of coherence. Antonovsky (1987) is of the opinion that one psychological resource, that mediates the individual's ability to manage stressful events, is sense of coherence (SOC). Sense of coherence can be defined as a dynamic feeling of confidence that the individual has about the predictability of his/her internal and external environments. In addition, the individual feels that there is a high probability that things will work out as well as can be reasonable expected (Coetzee & Cilliers, 2001).

A person with a strong sense of coherence is more likely to view and understand problems as challenges, and is more likely to select the most appropriate coping behaviour for the specific problem. Sense of coherence is the overall orientation that the environment is comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful (Antonovsky, 1987). Feelings of sense of coherence are enhanced by the availability of Generalised Resistance Resources (GRRs) (Antonovsky, 1987).

These GRRs usually take the form of cognitive skills, social support, specific skills and other psychological resources (Lustig & Strauser, 2002, p. 2). It can be suggested that both cognitive (locus of control, Self-efficacy, optimism, and hope) as well as emotional (self-esteem) fortigenic variables can be viewed as GRRs that can be used by aspiring chartered accountants to enhance their levels of resilience and their persistence. The inclusion of both cognitive and emotional variables as GRRs is also supported by Strümpfer's (2001b) perspective that resilience is accompanied by an individual's emotions and cognitions when coping with setbacks. Antonovsky (1979) proposed that the availability of these resources helps the individual to develop a sense of coherence, which in turn mobilises the resources to avoid or deal with stress. The latter experiences provide feedback and reinforce a sense of coherence.



2.7 The relationship between gratitude and psychological capital (hope, optimism, resilience and Self-efficacy)

Psychological Capital (PsyCap) has evolved out of recent research from Seligman who focused on human strengths, virtues and positivity compared to the focus on the negative aspects of human beings. Positive organisation behavioural scientists suggest that capacities such as optimism, hope, Self-efficacy and resilience are capacities extremely important to the workplace that they can be learnt (Petersen et al., 2008). For several decades psychologists focused far too much on the weakness of individuals and how this weakness may be an impediment to organisational growth (Linley & Harrington, 2006).

Luthans and Youssef (2007) have differentiated between trait-like and state-like constructs. Whilst trait-like constructs are relatively stable and difficult to change, state-like positive *psychological resource capacities* (PsyCap) efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience are fairly open to development. They conclude that happier, more positive people show more resilience through hardship and the link between positive moods is life satisfaction, physical and mental health and positive self-perceptions. Applied to the workplace, taking a positive approach to organisational behaviour focuses on higher organisational productivity as a desired end, POB should also value and include in its mission the pursuit of employee happiness, health and betterment as feasible goals in themselves.

Conceptualizing PsyCap as resources from which one can draw is an important mechanism from which individuals can impact their well-being. It makes sense that psychological resources are related. Suggested by research, an individual high in one resource is often high in others. State-like resources which are open to development through an intervention are likely to provide employees the greatest opportunity to enhance well-being. Emphasis is placed on how employees acquire, maintain and foster the necessary resources to meet work demands and guard against resource depletion. This is supported by insights of cognitive processing and evaluations and the differences between state-like (PsyCap) and trait-like (PWB) resources. Individuals have an opportunity to develop themselves through turbulent times and build capacity to draw from during organisational change (Avey et al., 2010).

Goldsmith, et al. (1997, pp. 815 - 816) describe psychological capital as those features of personality which psychologists believe contribute to an individual's productivity. These may include a person's perception of self, attitudes toward work, ethical orientation, and general

outlook on life. Preceding 1997, psychologists developed and validated measures of the components of psychological capital, hence making it possible to “observe the unobservable”.

2.7.1 Happiness

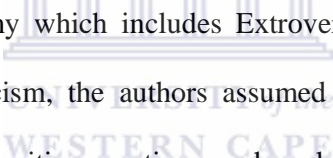
The origins of PsyCap have evolved from quite a few research studies in the field of positive psychology (Petersen et al., 2008). Recent research on happy people found that happy people are more extraverted, more agreeable and less neurotic and that they score lower on several measures of psychopathology. Gratitude is an important strength that contributes to subjective happiness. Grateful people were especially appreciative of the contribution of others to their happiness. The results of this study which used an intervention which purported to determine acts of kindness, unlike unhappy people, happy people reported more close and satisfying relationships and feel more gratitude in their lives (Otake, Shimai, Tanaka-Matsumi, Otsui & Fredrickson, 2006).

Happy people have more happy memories in terms of both quantity and quality, and they also appear to experience more gratitude towards others in these memories (Otake et al., p. 366).

One fundamental gap concerns the relationship between momentary experiences of happiness and long-lasting wellbeing. A simple hedonic calculus suggests that by adding up a person's positive events in consciousness, subtracting the negatives, and aggregating over time, one will get a sum that represents that person's overall well-being (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000)

One of the remarkable discoveries in this field of research on happiness is that most people are not born with this positive predisposition. Happiness is a skill that can be learnt. This is aligned with what the positive organisational behavioural scientists have been suggesting. The brain is malleable and hence it is helpful to learn skills that will make people less resistance to change. At the same time it may be possible to make progress in teaching people to behave and think in a more ethical and moral way. With the insights from the field of neuroscience, emotions may also be trained and ongoing development is showing positive signs in this regard (Petersen et al., 2008).

2.8 The big 5 and gratitude



Invoking the Big Five taxonomy which includes Extroversion, Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism, the authors assumed that grateful people experience higher levels of other specific positive emotions such as happiness, vitality, optimism, and hope, as well as greater satisfaction with life. On the other hand, they assumed that these people tend to experience low levels of negative emotions such as anxiety, depression, and envy. The grateful disposition is associated with personality traits which are mainly positive affective traits and well-being, prosocial traits and religious traits or spirituality is being born. To some degree, the correlations of individual attributes may be referred to with elements of the Big Five (McCullough et al., 2002). Trait gratitude has shown to be a stronger predictor of happiness than the Big Five personality traits.

Gratitude is an important component of the good life. Gratitude helps to reframe past negative memories of unpleasant events in such a way that these memories have less emotional impact. This implies that grateful coping entails seeking a positive consequence to a negative event after the individual has evaluated what is truly important in his or her life. Reframing negative events supports adaptive coping, which leads to overcoming a difficult time, example relationship loss or achievement failures (Watkins et al., 2008).

To argue that gratitude is simply a linear combination of more than one construct, can just reveal the significance of developing more insights at a diverse level of analysis (McCullough et al., 2002). Agreeableness and Openness have been positively related to gratitude in people's daily disposition (McCullough et al., 2004). Conversely, in a recent study, gratitude has shown stronger links to well-being and social relationships than the Big Five traits. This implies that gratitude has potential to have an effect on individuals that other personality traits cannot have. If gratitude can contribute to the knowledge and making sense of the meaning of well-being, this could be an enormous advancement for industrial psychologists who wish to further this study (Wood et al., 2010).

2.9 Positive emotions

Positive emotions fuel organisational growth and it is proposed that positive attitudes such as gratitude, be identified as critical resources to be cultivated in organisations (Cameron et al., 2003). Conventional views propose that experiences of positive emotion indicate well-being and possibly guide behaviour in the moment. According to Fredrickson (2001; 2004) positive emotions broaden people's thought-action repertoires, undo lingering negative emotions,

stimulate and build psychological resilience and trigger upward spirals toward enhanced emotional well-being. Associated to this work, new perspectives draw attention to the enduring individual and social benefits of the positive emotions of gratitude.

In addressing why some people are happier than others, it is important to understand individual differences in motivational and cognitive processes, for example his or her self-evaluation or self-reflection (Otake et al., 2006). Evidence of the powerful effects of positive emotions has been demonstrated in the workplace. Thoughts create emotional responses and cognitions leads to descriptions of how individuals identify with physiological feelings as distinct emotions. These emotions in turn influence how these individuals process information and make decisions (Avey et al., 2008).

2.10 Gratitude as an affective trait or emotional state

According to affective events theory, a specific event brings forth an initial evaluation which is either negative or positive and varies in the intensity of the felt emotion. For example, research demonstrates that the experiences of the same event will have two different outcomes for 2 different people. This implies that employees will view organisational change in various ways which will impact their behaviours and coping mechanisms (Avey et al., 2008). When investigating gratitude it is essential to establish whether it is being studied at the level of emotional state, or as an affective trait. In considering gratitude as an affective trait it can be understood that trait gratitude refers to an individual's disposition for gratitude. If an individual is high in trait gratitude, then they should experience gratitude more easily and more frequently than one who is not a grateful person (Snyder & Lopez, 2002).

Anticipated gratitude is a promotion-focused emotional state that is typically elicited when employees think about work-related success and motivates employees to take action thus facilitating feelings of gratitude in others. Research has shown that expecting others to feel grateful motivates individuals to invest additional time and energy in efforts to benefit those. (Grant & Wrzesniewski, 2010, p. 110). According to Emmons and McCullough (2004), psychologist and philosophers are seldom at ease with dictionary definitions and over the centuries it is evident that gratitude has been defined in many ways. One noteworthy reason is that gratitude is indeed a positive valence, is associated with positive outcomes, feels good and fundamentally strengthens self-esteem (Emmons & McCullough, 2004).

It has been a common but unspoken assumption in the social sciences that negative traits are authentic and positive traits are derivative, compensatory, or even inauthentic, but there are two other possibilities: that negative traits are derivative from positive traits and that the positive and negative systems are separate systems (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 12).

2.11 Social exchange theory / prosocial behaviour

Part of the bond of social order is the concept of social exchange and reciprocity. Giving and receiving in particular, reflects the idea of rights and obligations. The context of this giving and receiving depends very much on the purpose of the giving. An expression of gratitude in the form of a simple “thanks” forms part of the social glue and the moral order of society (Stein, 1989).

Some researchers argue that to the extent benefactors go out of their way to do the favour, beneficiaries should feel increased gratitude. As cited in Goei and Boster (2005, p. 171), the norm of reciprocity, according to Gouldner (1960) makes two demands: “(1) people should help those who have helped them, and (2) people should not injure those who have helped them” (Goei & Boster, 2005, p. 285). Gouldner’s (1960) belief that gratitude operates independent from the pressures of obligation is evident when he writes that, “the sentiment of gratitude joins forces with the sentiment of rectitude and adds a safety margin in the motivation to conformity”.

Amongst two other possibilities in a study referring to favour and compliance, differences exist regarding the psychological mechanisms that explain the favour-compliance relationship, as gratitude. Upon acceptance of a favour, internalization of the norm of reciprocity brings on a psychological state of gratitude and obligation (Goei, Roberto, Meyer & Carlyle, 2007). Through experiences of positive emotions individuals become unstuck, and grow towards optimal functioning, being able to transform themselves by applying more creativity, knowledge and resilience. The positive impact is also visible in how they integrate socially and their health. It was the resilient individuals who reported fewer symptoms of depression and trauma following the terrorist attacks on the United States of September 11th, 2001 (Emmons & McCullough, 2004).

Five articles deal with four different personality traits that contribute to positive psychology. These traits are subjective well-being, optimism, happiness, and self determination. These topics have been extensively studied and have produced an impressive array of findings in the

past three decades - many of them unexpected and not in accordance with what would have been previously assumed or expected (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Much research on gratitude uses scenario and self-report methods, which introduce potential limitations of social desirability and low psychological realism. The current experiment addresses these limitations by pairing a laboratory induction of gratitude with behavioural and self-report measures of gratitude. In the context of the prosocial nature of gratitude, psychologists typically define gratitude as a positive emotion. Emmons and Crumpler (2000, p. 56), described gratitude as "an emotional response to a gift" adding that gratitude is an interpersonal emotion that is felt toward other people or entities, and not toward oneself.

Research has demonstrated gratitude's positive valence and social nature. Taking the previous literature into account, I define gratitude as a positive emotional reaction to the receipt of a benefit that is perceived to have resulted from the good intentions of another. Naturally, gratitude is not the only possible reaction to the receipt of a benefit. Individuals may instead react negatively to favours with feelings of indebtedness. Both the emotions of gratitude and indebtedness may serve an informational function, alerting individuals as to the value of receiving a benefit from a particular benefactor (Baron, 1984).

The receipt of a benefit from another may trigger the norm of reciprocity, which states that individuals should help, as well as refrain from harming, people who have helped them. Gratitude and indebtedness would inform the individual as to whether he or she valued being subject to this norm in a given situation, and may affect compliance to the norm of reciprocity. The experience of gratitude as a positively valenced emotion (intrinsic attractiveness) would indicate that the individual felt positively about the benefit and the

benefactor. It then follows that one possible consequence of gratitude is prosocial behaviour toward one's benefactor. The small amount of research in this area provides indirect support for this hypothesis. Two studies support the idea that people who have been made grateful by a benefit are more likely to behave prosocially toward the benefactor or other people in ensuing interactions, whereas one additional study supports the idea that gratitude inhibits people from engaging in destructive inter-personal behaviour (Baron, 1984).

Direct reciprocity is the idea that cooperation emerges in repeated encounters between the same two individuals according to the principle 'I help you and you help me'. In contrast, indirect reciprocity embodies the concept 'I help you and somebody else helps me'. Indirect reciprocity comes in two flavours. Downstream indirect reciprocity means that a person who has helped in the past has a higher chance of receiving help. Upstream indirect reciprocity means that a person who has just received help has an (unreasonable) urge to help someone too. Although observed in experimental settings upstream reciprocity is harder to understand from an evolutionary perspective. Here, we assume that the recipient of an altruistic act experiences gratitude and is more likely to help either the donor or another person. Therefore, gratitude is an emotion which can lead to upstream reciprocity (Nowak & Roch, 2006, p. 05).

2.12 Gratitude and positive organisational behaviour (POB)

POB has been defined as "the study and application of positively orientated human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace". POB places emphasis on

positive constructs that are state-like and open to development. Drawing attention on what may or may not be considered as resource strength or capacity is worth developing (Avey et al., 2010). To differentiate POB from other positive approaches, several years ago Luthans set the criteria of inclusion of positive constructs. These constructs, he claimed must be theory/research driven, have valid measurement, be open to development or “state-like”, and have performance impact in today’s workforce (Petersen et al., 2008, p. 344).

Emmons (2007) yearned to put the importance and power of gratitude in an empirical test to investigate if gratitude is simply an alteration enhancer in bad circumstances and an adaption delay in good times. More specifically the researcher wanted to know if gratitude could have a more permanent effect that actually moves the overall range of the set point. Participants were randomly selected. One group was encouraged to indirectly feel gratitude, another was encouraged to be negative and complain, and a third group was left to be neutral. Participants kept a weekly, short journal in which they briefly described, in a single sentence, five things they were grateful for that which had occurred in the past week (*the gratitude condition*). In the next task they did the opposite, describing five daily hassles from the previous week (*the hassles condition*) that they were displeased about (Emmons, 2007).

After the 10 day experiment it was evident that participants in the gratitude condition felt much better about their lives and were more optimistic about the future. In fact, these participants were 25% happier than the other participants. In the second study, the approach to the intervention of keeping a journal, shifted from 10 days to 3 weeks. Participant conditions, in particular the gratitude condition felt more positive, offered more support and demonstrated prosocial behaviour (Emmons, 2007). In this study it was discovered that the

frequency in which people practice gratefulness matters (Emmons & McCullough, 2003, pp. 27-32). During exchange of benefits gratitude reminds the beneficiaries of reciprocity obligations. In this sociological exchange perspective, gratitude serves as the practical role for social cohesion, in contrast to the psychological perspective that would emphasise gratitude as an inner state to cultivate for its own sake (Cameron et al., 2003).

POB with its focus on the human capacities of Self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resiliency presents leadership researchers and practitioners with a high-potential source of competitive advantage to explore and on which to capitalize. It is thus essential for positive states and strengths to manifest into tangible, measurable behaviours that impacts performance (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). There is support for the view that inducing reactions incompatible with anger or irritation among various parties to resolve conflict may enhance the adoption of constructive patterns of behaviour. These are prosocial behaviours and may be directly referred to as gratitude (Tsang, 2006). Learned optimism prevents depression and anxiety in children and adults, roughly halving their incidence (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

2.13 Gratitude, virtuousness and good citizenship

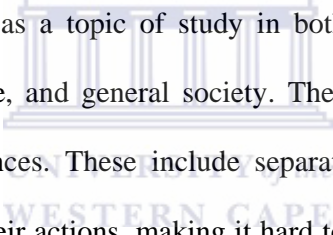
New research evidence demonstrates the relationship between virtuousness and performance, particularly in the context of rapid change. Duty-bound behaviours imply that individuals are behaving consistently and aspire to live at their very best. This very best relates to a meaningful purpose, have ennobling experiences, personal flourishing, and that which leads

to health, happiness, inspirational meaning, and resilience in affliction. The business world has paid very little attention to issues of virtuousness and words such as virtue, hope, and honor are not typically associated with the modern competitive business environment. However, in recent research on organisations that face turbulent and difficult circumstances, it has emerged that there is a relationship between virtuousness and performance (Cameron et al., 2004).

A particular study by Cameron et al., (2004) examined downsized organisations in a variety of industries. The researchers assessed members' organisational experience of numerous virtues such as compassion, integrity, forgiveness, trust, and optimism. The results showed that virtuous organisations significantly outperformed less virtuous organisations. This included a series of performance measures, including profitability productivity, innovation, quality, customer retention, and employee loyalty. Virtuousness has roots in the Latin word *virtus*, meaning “strength” or “excellence.” Anciently, Plato and Aristotle described virtues as the desires and actions that produce personal and social good.

More recently, virtuousness has been described as the best of the human condition, the most ennobling of behaviours and outcomes, the excellence and essence of humankind, and the highest aspirations of human beings. As noted above, virtuousness has been conceived as both an individual and collective state. At the collective level, organisational virtuousness can take two forms: virtue in organisations and virtue through organisations. Virtuousness *in* organisations relates to the behaviour of individuals in organisational settings that helps people flourish as human beings (Cameron et al., 2004).

The manifestation and consequences of individual virtues such as hope, gratitude, wisdom, forgiveness, courage, and other similar virtues have received increasing attention in the psychological literature (Petersen & Seligman, 2004). At the interpersonal level, virtuousness is associated with affiliative feelings and leads to the formation of social capital. At the organisational level, it produces positive emotionality, meaningfulness, and mutual reinforcement in the organisation. The second beneficial aspect of organisational virtuousness is its buffering effect. At the individual and group levels of analysis, human virtuousness serves as a buffer against dysfunction and illness. Individuals who experience virtuousness suffer less psychological distress and engage in fewer destructive behaviours in response to adverse events (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).



Virtues are making resurgence as a topic of study in both psychology and POS. Virtues benefit individuals, other people, and general society. The neglect of virtues also has had potentially important consequences. These include separating individuals from the wider social and external context of their actions, making it hard to identify traits that contribute to our understanding of human flourishing, and making it difficult to suggest virtue-based solutions to various problems. A study included three virtues: optimism, gratitude and proactive or transcendent behaviour. These seemed to be particularly relevant to nursing staff providing front-line service to patients (Burke et al., 2009).

Second, work situation characteristics accounted for a significant increment in explained variance in about half the hierarchical regressions; more significant relationships were observed. There were indicators of psychological well-being and perceptions of hospital functioning than with the other types of outcomes. Third, virtues accounted for a significant

increment in explained variance in about three quarters of the analyses, with gratitude having significant and independent relationships with various criterion variables in many of these analyses (Burke et al., 2009).

This exploratory study provided preliminary support for the general hypothesis underlying the research. That is, individuals reporting higher levels of virtues would be more satisfied and engaged at work, would indicate higher levels of psychological well-being, and perceive higher levels of hospital functioning and performance. As cited in Burke et al. (2009), these results were supportive of previous theorizing and consistent with empirical findings. Thus virtues seem to be associated with greater satisfaction, better individual health, and perceptions of goodness in the workplace.

Four different explanations for the association of virtues with higher levels of individual and organisational well-being have been proposed. First, virtues, as reported above, were associated with positive emotions. In addition, virtues tend to be associated with other virtues, increasing the experiencing of positive emotions even more (Carver, 1998). Individuals experiencing positive emotions are more likely to be proactive, to engage in organisational citizenship behaviours, be outgoing, and think and act in more creative ways.

Fredrickson (2001, 2003) developed her “broaden and build” theory of positive emotions, which, at its core, suggests that positive emotions foster an upward spiral of individual functioning. Second, virtues are associated with higher levels of individual psychological and physical health. Healthy individuals are likely to be heightened focus, vigor and

persistence, which in turn contributes to higher levels of individual and organisational functioning (Fredrickson, 2004).

Third, virtues are associated with increases in both personal and job or organisational resources over time. This would be predicted by Fredrickson's "broaden and build" theory; the rich keep getting richer. Particular virtues are likely to increase over time, and the consequences of these virtues (example, proactive behaviour, creativity, vigor) are also likely to increase over time resulting in more personal resources. In addition, virtues would also be associated with more job and organisational resources over time as well (example, more variety, more feedback and learning). Virtues can make it easier for individuals to bounce back after setbacks in their personal or work lives (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Fourth, virtues have also been found to influence colleagues in the workplace; virtues can be transferred to others. To the extent to which this occurs, the unit or organisation becomes stronger and more effective. Positive emotions can be transferred to colleagues and customers (Burke et al., 2009).

At the organisation level, virtuousness also serves a buffering function by contributing to the speed and effectiveness of recovery from setbacks. When organisations downsize, it almost always experiences employees who demonstrate problem behaviours that lead to poor performance. Virtuousness buffers the organisation from such effects by protecting feelings of solidarity, preserving social capital, enhancing collective efficacy, and clarifying purposefulness and vision. In health care organisations virtues such as kindness, love, and compassion helped to foster "strengthening," "replenishing," and "limbering" capacities in organisations (Caza, Barker & Cameron, 2004, p. 175).

When virtuousness is present, it strengthens the organisations by providing a clear representation of what was desirable, aspirational, and moral in the organisation. It helped the organisation to find renewal through its association with positive affect, social capital, and prosocial activity. By enhancing relational coordination, virtues helped to influence the organisation thus increasing its capacity to be flexible towards unanticipated and potentially damaging situations (Caza et al., 2004).

Organisational virtuousness must complement ethical standards which are essential in times of change and ambiguity. From the research it is recognized when virtuousness is present, both individuals and organisations deal with turbulence and uncertainty more effectively. Research evidence suggests that the brand of great leaders in the 21st century which is typically characterized by change and turbulence is that these leaders demonstrate both ethical behaviour and virtuousness which embraces and enables the highest in human potential (Caza et al., 2004).

2.13.1 Gratitude as a virtue

Bakker (2008) describes his work with individuals and organisations to increase engagement using both interviews and survey data. Contemporary writers view gratitude as an integral element of good citizenship. Gratitude is more than just a pleasant feeling, but more so a virtue that contributes to living one's life well. When being virtuous is amplified through its contagious effect, it has powerful effects on organisational performance (Bright et al., 2005).

There has been increasing research attention devoted to the effects of virtues in the workplace with some of the research being carried out in hospital settings (Luthans et al., 2008).

Gratitude plays a role in moral life; individuals owe it to their parents, their friendships and their community (Berger, 1975). The person who is able to experience gratitude, may also be a person motivated to carry out prosocial behaviour rather than commit destructive interpersonal behaviour. Very little has been done in developing a rating scale to measure gratitude (Cameron et al., 2003) until the GRAT 44-item scale (Watkins et al., 2008).

2.14 Positive organisational change

Research indicates that organisational change occurs as a result of a misalignment between the environment, organisational goals and current results. The change is critical for management to implement effectively and for employees to have acceptance and engagement. As much as leaders drive organisational change, it is the employees in the organisation who are required to adapt and behave according what is required after the change is introduced. Employees are required to learn new ways of forging paths and achieving redefined goals. They must be confident to adapt and have resilience to bounce back from setbacks which is part and partial of the change (Luthans et al., 2008).

When obstacles present themselves, the odds are down and things go wrong, these employees are required to remain optimistic; they need motivation and alternatives. A positive outlook for the future, positive relationships and positive processes supports the premise for successful organisational change (Luthans et al., 2008).

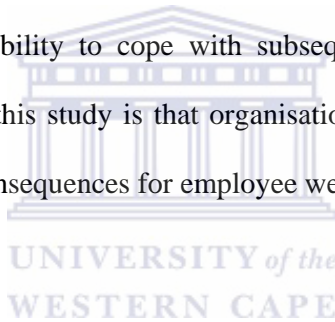
Several studies and theories can be drawn from to propose further insights into what would constitute effective strategies for change. Amongst these as cited in Avey et al. (2008), are the positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentimihalti, 2000), emerging fields of positive organisation behaviour, (Luthans, 2002a, 2002b; Nelson & Cooper, 2007; Wright, 2003) and positive organisational scholarship (Cameron & Caza, 2004; Cameron et al., 2003; Roberts, 2006). Fredrickson's (1998) broaden and build theory examines the impact of positive emotions and the role it plays in generating broader ways of thinking and behaving that would produce positive organisational change (Luthans et al., 2008).

In a longitudinal study of employee adaption to organisational change, the planned change is described to alter key organisational variables that then affect the members of the organisation and their work-related behaviours, resulting in changes in a variety of organisational outcomes. During this time managerial responsibility is to minimise negative feelings such as threat or fear. Attention and research is currently focused on which are the potential buffers that would negate these effects on employee adjustment. The extent to which change-related information may bring about change related Self-efficacy is currently investigated (Jimmieson, Terry, & Callan, 2004).

According to Bandura's (1977) theory, people who possess Self-efficacy have an intrinsic belief in their own capability. These individuals acquire from within themselves a plan of action to meet the demands of organisation change. Bandura emphasises that this Self-efficacy is oriented to how they cope during a specific situation or how they execute a specific behaviour. The cognitive-phenomenological model of stress and coping provides a

theoretical framework which explains how employees are able to adapt through organisational change (Jimmieson et al., 2004).

It is important to consider how the employees cognitively interpret the organisational change. Those employees who perceive themselves to have situational control and Self-efficacy will most likely take it upon themselves to enable better, more positive experiences of adjustment. The findings of this study demonstrated that those employees who perceived higher levels of change-related information and change-related Self-efficacy, reported higher levels of psychological well-being, client engagement and job satisfaction of the early phases of the change process (Jimmieson et al., 2004). When employees anticipate organisational change, they feel efficacious in their ability to cope with subsequent demands. The overall and complex pattern of findings in this study is that organisational change related stresses have the potential to have ongoing consequences for employee well-being.

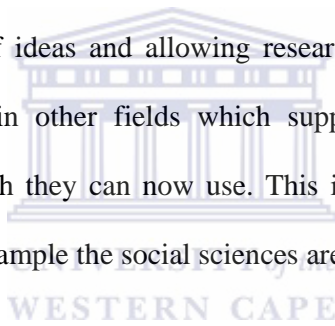


2.15. Summary

The purpose of this study is *to investigate the experiences of gratitude during organisational change*. As cited in Cameron et al. (2003), Park and Peterson define gratitude as “being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen.” Everyone can associate with the feelings of gratitude, simply because we receive gifts and we are grateful for the kindness shown towards us. We acknowledge that the person had a choice towards the gesture and did so out of goodwill.

Three components in psychology are relevant: the benefactor, the gift or benefice and the beneficiary. This indicates that gratitude is an approach to life that can be chosen by the individual. Classical writers generally viewed gratitude towards one's benefactor as an obligation and duty rather than an emotional quality. Gratitude has been associated with justice (Cameron et al., 2003; Fitzgerald, 1998) which entails rendering to others that which is due to them. Tsang (2006) defines gratitude as a positive emotional reaction to the receipt of a benefit that is perceived to have resulted from the good intentions of another.

Psychologists have started sharing concepts with other fields of interests, for example social psychologists, educational, clinical and industrial psychologists. This step in the right direction will enable sharing of ideas and allowing researchers to improve generalization. There has been development in other fields which supports researches in the field of Industrial Psychology and which they can now use. This increases the external validity as theories in other sciences, for example the social sciences are used (Seijths, 2003).



As positive psychology finds its way into prevention and therapy, techniques that build positive traits will become commonplace. Psychologists have good reason to believe those techniques that build positive traits and positive subjective experiences work, both in therapy and perhaps more importantly in prevention. Building optimism, for example, prevents depression (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 12)

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research design and methodology used to conduct the research which is based on a qualitative design. A qualitative study is worth conducting when the researcher wishes to find meaning in understanding a certain phenomenon from an insider's perspective. In fact, it is the purpose of the research that will have the most influence on the type of techniques used to collect the data, the use of certain research methods employed and even how data is eventually analyzed (Henning et al., 2010).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of gratitude during organisational change. In determining the relevance of the psychology of gratitude in organisational studies, the researcher attempted to establish further benefit to the following research questions: What is the meaning of gratitude and why is it important in the organisational context? How does gratitude, compared with other positive emotions relate to Positive Organisational Behaviour? How is gratitude influenced by other strengths - Self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience? Are more grateful people inclined to have higher levels of Psychological Capital (PsyCap)? Is it possible that more grateful people cope better through times of change?

The previous chapter introduced the literature relating to the major components of gratitude in organisations and the call for research in understanding the phenomenon of positive organisations. This research may lead to specific insights for the design of interventions

which could support employees in organisations which are experiencing challenges because of constant change. This chapter outlines the research paradigm, the method chosen for the research and specific information about the rationale for the method chosen.

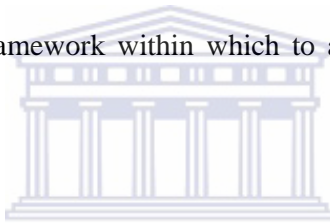
3.2 Qualitative research paradigm

In qualitative research, the main objective is to describe events or experiences of individuals in their own natural setting such as a home, school or an organisation. The participants' and the researcher's interpretation is extremely important to the research process and the prediction of outcomes is not a meaningful goal of the research study. Several classifications and terms in the literature can be very confusing and it is important to understand the differences in approaches to qualitative studies (Willig, 2009). The reason for choosing a qualitative paradigm versus the quantitative paradigm is that this approach is best suited to understand the phenomenon in this field of study. In a qualitative study the variables are not usually controlled and it is not intended to apply generalisability of the findings to other populations. Qualitative studies require sufficient freedom and scope to unlock the natural development of action and representation that the researcher wishes to capture (Henning et al., 2010). This is certainly the case when conducting this work on gratitude in organisations.

It is not always possible to capture data in predetermined instruments and this may limit the level of understanding of the research topic. Hence, if the researcher wishes to capture richness of data, very often a qualitative inquiry is turned to and usually with a specific purpose in mind. In this way, it is possible to find out more about the thoughts, actions and

emotions of the participants and whether the findings may have any significance for the future (Henning et al., 2010). According to Willig (2009), data collection is to create a comprehensive record of the participants' words and actions with minimal loss when data is transcribed. It is anticipated that data handling will not be difficult and not much is likely to be excluded which is of relevance and importance to the study.

Babbie and Mouton (2008, p. 490) advocate that 'there is no one neat and tidy approach to qualitative data analysis, nor even one approach to specific type of qualitative data analysis'. This research has defined a compelling question that the researcher is seeking to learn more about. This has made it easier to decide on a paradigm for gratitude from which to progress, and has lead to a theoretical framework within which to apply suitable techniques for the study.



When analysing the data, the researcher seeks to find a pattern and a reason for the way in which something happened. The researcher typically investigates the qualities of gratitude in organisations, rather than quantities. The qualitative research approach endeavours to find out not only *what* happens in gratitude, but also *how* it happens and, importantly, *why* it happened. This data may be used in the future to bring about a measure of positive organisational change through application of the insights. The researcher typically explains in argument, by using evidence from the data and from the literature what gratitude in organisations means to the respondents (Henning et al., 2010). An appropriate technique which may assist in understanding these experiences is based on the method of content analysis.

3.2.1 Content analysis

Clarity on the research process and approaches used for qualitative data analysis is important in achieving the researcher's interest. In this study the theoretical focus is on content analysis for which there is a plethora of definitions.

Content analysis is defined as 'words or phrases within a wide range of texts, including books chapters, essays, interviews and speeches as well as informal conversations and headlines (Babbie & Mouton, 2008, p. 491). Green (2004, p. 82) defines 'content analysis as a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use'. Qualitative content analysis defines itself within this framework as an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models, without rash quantification (Mayring, 2000, p. 2).

According to Sekaran (2003) content analysis involves quantification of qualitative information obtained through systematic analysis of relevant information which is used. This may be used in providing a means for submitting it for statistical analysis. While analyzing qualitative data, the notes transcribed are integrated and categorized under appropriate themes, the response categories then transformed into numbers, and subjected to appropriate data analysis. By using multiple methods such as interviews and questionnaires, the researcher establishes convergent validity and a sense of reliability of the data (Sekaran, 2003).

By examining the presence or repetition of specific words and phrases in these texts, a researcher is able to make inferences about the philosophical assumptions of a writer, a written piece, the audience for which a piece is written, and even the culture and time in which the text is embedded. Content analysis may be used in a wide array of applications, for example psychology and cognitive science (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

The characteristics of content analysis refer to language or communication with regards to its content. Two types of content analyses are applicable, namely thematic (conceptual) and relational analysis (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). Thematic analysis refers to 'coding and categorising as well as extracting and constructing themes from categories' also referred to as 'thematic organisation' (Henning et al., 2010, p. 107). The actual coding and categorizing of the data is to get to grip with the content which then becomes part of the analysis process.

Qualitative content analysis is the preferred choice for novice researchers because it focuses on one level of meaning, namely, the content of the data texts. The limitation may be that the findings may be superficial as it captures the 'real world' of the research participants in a straightforward way without much interrogation of the data. Software analysis programs, (CAQDAS) look for meaning in single type lines from the initial transcriptions (Henning et al., 2010). Mayring (2000) advocates two computer programmes that have proven its worth in interpreting qualitative content analysis, namely, Atlas/ti and WinMax. For this study there was no use of any software to help the researcher to interpret the data (Henning et al., 2010).

Following this perspective, a cross sectional research design, using a combination of qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) will be utilized with employees

(coachees) who have experienced organisational change. The researcher hopes that this unit of analysis will direct the boundaries of the research question. In conducting a cross-sectional analysis the researcher looks for recurring themes – similarities, differences that represent common patterns. The audio-recorded and initial transcribed data, as well as the response to the 2 questionnaires constitute the data for further analysis (Willig, 2009).

The conclusion reached from a cross-sectional analysis is based on data collected at one single time. In the context of finding meaning, it may be required to introduce a longitudinal study which permits observations and data collection over a longer period of time. Most research that involves observation of the experiences of participants or in-depth interviews is usually longitudinal in nature (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

3.3 The participants

Participants were all selected from the same organisation.



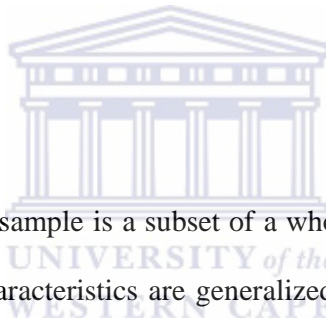
3.3.1 Population

A population can be defined as the specific group of people that the research has been conducted on; which allows the researcher to examine the elements of the study (Sekaran, 2003). The population for the purpose of this study consists of employees who have been through executive coaching, during times of organisational change. The sample will equally be representative of the whole population. It is impractical to include all members of the

population in a research project. The sample of employees, which represents a whole, will be used by the researcher to collect the data (Struwig & Stead, 2001).

In this qualitative study the researcher had an idea of who the participants could be. Henning et al. (2010), refer to this as the ‘theoretical population’ – those employees who are able to partner with the researcher to achieve the objectives of the study. In reality it is almost impossible to study all the members of the population that interests the researcher. In every research study, the researcher will select the group of people who represent the population and from whom they can collect data (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

3.3.2 The sample

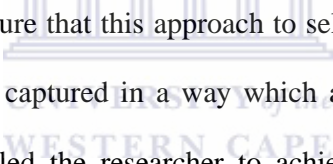


According to Sekaran (2003), a sample is a subset of a whole population that is investigated by the researcher and whose characteristics are generalized to the entire population. Babbie and Mouton (2008) refer to a sample as that small group of people researchers choose to collect data from, since they are almost never able to select the entire group.

For this qualitative study, the sample size is 16 employees ($n=16$). The aim of the study is to determine the experiences of gratitude during organisational change. Data was collected from employees in a single organisation. In all probability, the data may or may not reflect the exact characteristics of the phenomena that the research is hoping to achieve. Decisions about the research method differ from conducting a large scale survey. Understanding the

phenomena for a specific context, suggests to the researcher what type of design will be methodically acceptable (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

Knowing who the people may be, the researcher designed the interview to be most suited to the participant. The researcher conceptualised the process as a partnership which should lead to a specific goal. The researcher thus selected a sample that could provide insight into the phenomenon under investigation. In this context, the underlying factor is not the setting but more so the people who fit the criteria. Hence, the researcher believes that the employees who had experienced executive coaching through organisational change would be knowledgeable of the topic of gratitude, and could share their experiences (Henning et al., 2010).



The researcher attempted to ensure that this approach to selecting the sample indicates each individual's responses could be captured in a way which allows several conclusions to be drawn. The above factors enabled the researcher to achieve, having used an appropriate sample, with a minimum degree of bias, information that would address the topic and purposiveness of this research. Therefore the rigor of the study makes it possible for the researcher to achieve the hallmarks of the research (Sekaran, 2003).

3.3.3 Sampling procedure

Non-probability sampling is often the most appropriate approach for qualitative researchers. A non-probability sample was utilized for the purposes of this research. The researcher relied

on purposive or judgment sampling, to determine which employees from which to choose, for the data collection (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Sometimes it was necessary for the researcher to select the sample on the basis of existing knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of the research topic (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). Participants were selected because they have been exposed to coaching and they work in various positions of the organisation. This provided the researcher with a meaningful way to investigate gratitude in organisations. Due to the scope of applicability of the research, findings from one industry to another will not be determined and no need for generalisability of the sample is made (Sekaran 2003).

An adequate amount of potential participants had initially been approached via a telephone call followed by an email. The appropriate information regarding confidentiality was shared and their willingness to participate was received for the researcher to proceed with the research process. The ethical considerations (refer ethical considerations, 3.8) were dealt with at the beginning of every face to face interview. Not all of the potential participants were included for the interviews and data collection and none of the participants were seeking remuneration for participating. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the gender distribution of the respondents.

Figure 3.1 - Gender distribution of the respondents

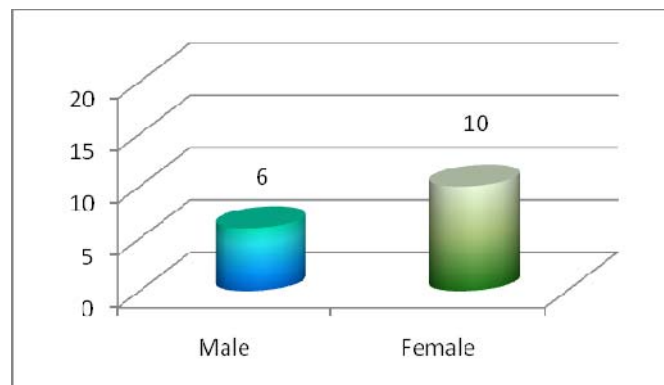


Figure 3.1 indicates the gender distribution of the sample of respondents from the organisation at which the research was conducted. As can be seen from the figure, the majority of the sample (n = 10) or 63% was female, while the remaining 37% (n = 6) comprised of male respondents.

3.4 Method of data collection

A cross sectional research design, using a combination of qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) was utilized and the data was collected in 2 phases and 4 steps.

Phase 1 – Step 1:

Sixteen (16) participants who had been in an executive coaching relationship with the researcher and who are familiar with keeping a gratitude journal were selected. At this time they were asked to complete 1 standardised measure, The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6). The GQ-6 consists of 6 items and participants are required to endorse each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale, 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. The GQ-6 has an alpha of .82 and is unidimensional (Lopez, & Snyder, 2003).

Phase 1 – Step 2

An interview was conducted for this step. The interview was derived by using an adaptive version of the GQ-6. The researcher was able to probe with questions such as “explain why” and “how”. Two additional probing, open-ended questions were added which would seek further understanding from the participants and to close-out the interview. These questions are as follows: “Given everything you just said, how would you describe how gratefulness

manifests in you?” “How could you raise your awareness about being more grateful at work?” Probes are a useful way to get rich responses based on the experiences, feelings and sentiments of the participants. The truth is, the researcher wishes to achieve the most valid, reliable and objective study, however in reality, this may not always be completely possible (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

Phase 2 – Step 3

Upon completion of the interview, the participants were requested to complete 2 standardised measures, the Psychological Capital (PsyCap) questionnaire also known as the PCQ-24 and the Gratitude Resentment and Appreciation (GRAT) 44-item scale. The PCQ-24, a measure of PsyCap consisting of four components, is measured by six items adapted from existing published measures (efficacy--Parker, 1998; hope-- Snyder et. al, 1996; optimism--Scheier & Carver, 1985; and resilience--Wagnild & Young, 1993). The resulting score represents an individual's level of positive PsyCap based on a 6-point Likert-type scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree (Cameron et al., 2003).

The GRAT 44 items require participants to read each item and indicate their agreement/disagreement on a five point Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree with the statement) of the 44 items, 14 are reversed scored. The development of the GRAT 44 appeared successful with good reliability and validity to measure dispositional gratitude (Watkins et al., 2003).

Although the method of data collection was qualitative and quantitative; the interpretation is based primarily on a qualitative approach. Based on the GQ 6 and responses of the PCQ 24

and GRAT 44, common themes will be compared with qualitative data from the interview. Thereafter, a review was undertaken of how gratitude is experienced by respondents. This is an approach used by the researcher which would enhance the validity and reliability of the qualitative process. The quantitative measures are used to supplement the qualitative data through the use of standardized questionnaires. Participants were interviewed through asking structured, open-ended questions to provide their most personally meaningful experiences of gratitude at work for the qualitative component as adapted from the GQ-6.

3.4.1 Questionnaires

The instruments used as the method for data collection are in the form of a quantitative questionnaire and a short qualitative study. A questionnaire is a predesigned written set of questions to which participants record their answers. It comprises of 2 sections; Section A requires a list of biographical data and Section B consists of a list of qualitative, open-ended interview questions that requires participants to rate their typical behaviour of responses according the Likert-type scale. The next step is to share with the researcher their views according to their experiences of gratitude in organisations.

Questionnaires represent an efficient data collection method because the researcher understands that a sample of 14 includes employees that have specific relations with regard to the research topic. Quantitative questionnaires can either be administered by the researcher or sent by mail or e-mail to participants. The 2 questionnaires which were used were administered at the same time after the interview and conducted face to face.

Questionnaires are just as important as the nature and wording of the questions. Improper questionnaires can lead to confusion for the respondent (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). The questionnaires used in this study have been used in other studies and have been shown to be valid and reliable questionnaires. Even though most of the participants may have had previous knowledge of completing questionnaires the researcher clarified the requirements with respect to questionnaire completion. In this manner, the researcher was able to clarify any confusion for the respondent (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

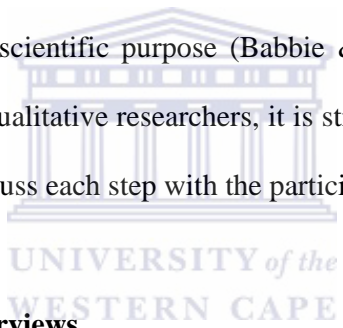
3.4.2 Interviews

The interview lasted on average for 55 minutes and the interviews were audio-recorded with informed consent (Schilling, 2006). The researcher had to be familiar with the questions asked in the interview before the research took place (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). For this reason the researcher has used the questions from the GQ6 and prepared beforehand open-ended questions which were used to obtain the data. These questions were as follows: “You said there is so much in the organisation that you could be grateful for.....Tell me more about that? Why is it that you are grateful for that? Can you explain it to me? Or, what needs to change for you to be more grateful for that?”

Where participants gave incomplete answers or provided an answer which they did not elaborate on, the researcher probed further. Probes helped to elicit more responses to open-ended questions. The researcher applied a creative approach in probing further, through use

of elaborating on what the respondent had just said. Sometimes the researcher repeated the same question or allowed for a time of silence (Henning et al., 2010).

The participants were also allowed a few moments of silence to formulate their response in their mind. At the end of the question the researcher used an appropriate verbal probe such as “Anything else?” Qualitative researchers try to provide meaning to a particular phenomenon, which in this study is “the experiences of gratitude at work”. The researcher needs to remain objective and truthful to the research process at all times and to stay close to the meaning of the respondent by putting themselves into the shoes of the respondent. Ultimately, the researcher needs to ensure that the process used to obtain the information from the interview is sufficient for analytical and scientific purpose (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). Even though there is no ‘one right way’ for qualitative researchers, it is still the researcher’s responsibility to remain transparent and to discuss each step with the participant upfront (Schilling, 2006).



3.4.2.1 Face to face interviews

Face to face qualitative interviews were used for the qualitative research. When conducting interviews the researcher was able to record any other observations as soon as the interview has terminated. This is because information recalled from memory may be imprecise and reveal some biases. The audio recorded information may also include biases as the participants know that they are being recorded and therefore their answers may be influenced. Anonymity is also not completely observed as the participants may be identified by their voices. When audio recording information, the researcher should ensure that the data that is obtained is not likely to be biased. The respondent’s permission is required at all times and

the researcher needs to allow participants to allay all fears, suspicions and anxiety they may have about the research consequences (Sekaran, 2003).

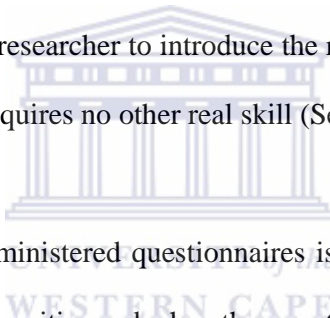
The advantage about face to face interviews is that the researcher can establish credibility and rapport by being pleasant, sincere and non-evaluative. When participants are able to clarify concerns and see that they are helped through difficult questions the objective of the research study can be very successful. The researcher can adapt the questions, clarify doubts and ensure that the responses are properly understood by repeating or paraphrasing questions. The researcher can pick up non-verbal cues from the respondent and any discomfort, stress, or problems that the respondent experiences can be detected, example through a frown (Sekaran, 2003).



Notwithstanding the benefits of face-to-face interviews, they also have shortcomings. Face-to-face interviews have geographical limitations and may impose on the scope of the research study. The cost of training researchers in order to minimize bias, for example in how they interpret the responses, is high. Participants might feel uneasy about the anonymity of their responses (Sekaran, 2003).

Should the researcher have required information from a bigger sample, telephone interviews could have been an alternative option. In telephone interviews the researcher would be able to obtain quick information from a large number of participants and in a large geographical region. Most telephone interviews are structured within a specific time limit, example 10 minutes per telephone interview. Current technology systems such as Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) are also possible and easy to manage (Sekaran, 2003).

For this study the researcher could have made use of electronically administered questionnaires to probe further and where the participants could use their own personal computer for responding to the questions. **Electronically administered questionnaires** are regarded as an efficient manner to collect data as they can be administered to the group of people and collect all the data necessary for the research study. This may take a slightly longer period of time and any doubts the participants have regarding the questionnaire can be addressed directly and be clarified via e-mail. The researcher also has the opportunity to thank the participants for the initial response to the research topic and to motivate the participants to give further frank answers. Administering electronically administered questionnaires only requires the researcher to introduce the research topic well, the reason for the additional information and requires no other real skill (Sekaran, 2003).



Advantages of electronically administered questionnaires is that they are easy to administer and can reach participants in other cities and when they are travelling. It is a very inexpensive and quick way to deliver the questionnaire to the respondent. Participants can answer the questions at their convenience. Disadvantages are that participants must have access to the facility even when they are travelling. The respondent must be willing to complete the questionnaire. It should be pointed out that the respondent may be biased in their response and data should be selected using other methods. The researcher used personally administered questionnaires when this type of bias limited the research study (Sekaran, 2003).

3.5 Validity, reliability and objectivity

For the purpose of this study, an adapted version of the GQ-6 was produced. The 6 items are coded according to the six-point scale and are all in closed-ended formats from 1= strongly disagree and 7= strongly agree. The researcher explored the topic using a list of qualitative open-ended questions that requires the respondent and the researcher to engage in a face to face interview discussion (Struwig & Stead, 2001). These are able to provide insight into validity and reliability of procedures followed.

Reliability refers to instruments' scores, or observations, which are reliable if they consistently measure the same construct. An instrument cannot be reliable but its scores can be (Struwig & Stead, 2001). The original questionnaires have been used before and are constructs of previous research indicated by the literature. These questionnaires have been adapted and have been formulated from previous questionnaires as well as lists of qualities as indicated by the research in the literature review. The questionnaires are thus valid and it has been used for previous studies on gratitude and psychological capital (Cameron et al., 2003; Watkins et al., 2003).

According to Babbie and Mouton (2008), the four key principles of objectivity for the qualitative researcher are the following: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

All the data collected or gathered in the research study were documented carefully and analysed qualitatively. After the interviews have been transcribed and checked for completeness and errors, the text is ready for the next step in the research process which is called the analysis process. The tools used would be to provide the researcher with support during the interpretation, condensation and synthesising phase. There are a number of options which can be used to discover the meaning of the phenomena that occur. The conclusions drawn through the interpretation of results of data analysis should be objective and not based on any subjective or emotional value (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).



3.6.1 Coding the data

Coding data requires the researcher to make decisions around what they are going to code, for example, coding for frequency or coding for existence. The researcher decides whether they are prepared to generalize on words that may have similar meaning as well as the parameters of what is acceptable or not. Through this process a set of rules automatically emerges for the study. The more certainty gained through this process, the more certainty is gained in which of the data that has been transcribed should be left out (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). These practices have been applied in this study. Basic approaches to working with the data usually start with a set of data that has been transcribed from the interview (Henning et al., 2010).

- The qualitative content analysis spiral
- A method of transcribing the data using 5 levels is applicable and the process is

described with the image of a spiral. The process moves in analytic circles from one level to the next and is called the qualitative content analysis spiral:

Level 1 – from tapes via transcripts to raw data

Level 2 – from raw data to condensed protocols

Level 3 – from condensed protocols to preliminary category system

Level 4 – from preliminary category to coded protocols

Level 5 – concluding analysis and interpretation (Schilling, 2006)

The table below represents a summary of the phases of content analysis.

Table 3.1: Phases of content analysis

<p>Phase 1:</p> <p>Orientation to the data</p>	<p>Phase 2:</p> <p>On the way – working the data</p>	<p>Phase 3:</p> <p>Final composition of the analysed data text (verbal and visual)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading or studying data sets to form overview and to comprehend the context (within the data). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coding segments of meaning. • Categorizing related codes into groups. • Seeking relationships between categories to form thematic patterns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing the final themes of the set of data. • Presenting pattern of related themes.

(Henning et al., 2010, p. 138).

According to Green (2004) how it is defined earlier in the chapter (refer p. 4) have three fundamental aspects namely:

- (a) the findings should be replicated by others
- (b) the analysis should measure what it intends to measure
- (c) the analysis is not limited to contextual data

Green (2004) further states that three basic approaches are contained in content analysis, namely:

- (a) the frequency count of the words
- (b) to examine the co-occurrence of words
- (c) the coding of text units using a coding scheme

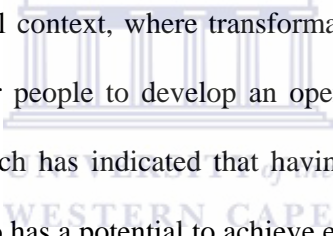
Several other approaches are noted in the research, however for this study the researcher has used the approach proposed above by Henning et al. (2010) as most favourable. The researcher has read and studied the texts to conceptualise certain meaningful labels and key codes which is also beginning to highlight specific themes and patterns (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

3.7 Strengths in conducting the research

One of the main strengths of qualitative research is the comprehensiveness of perspective it gives researchers. The researcher was able to develop a deeper and fuller understanding of the phenomenon under study. Flexibility is a major advantage of qualitative research and the researcher as the “main instrument” has modified the research plan to suit the object of the

interview. This increased the validity of the findings and allowed more control and freedom in the research process (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

The topic of gratitude as a construct on its own is a relevant topic for the purpose of organisational settings and has been researched in the last 5 years. The issue is how this affect can have a positive influence on organisational performance and the well-being of the individual. Stakeholders in organisations can gain insights into the importance of introducing acts of gratitude in organisations. Including gratitude practices is also an important consideration. Training interventions could also be the platform for teaching employees in an organisation the effects of having a grateful disposition at work.

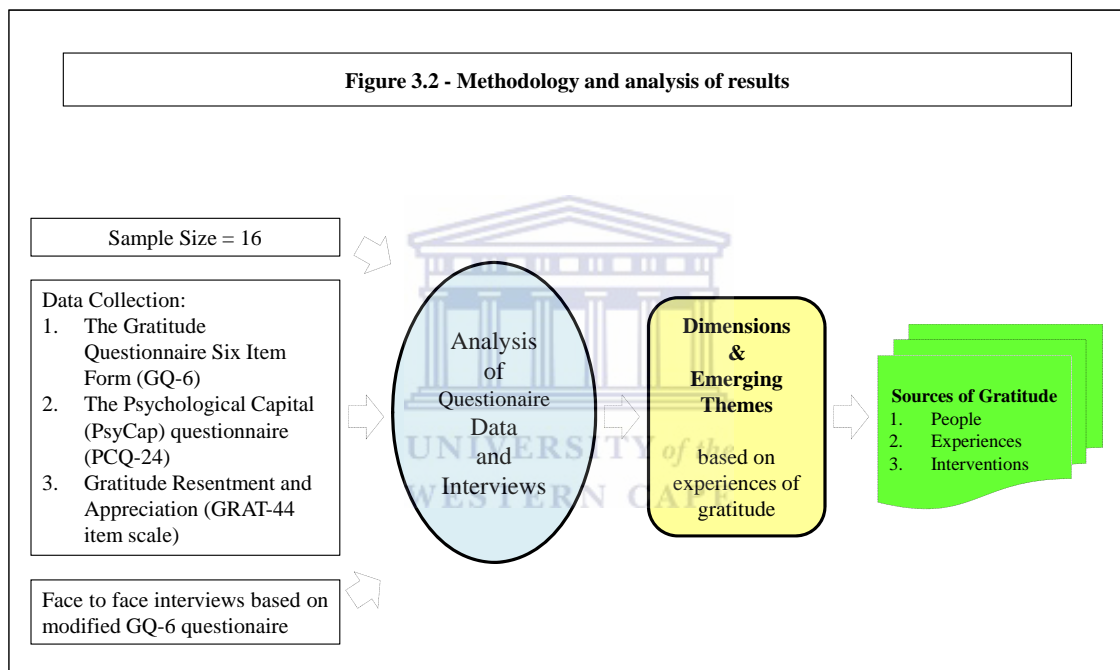


In the South African, and global context, where transformation and change is imperative it may be a necessity to empower people to develop an openness towards having a positive outlook on life. Previous research has indicated that having openness as a result of being more grateful, the individual also has a potential to achieve exponential personal growth. This personal growth may help the individual to re-invent themselves and be more competent to deal with the change but more so attract more.

Probably the greatest advantage of content analysis is its saving in terms of both time and money. There is no obligation to obtain a number of research resources or any special equipment to complete the research. The most important requirement is access to the data to be coded after the data collection phase. Content analysis provides a safe and secure approach to data even when the researcher is required to repeat part of the data collection. The time taken to collect data may occur over a longer period of time and seldom has an effect on the

response of the participant. The researcher can always code and recode and recode again if necessary (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). Following specific process in the data collection and analysis secures for the researcher essential guidelines which is necessary to bring clarity to the organisational research. This in turn provides the research study with the defence and rigour it deserves when presenting the facts and reporting on the findings (Schilling, 2006).

The summary of methodology and analysis of results is depicted in Figure 3.2 below,



3.8 Ethical issues to consider

Conducting research is an ethical venture and researchers should bear in mind the importance of ethics. The researcher uses a code of moral guidelines on how to conduct the research in a morally acceptable way. The research is exempt from plagiarism, distorting and inventing data, and republishing data as an original contribution without proper acknowledgement.

Failing to adhere to the confidentiality and privacy of the research participants would have meant that the researcher was involved in scientific misconduct.

Before conducting the study the researcher ensured that participants voluntarily agreed to take part in the study and they could decline or withdraw at any point in the research process. Participants were informed and it must be understood that there would be no negative consequences such as feelings of embarrassment, loss of self-esteem or physical harm. Throughout the research study the researcher should respected the confidentiality of the participants and guaranteed this at all time. Information regarding the names of the participants was not included in the responses sent via e-mail.



CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the most important themes and insights which emerged from the questionnaires and the interviews. Salient themes and sub-themes are presented based on the participants' responses to the research questions of investigating gratitude during organisational change. The following 6 questions from the GQ6 have been used during a face-to-face interview.

Q1. I have so much in life to be thankful for.

Q2. If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.

Q3. When I look at the world, I don't see much to be grateful for.*

Q4. I am grateful to a wide variety of people.

Q5. As I get older I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events, and situations that has been part of my life history.

Q6. Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone.*

In addition the researcher structured 2 further questions which refer to:

Q7. How does gratitude manifest in you?

Q7.1 How can you raise your awareness of being more grateful?

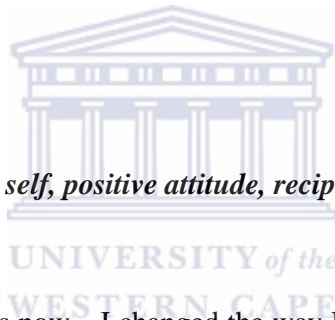
* Indicates reverse scoring

A number of open ended questions to each of the GQ-6 questions helped to evoke and allowed the researcher to discover very strong emerging themes. When asked "I have so much in life to be thankful for" the researcher probed further and sought clarity on what it is

in the organisation that the individuals are grateful for. The same emphasis was placed on gratitude in the organisation context throughout the interviews and for all the questions that followed. Several main themes emerged during the interpretation which included amongst others; opportunities, Self-efficacy, well being, leadership, competence, teamwork and resilience. Sub-themes have emerged which has been listed and contextualized based on the responses from participants.

4.1.1 Manifestation of gratitude in the organisation

Participants gave detailed descriptions of how gratitude manifests in them. Participants made reference to the following:



4.1.1.1 Being their best possible self, positive attitude, reciprocity act of kindness

Participant 4: “I show it to others now...I changed the way I am...every other Monday I take something to work...I just discovered I can bake...so I take something to work and we share things....we speak about important stuff...besides just work”

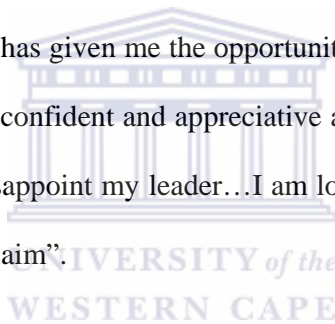
Participant 5: “Within an organisational point of view....within the team we all have different skills and we all pull on each other’s strengths...if he can’t finish something then he gives it to me...that respect for each other..... does manifest gratitude in me”.

Participant 6: “I give my best when I am grateful....when my best is appreciated...when my efforts are appreciated...and when you say thank you from the heart....and you mean it....because it is also what drives my inner self...then I can give more”.

Participant 7: “I am someone who always gives everything...I give everything to this company...that’s how I show my gratefulness... I feel I want to give that back to the company....do the best I can”.

Participant 8 said the following: “Gratefulness for me has a direct impact on what I do...I try to be the best that I can be because I am afforded the opportunities and by being skillful....it is a combination of the two opportunities and skillfulness....I express my gratitude for the opportunities by being the best I can be...in the business context and for my family”.

Participant 9: “The organisation has given me the opportunity to showcase exactly what I can do ...therefore I am much more confident and appreciative and that is why I always try to do my best in everything, not to disappoint my leader...I am looking at getting better and better going forward....that’s the main aim”.

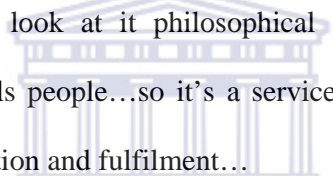


Participant 12: It manifests itself in my attitude....my attitude is more positive because I believe my efforts are recognized here...and they believe my efforts are value-adding...and it manifest itself in growth as well...I’ve grown quite a bit ...whether it is how the sector works....whether its learning about the people I have to work with...so in growth it has manifested itself...it creates more passion in what I do...it fuels my passion...”.

Participant 13:it’s that I am happy and positive...that is how it manifest...because if I’m not happy...and if I am not positive...then I wouldn’t be grateful... acknowledge that there are moments, small moments that you achieve, that you have to be grateful for”.

4.1.1.2. Gratitude as being a philosophy of life – counting blessings:

Participant 5: Changes happen all the time....it's not always the change that you would like...but there's always a bigger picture....you either see the bigger picture and become part of it or you're not part of it....change for me is a growth...understand what the changes are aboutand then...take the change...and whatever positive things come out of the change most of the time it's not that bad.....it's just to take the positive out of it and move with the positive...not look at the dark side....”.

Participant 12: “One can also look at it philosophical at it....we are a company that manufactures medicine that heals people...so it's a service unto society...it enhances your work life in terms of job satisfaction and fulfilment...UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE

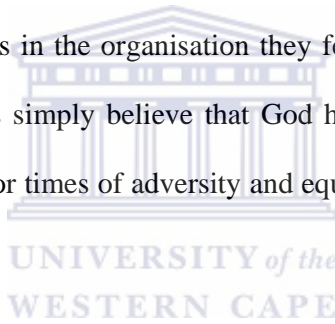
Participant 14: I think you have to take stock...I can go to the gym...I am by the means to do things....I have my faculties right....and its comparing yourself to less fortunate people...sit back and think about the things you have to be grateful for...have a yardstick...and acknowledge that I do have it better than others...you realise...I'm fortunate...it changes your perspective of what is important.”

Participant 16: “In my nature I prefer to...focus on things that I have than things that I don't...for instance...I am grateful that I have work... I always tell myself....to count my blessings...to focus on the good things...the bad will just get you down....that's basically

how I would put it.... paying me a decent enough salary...I'm grateful that my organisation remunerates us fairly....and they have really nice people”.

4.1.2 Growing an awareness of gratitude in the organisation

Participants believe they can grow their awareness of being more grateful in the organisational setting by remembering the difficult times, focusing on the positive influences and through reflecting on the opportunities for growth. When they take all of life together and consider the good against the bad, then there is a lot more to be grateful for than not. This they believe applies for both life and the organisation. When comparing themselves to others who may have less opportunities in the organisation they feel a sense of obligation towards gratefulness. Other participants simply believe that God has a hand in their live and their career, hence they are grateful for times of adversity and equally grateful for the benefits that they have in the organisation.

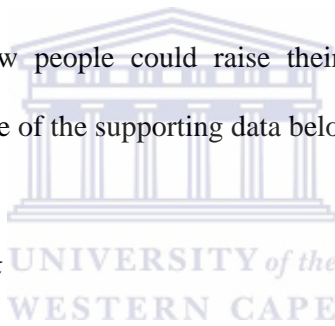


The following table presents a summary of how participants felt they could raise their level of awareness of gratitude in the organisation,

Table 4.1: Raising awareness of gratitude

No of participants	Themes Emerging	Evidence to support theme - "quotation"
3	Living my best possible self	Always doing my best...better and better
3	Counting blessings	"Reflection and remembering beginnings"; "as natural flow from within"; "as constant reminder"
3	Daily reflection in journal	"Remembering - making a list in journal" " keep a gratitude journal" "evaluation of recognition and reciprocity"
2	Periodic reflection and self-evaluation	"every six months, take action on opportunities for growth; "self-evaluation, reflection "; ""reflection - happy-gratitude-positive"
4	Gratitude as a philosophy in life	"belief in higher power - God has hand in career"; "comparison with others who have less to be grateful about"; "see change as opportunity to grow"
1	Reciprocity	" trust me for my skill and talents and I will trust you for your skill and talents"

These emerging themes of how people could raise their awareness of gratitude in the organisation are depicted in some of the supporting data below:



4.1.2.1. Reflection and feedback

Participant 1: “Sometimes it’s good just to stop and think about the things that you can be grateful for...sometimes I get home and think...wow....there’s nothing good about today...so I think you just need to stop and think about some of the things that you can be grateful for...there’s a balance between work life and real life....so you can always be grateful....I’m getting more than what I need....my challenge is to say....what do I do with the more that I have...the driver is what work I need to do and what I can do...so long as I’m paid sufficient...it’s fun...so coming back to the question of how do I improve my gratefulness...it’s just ...stop and think and be grateful for every person that you work with....for what they do in the work context....”

Participant 3: “To take time out at the end of every day to reflect...in terms of what was achieved...what was not achieved...what were the positives...what needed to be improved...”

Participant 4: “I think by remembering what was...thinking about what I was and what I was becoming...you see the in-between stages and how you got there...and then there is a lot to be grateful for...so if you just keep remembering then you remember to go forward as well.”

Participant 6: “Maybe I should ask what impact I have on you... a positive or negative impact on your life....what can I do better.”

Participant 12: “I make a list every 6 months and write down the things I believe are my shortcomings and equally also write down the things I did particularly well. I then set out to work on my shortcomings...in terms of the things I did well...it gives you time to appreciate...and how far you’ve come and how well you’ve done...and to be able to consolidate that...It’s a sense of achievement...so even the curve balls they throw at you...it can make you prepare for the future...that too you appreciate.”

Participant 13: “It’s recognizing when you have achieved something...and being able to look back and say ...I have achieved this or that and also build the confidence. It is allowing time to reflect...like have my daily gratitude journal and just thinking of that more”.

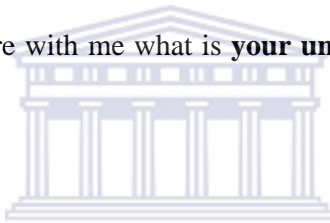
Participant 16: “I just constantly remind myself...to count my blessings as I say...rather focus on the things I have than on that which I don’t....and when I get something that I

wanted then I always say thank you...thank you to myself...thank you to God who made it possible to get the things I wanted...generally for the things that I want....I am like..If it's your will then let it be done...if not then it's fine too...that's how I get myself there....”

4.2 Meaning (disposition) of gratitude in the organisation

After the interviews were completed the researcher waited for 1 month before sending all the participants an email asking them to provide their understanding of the meaning of gratitude in the organisation. The following question was then posed to them:

“In your own words, please share with me what is **your understanding** of gratitude in your workplace/organisation?”



This question was posed to all the participants 1 month after the interview had taken place. The same key themes that emerged from the interview emerged from this email question. Gratitude like with other studies appears to have a happiness link. “A happy work environment will result in a happier workforce and one that feels valued and appreciated”.

Gratitude also has a link to what others do that makes people feel appreciated at work, “Gratitude in the workplace refers to how appreciated you feel at work or in the work environment. Participants’ response to working for a successful company, steered by competent leaders is a theme that describes participants’ understanding of gratitude. It is reflected in the following quote, “The fact that you work for a reputable company that strives to be a good corporate citizen and one’s work is taken seriously and appreciated to ensure

sustainability of the business. The fact that the business is very dynamic and opportunities are endless”.

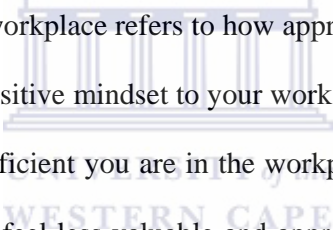
Participants described the meaning of gratitude in the organisational context in the following way:

Participant 1: “Gratitude is the natural overflow of thankfulness for a variety of interactions and opportunities within the workplace. Gratitude resides within one and can only be freely and gladly expressed. I am grateful for the following:

- God having opened up the opportunity for me at Aspen and in doing so being able to display some of the gifts that He has given me.
- The opportunity to work alongside so many diverse and passionate colleagues.
- The opportunity to learn entirely new skills from people with much experience.
- The opportunity to mentor and coach young managers.
- For the incredible technical opportunity of learning aseptic processing technology.
- The opportunity of being mentored by a humble man who is passionate about quality.
- To be working in an environment of incredible growth and expansion.
- For being part of the solution to daily challenges.
- For honest feedback from colleagues.
- The remuneration that has been provided.

Participant 2: “Gratitude for me in the workplace is showing a sincere appreciation for individual’s talent, skill, abilities, energy and even considerateness. This is important for the building of strong and healthy working relationships and teams.”

Participant 3: “The things that you appreciate that make coming to work a pleasure, and that make your tasks easier in order to achieve your goals. These things could be: “Some of the people that you work with...Achievers working towards a common goal with no hidden agendas, and no discipline issues amongst sub-ordinates that take up valuable time. I appreciate the Open door policies to Executives and freedom to propose better solutions at the top without all the red tape”.

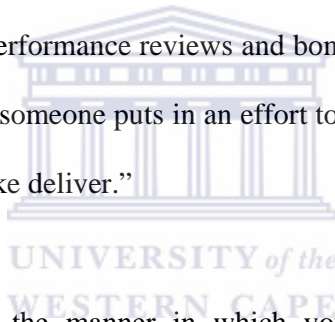


Participant 4: “Gratitude in the workplace refers to how appreciated you feel at work or in the work environment. “Having a positive mindset to your work environment impacts on the way you view your work and how efficient you are in the workplace. Having a negative mindset will do the opposite as you will feel less valuable and appreciated and this is more likely to make one less efficient at work. A negative mindset makes a person more discouraged and anxious and they tend to complain more than someone with a positive mindset.”

Every human being has a craving to feel appreciated. I think that the lack of appreciation in the workplace is what causes employees to start feeling negative about their work environment as all people want to feel acknowledged and appreciated and that sometimes just a thank you for a job well done means more than any kind of monetary incentive. Focusing on what is done right instead of what is done wrong will also make someone feel more appreciated. Gratitude is appreciation for the little things and can evoke positive feelings in

any employee. This if explored correctly can be of immense benefit in the workplace. Employers should focus on cultivating gratitude and making staff more enthusiastic to participate in work, encouraging teamwork and building stronger ties with their co workers, etc. Gratitude at the end of the day is the responsibility of everyone both employer and employees as it takes just a small gesture like sending a thank you email or a card to a sick colleague that can start a chain of gratitude events in the workplace. A happy work environment will result in a happier workforce and one that feels valued and appreciated.

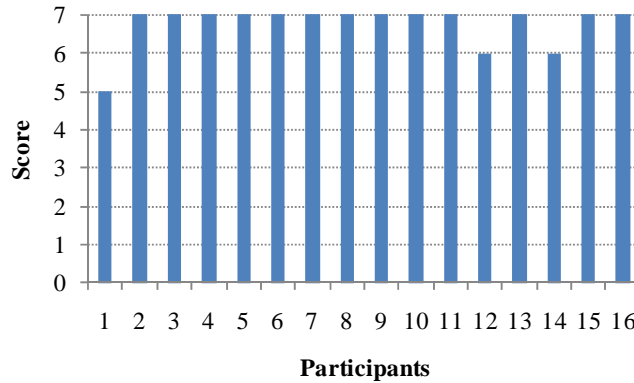
Participant 5: “I feel that gratitude in the organisation is for me through respect and acknowledgement of an individual’s performance and contribution to the overall goals of the organisation. This is shown in performance reviews and bonuses/incentives. On another level it is showing appreciation when someone puts in an effort to deliver and go the extra-mile, or re-arranges their schedule to make deliver.”



Participant 6: “My opinion is the manner in which your value in the organisation is appreciated by other means over and above the Weekly wages or Monthly salary. This can be in the form of a thank you note a pat on the back or a Bonus etc. This must come publicly or privately though gratitude that is expressed publicly might hold more value than privately. Adding Value & feeling appreciated.”

4.3 Dimensions and themes emerging from GQ1:

Figure 4.1: GQ1 -I have so much in life/organisation to be thankful for



The score indicates that all 16 people agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (score of 4 and above). The emerging themes are,

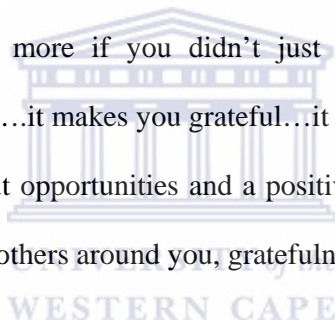
- o Self-efficacy, Opportunity, Well-Being, Leadership, Personal Growth, Teamwork

The sources of gratitude are directed at the people who gave them the opportunities i.e. showed leadership and belief in their abilities. They have given participants the **opportunities** that have shaped their careers and life in a very impactful manner. i.e. personal growth is one of the key hallmarks as participant 10 says, "... in terms of the organisation...to be part of a bigger company...that I'm being recognized for adding value to the company and being given the opportunity...that is what I am grateful for". The experience has resulted in an increased level of **Self-efficacy**, since it has boosted the ability of participants to raise their performance. This is confirmed by participant 4 who says: "When I first started it was very difficult...we didn't have experienced people...we were thrown in at the deep end... I didn't know it was something I was capable of doing...actually being in the situation has made me realize that I can manage...I can make decisions....I can problem solve...I could do all those

things...” Participants have grown in their personal **leadership**, taking ownership for problem solving and ensuring mutual accountability is a value which lives within team members and governs team norms, and supported by what participant 13 says, “I don’t feel that I have to be watched over all the time... I can make my own decisions...and I have to do my own risk-assessments when I make those decisions...based on the experience that I have gained and the mentoring and coaching that I have received.....that’s what I am grateful for...I feel empowered...”

During a conversation with Participants (2, 7), they referred to life as being very difficult at most and that they believe that nothing is given to anyone without putting in hard work. “You become appreciative of things more if you didn’t just get things in life...like second nature.....you had to work for it....it makes you grateful...it sort of shapes your character”.

It could be assumed that without opportunities and a positive outlook, having confidence in oneself, or positive influence of others around you, gratefulness is not hard to be experienced.



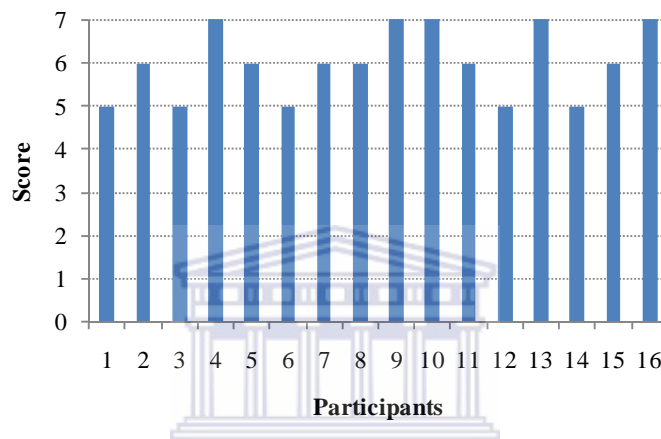
Participants (2, 4) have shared adverse experiences where the impact could have been negative and challenged their **well-being**, however what emerged from these interviews was still an expression of gratitude. This is confirmed by the following quote, “It’s given me the will power to move forward even through the difficulty...cause it’s never been an easy road...and each and every hardship that I went through has made me what I am today...and I can seriously say that it hasn’t just changed my work outlook...its changed my life.” .

Sources of gratitude are also strongly linked to what participants do as part of a team and the positive experiences they have had. Support and appreciation for **teamwork** is captured by the following quote, “There was great synergy... people were open, transparent, accessible

and honest...and there was great value placed on sharing...that's what I'm grateful for the sharing element of it...you were endowed with something for the purposes of serving others...for the blessing of others..."

4.4 Dimensions and themes emerging from GQ2:

Figure 4.2: GQ2 - If I had to list everything...it would be a long list



The score indicates that all 16 people agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (score of 4 and above). The emerging themes are,

- Opportunity, Relationships, Well-being, Competence, Intrinsic Strength

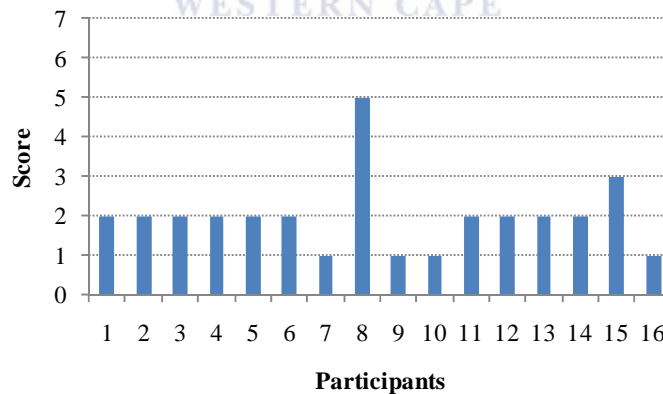
The sources of gratitude that makes up a long list is grounded in making different experiences through the relationships people have. This provided opportunities for participants to build competence in,

- Seeing the big picture beyond their immediate domain of work
- Valuing differences in people including different leadership styles
- Living out many different emotions pertaining to their family life and which all contributed to intrinsically strengthening them

Most participants agreed that they would have a very long list, particularly since gratitude is something natural and something that individuals are mindful about, participant 7 says, “ It would be a very long list...grateful for quality of life...for family...a good solid career...grateful for opportunities afforded to me.... for belongings that one has acquired over time...grateful for job security...the list can go on but those are some of the key things....”. Some participants felt that their list would not be that long, but the things that they would be grateful for in the organisational context would be meaningful and add value. Participant 16 said,” It’s not a long list probably because I’m not a person with a very long list of requirements in terms of getting happy ...the part where I slightly agree is probably not a very long list...”.

4.5 Dimensions and themes emerging from GQ3:

Figure 4.3: GQ3 - When I look at the world, I don't see much to be grateful for... things you ungrateful for?



Most participants found it very difficult to respond to this question and most of them admitted that there is not much that they are ungrateful about. This is reflected in the scores of disagreement above. Participant 12 for example said, “there are not a long list of

things...let me say this...I'm a type of a person...I don't feel sorry for myself...I will speak up if something doesn't gel with me... if there's something I would try to get to the bottom of it...even if I have to do things differently....I don't have lots of things that I'm ungrateful for”.

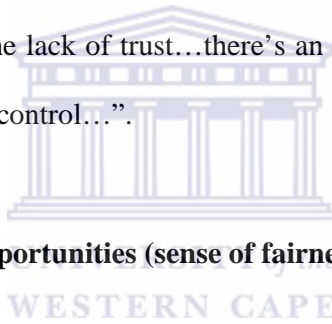
Yet when prompted during the interview, some compelling themes emerged which provides some of the paradoxical evidence of the “good” and the “bad” experiences during organisational change. This question also asked of the participants to share what needs to change inside of the organisation in order for them to be more grateful. The next probing question wanted participants to explain how these changes would make them more grateful. The perception is that participants are all ungrateful when they see barriers which would make it difficult for them to achieve their goals. Participant 3 echoed, “I would say...corporate politics...I still amaze myself at how grown-ups act in the workplace...you so busy during the day...where do you still find the time to come up with all these stories and calculating the notions of disruptions....I tend to distance myself from it...”.

The emerging themes which are the sources of ungratefulness are:

- The manner in which change is brought about and compliance expected
- Ambiguity in behaviour of colleagues, sometimes described as corporate politics
- Resistance to change if people are not engaged, involved or part of the decision-making process.
- Lack of support from leaders during change

It was insightful to discover how this question revealed very similar sentiments of how participants could be more grateful for the things that they are initially ungrateful about. The section below provides further details of evidence for this question.

Participant 2: “when things are out of your control to trust the people who are in control of the process... It will make me more grateful because in the example that I’ve just mentioned I was the individual that was in control...and there were individuals that felt out of control...out of control because they were not part of a process...and not controlling the process...and I would be more grateful if there were more trust...I trusted and if trust was reciprocated... now I can appreciate the anxiety that goes with change...and therefore...as much that I am ungrateful for the lack of trust...there’s an element in me that says...okay, I understand..why you feel out of control...”.

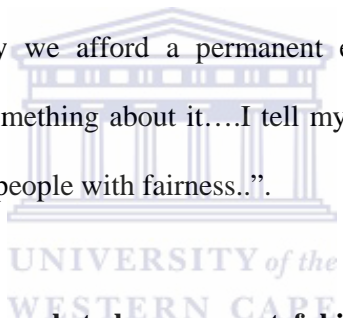


4.5.1 Barriers to realizing opportunities (sense of fairness)

In response to probing “what barriers exist to realize opportunities, participants shared very clear ideas on how this can be addressed. This include, participant 2 becoming grateful, for how the changes had evolved and says, “ It’s the hindsight...the beauty of hindsight...I mean, when you in the situation you’re not able to make sense of it...but when you reflect...you are able to take yourself out of that situation and look in...and say how could things have been done differently....And how that could have been prevented...and sometimes...the learning is just that you couldn’t have done things differently...you’ve done your best... and to be content with that too...”

Participant 16 indicated that, “Lack of flexi hours...it’s the very first thing that comes to my mind...in fact it’s a very big stumbling block... it’s so rigid...it’s not moving with the times....it’s completely opposite to the way that other companies are going...generally speaking ...”.

The requirement for managers to comply to company policy by taking action for late coming, created some big personal challenges, as participant 12 says, “ I always try my best to always say what I believe about a situation...maybe I make an example...and it’s a bit sensitive....we are currently trying to clean up... I don’t agree with is how we are going about doing it...we follow a disciplinary procedure...I don’t think it’s the right way to go about it...the same opportunity we afford a permanent employee...we should afford a contract worker...I would do something about it....I tell my superiors that I don’t think it’s fair.....I believe I need to treat people with fairness..”.



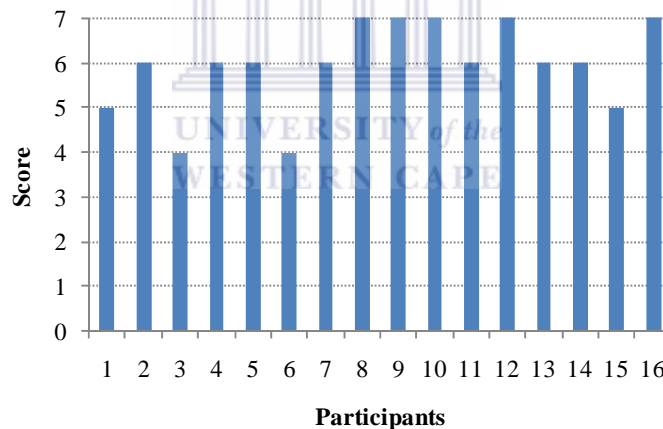
4.5.2 What must change for people to be more grateful in organisations?

This question was posed to see how well people could work through their ungratefulness and identify specific changes that would help. In this case, some reflection showed that solutions can be generated. Participant 2 indicated, “I think my reflection that I did at the time...reflecting and searching for the lessons... I’ve gained a lot of valuable lessons in those conflicting experiences...it was a kind of sandpaper experience for me....I’m grateful I engaged with conflict...because it made me...where I am right now...I realize...goodness...that was needed....for where I am now...cause how I will engage.... is different now...”

In the same positive way, participant 13 responded, “it’s about trying to make an influence....being in a position of influence...so you can surround that person who is negative with positive people...surround them with positive thoughts...positive ideas...so that they can also see...the contrasts...to see there is a way out of it...to highlight the contrast...the contrast between being negative and being positive...the contrast between taking action and not taking action ...and use examples from your life...to show how action can be taken...”

4.6 Dimensions and themes emerging from GQ4:

Figure 4.4: GQ4 - I am grateful to a wide variety of people



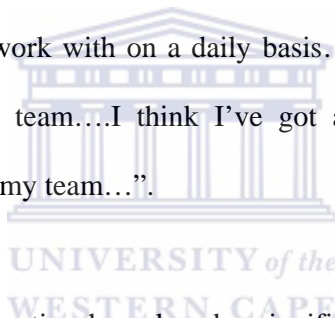
The score indicates that all 16 people agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (Score of 4 and above). The emerging themes are,

- Leadership, Relationships, Trust, Opportunity, Teamwork

The sources of gratitude are from specific people who experienced effective leadership behaviours in the workplace. Participant 15 reflects this strongly by saying, “I think he was a

very honest and open person...both personally and professionally...he took a lot of pressure...onto himself because of the nature of his position.... and I think he is a strong leader... ...for seeing in me the potential ...to turn the department around....I increased the input...and the quality...to see that I can make a difference there”.

Through relationships, personal growth could take place as opportunities were made possible for participants. The trust in the individuals and their capability is the foundation the relationships which developed, and the courage shown in taking a stance that leaders took in the development of their people. This is supported by what participant 7 says, “I’m grateful for leadership.....I think I’ve had good leadership over time....grateful to colleagues...some very intelligent people...that I work with on a daily basis...that one learns from on a daily basis...so team members....my team....I think I’ve got an awesome team...so I’ve got leadership....my colleagues and my team...”.



Mentoring and sharing of information has played a significant role in the gratefulness that participants felt. Qualities which participants appreciated in their mentors include nurturing, support and challenge to ensure that participants were improving in their performance and capability. Participant 11 says, “someone like “x”....he’s like a walking encyclopaedia...and never ever would he...if I ask him for advice...would he make me feel stupid...incompetent...he will help you and explain what you need.... the qualities that these people have...honesty...respect also...and they really take an interest in what you have to say...and if you tell them something they would listen...and they give good feedback...even if they don’t agree....they will also tell you why they don’t agree....it’s that trust you can have in them...”.

In most cases, participants have been transformed in their careers, and feel they can reciprocate this to others who are now in their teams. This is mentioned by participant 14 who says, “I’m grateful for the colleagues I can call my friends...and the fact that I can trust them...I can rely on them... I suppose the fact that the teams that we have are integrating... they are people I can confide in...there won’t be the fear of mistrust....so I think the trust factor is a big one....the fact that I can be myself...and know that it is not going to pop up somewhere else that I’ve said this or said that...”

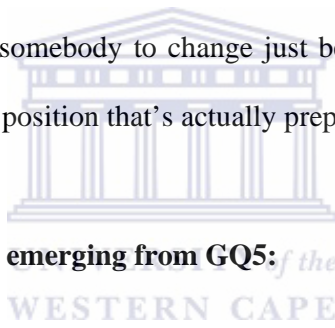
4.6.1 List of qualities that participants are grateful for in the organisation

Participants were probed for additional views regarding people they are grateful for. These are covered by a number of “values” which underpin behaviours in the workplace. An example of this is shared by participant 3 who says, “You know with some people you just click with naturally...he’ll give his honest opinion...he’s fair...practical in his thinking... the qualities of those people...honesty...integrity...reliable”.

Participant 7 appreciated the following attributes, “pace of delivery....ability to be in the service industry...ability to have vision and try and understand a need...and trying to satisfy that need as best as one can...the team going the extra mile...it’s a broad statement but...thinking outside the box....and anticipating what is to come...and so...being pro-active and problem-solving...people who are self-starters...people who are meticulous...in nature....quality oriented...it makes you grateful in that you don’t have to hesitate...you don’t have to ...doubt whether quality work is being done...so within a peaceful setup where

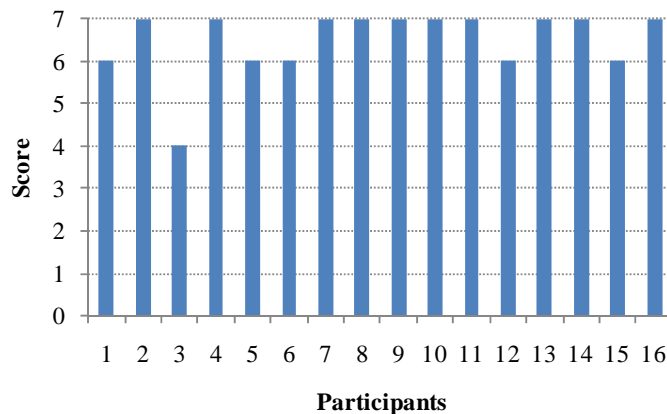
one works in, it does help a lot...You don't have to double-check...you don't have to go back ...redo something from scratch...when you don't necessarily have the time to do that....”.

Participant 15 appreciated the business acumen which is captured in the following statement, “he’s got an amazing business sense...he’s a very stable in what he wants...and that is part of his vision...I trust him...that that will be what it is...he’s never done anything that makes me believe different...that’s why I say he has a business mind...which is good ... I mean we’ve grown a lot...from the time he took over...we’ve doubled...so the reason why he’s in the position is obvious....but I’m grateful to him for listening to the little people...he’s not deterred of anything...if you go and discuss something with him he will assess it...and that’s all you want....you don’t want somebody to change just because you want to change...but having somebody in such a high position that’s actually prepared to listen...that’s very nice.”



4.7 Dimensions and themes emerging from GQ5:

Figure 4.5: GQ5 -As I get older I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events and situations that have been part of my life history



The score indicates that all 16 people agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (Score of 4 and above). The emerging themes are,

- Personal growth, Opportunity, Self-efficacy, adversity

Most participants referred to maturity as a natural tendency to look back and allow them to be more grateful about their past experiences that involved people, events, and situations that have been part of my life history. Participants are grateful for leaders who allowed them certain freedom, support or opportunities during their career path. When they compare the current situation with the past whether it was better or worse, they would be grateful towards that.

Participant 3 shares the nature of personal growth by saying, “ It allows you to work to your full potential...that you don’t have specific boundaries...because you are a disciplined person you can work to your full potential...as opposed to someone telling you what to do all the time...I was given the platform to propose where we are going with health and safety...that I could set up a meeting with top management to put my proposal forward on why and how to go forward...”. Participant 7 embraces the challenges through, “so the pace over the last few years has helped me to grow faster...as an individual and as a professional perhaps...and so it gives you levels of confidence and perhaps levels of professional maturity...which I think one has to be fortunate for...in slower paced business you don’t often find rapid change which allows you to grow as a person..... and so for me there’s a correlation between personal growth and professional growth....”

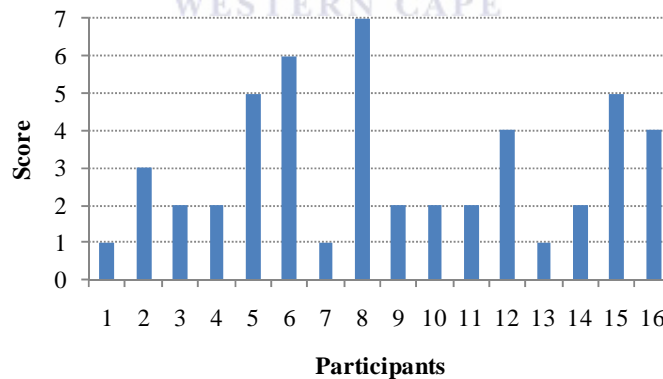
Participant 11: When I think of people who crossed my path here at work... over time you can look back and take the positive from it...that’s why I’m grateful.....if you can forgive and

forget those....that makes you grateful in the long run...there is always something positive ...I think also with time you become more mature...something I may be grateful for now...”.

Adversity emerges very strongly, as participants experienced support in many different ways and from different people. Participant 14 says, “I appreciate it...because I know it’s not easy to get to this position...and how much stress I’ve gone through...and the blood sweat and tears that goes into all of these audits...so I get impatient with people if they don’t give their full support during the audit...but they’ve become such a well oiled machine now...everybody....we very good at managing audits now...and I think that makes you really appreciate what you have achieved”.

4.8 Dimensions and themes emerging from GQ6:

Figure 4.6: GQ6- Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone

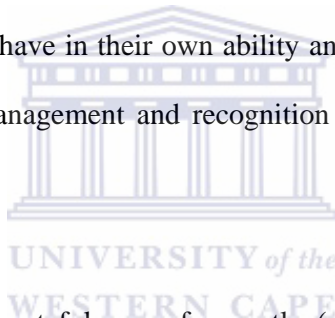


The score indicates that the responses are significantly variable across the 16 participants, with scores ranging from 1 to 7.

The emerging themes are,

- Opportunity, Recognition & Reward, Personal growth, Confidence and Intrinsic Strength, Leadership

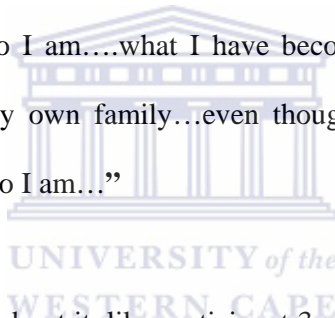
The evidence show that how frequently people feel grateful is determined by how often they experience the events that makes them feel grateful. The participants who agreed or strongly agreed (Score of 4 and above of which there were 6 people in the sample) to the question indicated that time is long between feeling gratitude if opportunities are not happening for them. The frequency with which they feel grateful is determined by how they define major events in their lives. This includes recognition through a career move, overseas trip on business development or reward through a bonus/ pay increase annually. These events tend to increase confidence that people have in their own ability and they interpret these events as a vote of confidence from the management and recognition for the value they brings to the business.



There are 10 people who feel grateful more frequently (with a score of below 4). These people value experiencing good things on an ongoing basis. They appreciate having been given and being in a job/career where they are valued. They appreciate “the small things in life”, where someone does something for them, or someone from their team does something well and is recognised for it. For them, every small event or experience is something to be grateful for. Participants have indicated that they are grateful for big events and others have indicated that they are grateful for big projects. Those who are grateful for big events or projects may naturally feel grateful at a lower frequency that others who are grateful for the small things in life.

How the participants interpret the meaningfulness of the event or kind act from a person, has an impact on whether they would feel grateful or not. Participant 2 says, “ it doesn’t take me long to say thank you... by merely showing up is enough for me...to say thank you...just be you...be honest...be transparent...be who you are and allow me to be me...accept me...trust me...appreciate me...vice versa...that is enough to be grateful for”.

Participant 5 says, “I suppose at the beginning it was little steps....where you look at everything every day and think...oh wow...that’s cool...I have to be grateful for that...I had to train my mind... now I spend very little time in the dark side...yes, last year when we were doing the coaching I was going through a difficult time...personally not work wise.....but I was never ungrateful... for who I am....what I have become...for where I am today...my family... my in-laws....even my own family...even though they not perfect because that imperfection...has made me who I am...”



Some people do not often think about it, like participant 3 who indicates, “ Now that you are asking me I’m thinking about it...about my annual increase...he’s probably never spoken to me before that he was very happy with me...so I have a better understanding now that he’s happy with what we do...I think we’ve exceeded his expectations...That our work is being appreciated”. This is different to participant 12, “No...it’s not long amounts of time....a few weeks ago with my performance review my boss decided to raise my performance score to higher than what I expected....that says he was happy with my work....it made me grateful...the money...and the confidence that he’s shown in me....”.

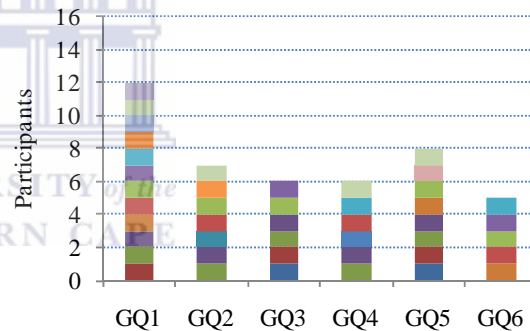
4.9 Themes emerging based on quantitative results

Based on the analysis in the previous section, and the occurrences of specific themes during the interviews, 7 main themes have emerged which form the bedrock of the gratitude experiences for participants. These 7 themes are now analysed across the GQ-6 questions to determine sources of gratitude, which can be a source of positive stimulus during organisational change.

4.9.1 Emerging theme 1: **Self-efficacy** and intrinsic strength

Definition: Self-efficacy

Change-related Self-efficacy can be defined as an employees' perceived ability to function well on the job, despite the demands of a changing work environment. (Ashford 1988, Wanberg & Banas, 2000 in Jimmieson et al., 2004).



From the questions posed, participants provided strong evidence for the theme of Self-efficacy and intrinsic strength. The sources of gratitude which influences Self-efficacy are based on the work experiences and the positive impact of different managers in how people developed during changing times. Confidence shown in people, trust in their ability and empowerment through decision-making, showed up in many of the experiences participants shared.

A number of participants spoke about projects or assignments which showed them and their teams, that they had the ability to perform well, in situations which they had not experienced before. Some participants also shared their ability to adapt to changing roles, and know that they can still succeed. The evidence shows that it takes belief and confidence from others (for example line managers) to assign people to situations where through achieving their goals they will grow in Self-efficacy. Participants who had experienced this growth in Self-efficacy had been able to impact other team members in a similar way, which had lead to others benefiting from their experiences.

The above reflects gratitude influenced by experiences and support from people, which has resulted in an increased level of Self-efficacy, since it has boosted their ability to still do well in their job or project, within a rapidly changing environment.

Supporting evidence includes,

Participant 13: “I’m grateful for sitting here today, having a positive experience and feeling that I can positively contribute....I am empowered in a sense because my managers have confidence in my ability....I have to live with the consequences of the decisions I make but in the end, it’s my responsibility ...so I must take accountability and am grateful for being in this positionnow at least there is a knowledge and now I can look out for myself....I am grateful for the confidence that I have in myself and in my team..where in the past I did not have it...we are really playing in an international arena, and we are doing it successfully....what I realised in the past few days is that we don’t have to stand back for anybody...”

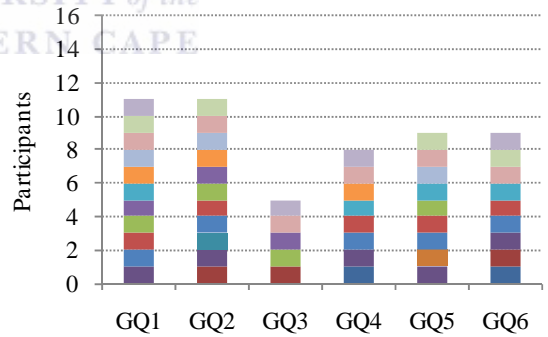
Participant 10: “When people have confidence in you it automatically makes you go to the next level...when you get positive feedback from people it basically validates what you’re doing.....my whole profile has basically changed and with that comes accountability, responsibility...energy”

Participant 11: “I see the circumstances they come from... then I feel if you have the willpower, but you do not have the self-confidence...and for me it’s a yes-moment if I can see the change I can effect in someone else...”

Participant 8: “at the end of the day I managed to take charge and prove to myself I can do it, and it made me learn more...and just the exposure to see how other people do it, and that I could contribute and show them what we can do”.

4.9.2 Emerging theme 2: Opportunities for personal growth, sense of achievement, realisation of personal goals

Definition: Opportunities
 A favourable situation or set of circumstances where people acquire knowledge, skills and experience which allows them to grow personally and achieve their goals



This theme emerges very strongly across the questions posed, and probably represents the biggest reason why participants feel gratitude in the workplace. Examples of these opportunities are,

- 1) Having mentors and guidance from key individuals, who are willingly to share their knowledge and experience with those in their team
- 2) Working in different departments and being given new roles and responsibilities during a organisation restructure and changes
- 3) Assignments abroad to learn from new facilities and share local knowledge
- 4) New job opportunities in a new section of the business
- 5) Opportunities to develop and influence a new department, with a different geographic scope
- 6) Opportunities to participate in projects which are significant to the company.

The evidence shows that as long as participants are experiencing new opportunities, they are grateful. A lack of opportunities was also noted as something people are ungrateful for. The frequency between the **opportunities** which people get or experience influences their continued level of gratefulness. The frequency with which they feel grateful is determined by whether the opportunity is a “major event” in their lives like **recognition** through a career move or a successful overseas trip on business development. Recognition through success in these assignments increases the gratitude which people feel, especially if they then get a bonus or an additional annual increase. Participants also indicate that the quality of their work and the level of loyalty have increased because of being given new and different opportunities in the workplace.

Supporting evidence includes,

Participant 7: “...grateful for mentors and certain key role-players...so those individuals are

particularly significant in your career-pathing....I've had fantastic opportunities right up until now....I look at the business I see change...I see positive change..."

Participant 5: "They recognised the skill and talent...and gave me all I needed to sort things out...if you give me the opportunity, I could turn things around...'x' was always a mentor and a wise person...I appreciated it now because I went from there and I discover a completely different field..."

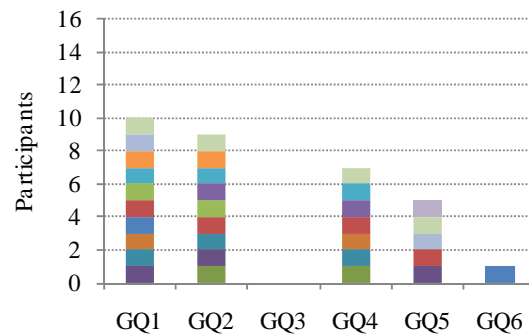
Participant 15: "...If you get the opportunity to discuss what you are interested in, they do seem to accommodate you....so I got a smaller group now...a more professional group...a quality driven group...so I think it's a great opportunity..it's a new position so being the first is also something...he saw I was doing a lot of work...he gave me the opportunity to get recognition for it...the quality of my work improves with the opportunities given to me..."

Participant 14: "I was allowed to get information and develop the department...and what I proposed at the time was accepted and decisions based on it...so we had to establish new standards for growth and that was exciting because I was exposed to new growth..."

4.9.3 Emerging theme 3: **Well-being and sense of purpose**

Definition: Well-being and sense of purpose

The state of being healthy, happy, or prosperous and having a defined purpose.



The theme of well-being and sense of purpose appears strongly in response to GQ1, GQ2 and GQ4, and to a lesser extent in the other questions. Participants have a sense that having a job in the current environment and being remunerated well, provides them with some happiness. They see their purpose as achieving the business imperatives. Other sources of happiness and prosperity include,

- 1) Being part of a large listed, growing company
- 2) Finding that the job challenge and the skills are well matched; this creates a win-win situation.
- 3) Being positive about learning from events that happen, whether good or bad

Supporting evidence includes,

Participant 8: “it makes me appreciate everyone in my life...I am able to function as normal, really grateful for health, and that I have nothing to complain about...when you are happy in your work, you are grateful for it”

Participant 6: “ I’ve been put on this earth for a purpose, it happens now that I am in ‘the workplace’, they’ve put their trust in me...grateful that I can contribute to the organisation, but also the society at large..I like closeness...I like company...that adds happiness to my life...people who got a vision of their own...who’s got a sense of purpose...”

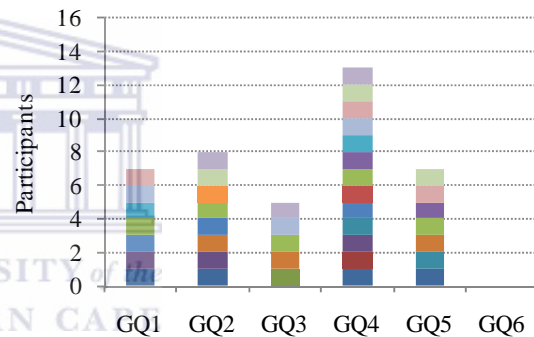
Participant 14: “...and the fact that we are almost in an evolution...we are moving up...I’m grateful for being part of it...yes, it takes blood sweat and tears...and you’re not always happy but your are more happy than unhappy...so it allows one to reflect and appreciate more where you at...”

Participant 5: “...things in life happen for a reason....you have to be grateful for the path that life takes you...feel good that you are worth something and making a difference somewhere...”

Participant 11: “to be grateful for my health...if you’re not healthy then nothing means anything...”

4.9.4 Emerging theme 4: **Leadership**, trust, decision making, empowerment, recognition and reward

Definition: Leadership
The ability to positively influence the behaviour and growth of others. Through integrity and trustworthiness, involve and empower others in the decision-making process. Give and receive feedback and recognition.



The theme of leadership is moderate to very strong throughout the responses to GQ1 through to GQ6. This is manifested in the following way,

- 1) Situation awareness and difficult work experiences brought about by change defines the type of leader people become
- 2) Opportunities to lead people, of different cultures has built confidence to deal with challenges and still be positive

- 3) Experiences of working for many different managers with different leadership styles, gives insights regarding which leadership behaviours work well
- 4) Being coached in developing good people and networking skills, and being open to feedback
- 5) Learning from and leverage the strengths of others in the business, across many functional disciplines

Supporting evidence includes,

Participant 9: “...Everything that has happened at the company and everything that has happened in my work life is who I am today...I’ve been turned from someone who couldn’t do this before to someone who can step into a pressurised environment and be the calming influence.....feedback is so important that it was actually going to “path” the direction we are going...they’ve given me a lot of feedback...good and bad...and I’ve used it to the best of my ability to actually turn into something positive at the end of the day....”

Participant 4: “it’s never been an easy road....being in the situation has made me realise I can manage...it somehow changes your mindset....changes the way you do things...but sometimes you need that encouragement...always pushing you to achieve more..”

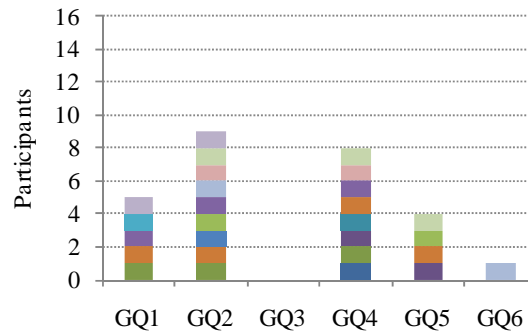
Participant 13: “I started in this company on a junior level, and how I’ve grown over the years...inside the company because of the opportunities I’ve been given...and the people that surround me and allowing me to grow...I got a great team of people working for me....they are achieving limits which they did not think possible...we celebrate even small achievements...I enjoy being with the people ...it’s an opportunity to learn from other people...he’ll first evaluate the situation (and say) let’s look at the risks..he has taught me a

lot on problem solving and he has helped me make decisions...he's got leadership ability so he showed me a lot...on my path..."

4.9.5 Emerging theme 5: **Competence**

Definition: Competence

The ability to do something well, based on knowledge, skill and/or behaviour, measured against a standard. This ability is acquired through experience or training.



The theme of competence is moderate throughout the responses to GQ1 through to GQ6. Having strong competences is seen as a basic requirement to succeed, and people view this as a strength. Lack of competence is seen as a reason for people to show resistance to change and apathy towards new initiatives. The company clearly recognises the people with the relevant competencies and have made changes to match peoples' skills with the job requirement. This has been a source of gratitude for a number of participants interviewed, as this has led to new opportunities and increased remuneration. Where people have not been able to demonstrate the requisite level of competencies, they have been moved to positions better suited for them. Although these changes have been a source of ungratefulness, the passing of time have often allowed these participants to find acceptance and thrive in this new role.

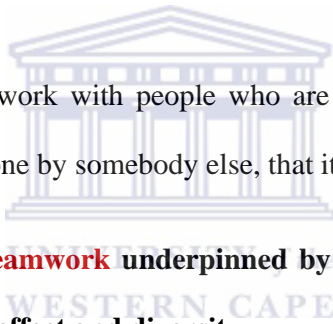
Supporting evidence includes,

Participant 3, "...and give you the freedom to do what you are skilled to do...I never had a

manager who prescribed exactly what I needed to do... I think we've exceeded his expectations... You are given the opportunity to set standards where there was nothing before.... they could've decided to turn a blind eye to my potential...to the skills that I have ...to the commitment and the dedication that I've shown..."

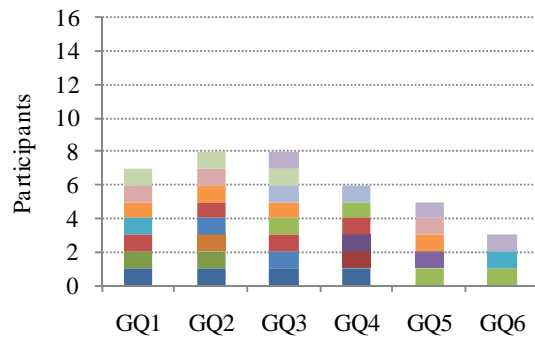
Participant 12, "...his technical ability...he was able to understand very abstract concepts...he could simplify it in a way that really makes sense...and the way he gets work done... Being human I think is the main thing... they have aspirations I thought I knew much...but when I moved to a new department... I witnessed the skills there ...the experiences people had... ...just seeing how I've used my personal skills and created a family from my team..."

Participant 16, "...it's nice to work with people who are competent and you not have to worry that something is being done by somebody else, that it is being done wrong... "



4.9.6 Emerging theme 6: Teamwork underpinned by social exchange, relationships, reciprocity, amplifying effect and diversity

Definition: Teamwork
 This is the process of people working collaboratively in a group, to achieve a common goal. They achieve this through making behavioural choices which benefits both the individuals and the team, simultaneously.



The theme of teamwork is consistent throughout the responses to gq1 through to gq6. The conversations of gratitude show a very strong appreciation for teamwork and the interactions participants experience in pursuit of the business goals. They indicate that a trustworthy relationship is the foundation of what makes effective social exchange in the workplace. Participants are through their own growth experiences, creating growth opportunities for others, and giving back in other forms, what colleagues or managers had done for them.

Supporting evidence includes,

Participant 10, "...it's just the way we interact with each other...we've learnt teamwork dynamics and for that I'm grateful...when you're exposed to other people...you have to learn about the other people...you allow the person to flourish....also give their opinion.... without the support of your team members you will never touch that end goal...it's about relationships with somebody...."

Participant 15, "...but as a group...I will take credit as a group...not as a person...that was a great team manager...the people that I worked with at the time..it felt like...it really was a team...so having the support...I want them to be the strongest functional team...a contributing team..."

Participant 2, "gratitude also for my team members...the team was faced with enormous challenges...but there was trust... each team member had their area of expertise and we would each accept that and work within that... It would be team members...entire team members...there wasn't one team member that I felt I can't be grateful for...."

Participant 14, "The fact that I was part of the team...that I could grow... we would be completely aligned... so you will be able to see how what you do influences the teams and

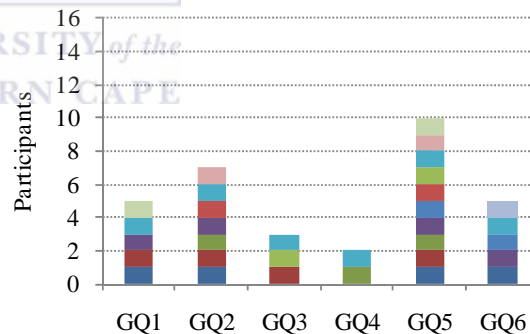
the teams objectives... ..I suppose the fact that the teams that we are, are integrating...the people who are driving change... the team that he’s currently managing on integration...I’m grateful to be part of...”

Participant 11, “if I can’t be thankful for something...how will I ever be able to touch someone else’s life?”

Participant 1, “...just being exposed to a socially diverse group of people...across gender, class, race... team around you,...grateful for the diverse things they bring to the table...it helps you to remain flexible and open-minded..... the fact that I’ve moved from an industry that is completely male-dominated to an industry that has a lot of females...”

4.9.7 Emerging theme 7: **Adversity, resilience, counting blessings**

Definition: Adversity, resilience, counting blessings
 The ability to face up to difficult situations, learn, find acceptance and bounce back through behavioural shifts and positivity, despite continued changes in the work environment.



The theme of **adversity, resilience and counting your blessings** emerges mainly when significant challenges have been overcome, and on reflection, participants show appreciation for the tough moments and what they have learnt from it. Some even indicate that the workplace have made them better people, more resilient, because they have had to face adversity. They reflect thankfulness for emerging stronger and seeking out the positive

aspects of the experience. GQ5 is a reflective question and therefore draws most of the responses to this theme.

Supporting evidence includes,

Participant 11: “To a certain degree it’s about sort of accepting a situation for what it is...when something negative has happened to me...I may be angry or feel bad about it for a while...but I will always end up trying to get the positive out of it.....and that you need to accept what comes your way...try to see the positive...”

Participant 4: “...and eventually I didn’t get any answers...so you have to just accept it...you move on... it’s never been an easy road and I’m actually grateful for that. Cause taking this sharp-winded road has led me to be the kind of person that I am... ...and each and every hardship that I went through has made me what I am today...and I can seriously say that it hasn’t just changed my work outlook...its changed my life”

Participant 2: “...there were challenges in terms of change...change had taken place but not everybody had accepted the change...so there was the natural conflict that comes with resistance...to change... and you’ve got to accept it...you can try to influence it but at the end of it....sometimes you’ve just got to make peace with some things.....it’s fine to accept the things you cannot change...”

4.10 Relationship between GRAT 44, PCQ 24 and GQ 6

Table 4.2: Correlation between GRAT 44, PCQ 24 and GQ 6

	GRAT 44
GQ 6	0.824**
PsyCap	0.723**

** $p < 0.01$

In terms of table 4.2, it can be seen that there is a significant relationship between the GRAT 44 and GQ 6 ($r = 0.824$, $p < 0.01$). Similarly, the results depict a strong, direct relationship between the GRAT 44 and PCQ 24 (PsyCap). Hence, it appears that those who demonstrate high levels of gratitude are inclined to experience corresponding levels of hope, optimism, resilience and Self-efficacy, that is psychological capital.

4.11 Reliability analysis

Cronbach's Alpha is viewed as an index of reliability associated with the variation accounted for by the true score of the underlying construct (Cronbach, 2004). Alpha coefficients range in value from 0 to 1 and may be used to describe the reliability of factors extracted from

dichotomous and or multi-point formatted questionnaires or scales. However, there is no lower limit to the coefficient, however, the closer Cronbach's coefficient alpha is to 1, the greater the internal consistency of the items of the scale (Cronbach, 2004).

Table 4.3: Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for GRAT 44, GQ6 and PCQ 24

GRAT 44		GQ 6		PCQ 24 (PsyCap)	
No. of cases	16	No. of cases	16	No. of cases	16
Alpha	0.925	Alpha	0.942	Alpha	0.842
No. of items	64	No. of items	36	No. of items	36

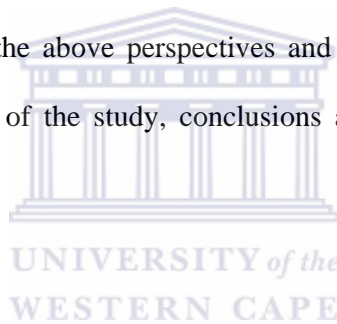
According to research, the Cronbach coefficient alpha's can be regarded as excellent in terms of the reliability of the instrument. George and Mallery (2003) argue that coefficients above 0.8 can be considered to be good indicators of the reliability of an instrument. Hence with the current study, this was exceeded, indicating a high degree of consistency, stability or reliability.

4.12 Conclusion

In all of the above interviews, the quality of the responses which participants gave provided strong evidence regarding how gratefulness is influencing the psychological well-being of people in the workplace. Participants expressed openly how they feel about gratitude in the

organisation as well as other dimensions of their lives. Participants emphasized the value of the interview and felt that everyone in the organisation should have an opportunity to crystallize those elements that they may be grateful for, particularly during organisational change. Remarkably and perhaps not so uniquely, participants differed in the frequency in which they experience gratitude, the size of the task at hand and the meaningfulness of the reason behind the gratitude. Despite a huge chorus of gratefulness within the workplace, there was some evidence of ungratefulness, and respondents were able to provide evidence of this. Seemingly, these experiences help to shift people towards gratefulness as it provides opportunities for personal growth and Self-efficacy.

Chapter 5 attempts to weave the above perspectives and interpretation into the theory of previous literature. Limitations of the study, conclusions and future recommendations are presented in the final chapter.



CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

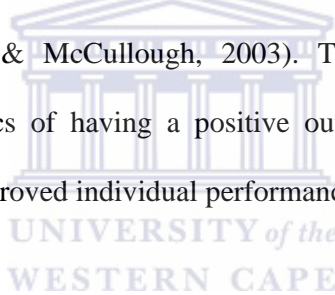
5.1 Introduction

Positive psychologists believe that a psychology of positive human functioning will arise that achieves a scientific understanding and effective interventions to build thriving in individuals, families, and communities. The prevailing social sciences tend to view the authentic forces governing human behaviour to be self-interest, aggressiveness, territoriality, class conflict, and the like. Such a science, even at its best, is by necessity incomplete. Even if ideally it has been successful, it would then have to proceed to ask how humanity can achieve what is best in life (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

This chapter discusses the themes which emerged from the research and is juxtaposed against previous literature and allows the researcher to integrate it against findings from previous research. Ambiguity in the work environment points to the essential need for the specifications of information during times of organisational change (Jimmieson et al., 2004). Gratitude is possibly the exemplary positive psychological trait, as it involves a life orientation en route to the positive in humankind (Wood, Maltby, Gillet, Linley, & Joseph, S., 2008).

5.2 An overview of the grateful disposition

Gratefulness towards life's circumstances may be an adaptive psychological strategy to interpret everyday experiences positively and to notice and appreciate elements of one's life. To place emphasis on the fortune of one's condition and that which we are not experiencing is crucial in enduring happiness. The interviews demonstrated that people feel fortunate and through this continue to experience happiness. Personal commitment to develop a world-view that one's life is a gift, hold considerable opinions about optimal psychological functioning. Religions and organisations have scheduled reflective days for the practice of grateful thinking. This is based on the premise that it leads to improved psychological and social performance (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). The results from the interviews associated several characteristics of having a positive outlook and a shifted mindset for example "willpower" which improved individual performance at work and in life.



According to McCullough et al. (2002) four "facets" of the grateful disposition is described:

Intensity – a dispositionally grateful person who experiences a positive event is expected to feel more intensely grateful than someone who is less disposed to gratitude.

Frequency – a grateful person may experience a grateful feeling several times a day even for the simplest acts of kindness where someone who is less disposed towards gratitude would experience it less.

Span – refers to the number of life circumstances for which a person feels grateful at a given time, feeling grateful for families, their jobs, their health as well as life itself. Less grateful people will feel grateful for fewer aspects of their lives

Density – refers to the number of persons to whom one feels grateful for a single positive result. A dispositionally grateful person might feel grateful towards a number of people, e.g. parents, friends, family and mentors and someone less disposed to gratitude may feel grateful to fewer people for the same result (McCullough et al., 2002).

The interview examples demonstrated a difference in how participants viewed the *intensity* and *frequency* of experiencing gratitude. Minor events or routine tasks were perceived by some as not necessarily leading to a grateful disposition, for example when a team member has done something which contributed to the “team effort”, saying thank you is a natural response to giving recognition. However, with major events such as a positive job change or having the opportunity to work on a big project only happens periodically and the gratefulness experienced is a lot more intense. Participants whose *span* of experiencing gratefulness more frequently for example daily, tended to be grateful to family, health, job, career, opportunities to grow both personally and professionally. The *density* of the people inside the organisation who most of the participants feel grateful towards are their colleagues, mentors and leaders who has enabled positive results by their involvement and support.

THEME 1

5.2.1 Self-efficacy and intrinsic strength

When psychologists refer to strengths they are not referring to physical strengths but psychological strengths. Drucker first spoke about strengths in the late 1960's. Forty years later, psychologists started delving deeper into this concept and to conceptualize this further. Seligman and his colleagues have started drawing insights from all areas of expertise, that is,

psychiatry, philosophy, youth development and the traditional insights of strengths and virtues. What is becoming apparent is that human strengths are part of a much wider, holistic human functioning and not really just a single construct, for example optimism, gratitude or creativity. The psychology of strengths, human functioning and positive psychological health has become more relevant in organisational behaviour into the 21st century. In defining strength it has been viewed by some as a human talent which can be unlocked, while others view it as a virtue that links to a moral behaviour (Linley & Harrington, 2006).

In organisations, people are often reminded to overcome their weakness. It should be emphasized that strengths are a natural capacity and if employees are made aware of what they are able to do naturally, they can value themselves and what they do best differently and allows them to think, behave and feel differently which leads to optimal human functioning and performance (Linley & Harrington, 2006). During the interviews participants reflected on how they view their own strengths by “doing the best they can” and also how they are able to unlock the best in others through the positive influence they have on others, and “encouraging others to do their best”. Opportunities given to them which allow them to gain respect, show their skills, and talents and achieve their goals, appear to be a huge source of Self-efficacy. When others value the contribution they are able to make, they begin to have greater confidence in their ability to tackle even more difficult task.

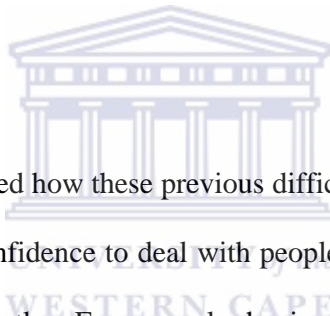
Apart from a few significant research studies done thus far on gratitude, result show that this area of research is still in its premature phases. According to Peterson and Seligman (2004) it was found that of all the 24 VIA character strengths, gratitude was more strongly related to

life satisfaction ($r = .43$) than all of the other strengths except hope/optimism and zest (with the latter arguably a direct measure of happiness). Notably, this suggests that gratitude can explain more variance in life satisfaction than such traits as love, forgiveness, social intelligence, and humour. One participant confirms that it is more important to be able to “forgive and forget those - that makes you grateful in the long run”.

According to (Jimmieson et al., 2004, p. 13), in the context of organisational change, change-related Self-efficacy can be defined as an employee’s perceived ability to function well on the job, despite the demands of a changing work environment. Employees who doubt their ability to respond to the demands of a specific organisational change event are likely to focus attention on their feelings of incompetence, which is accompanied by feelings of psychological distress, and a failure to deal with the situation (Bandura, 1977). On the contrary, employees who have high levels of change-related efficacy are unlikely to be distressed by feelings of inadequacy and, consequently they are expected to persevere in their efforts to control the organisational change process.

As with organisational change and the experiences shared during the interviews, participants have confirmed a strong level of Self-efficacy as a result of rising above the challenges faced. The challenges which arise for the individual requires them to adapt, draw on their intrinsic strengths, and lead the response to the change process, thus taking accountability for their work. The presence of meaningful challenge in the workplace will provide the opportunity for people to develop skills, which will allow them to perform at the next level.

In one study it is proposed that gratitude is an antidote for people and prevents them from engaging in destructive interpersonal behaviour. Conflict can lead to a both positive and negative impact; it can be either constructive, generating positive outcomes or very destructive, thus leading to negative results. In their efforts to develop strategies for reducing destructive conflict, researchers have often ignored a valuable source of information that might, potentially, prove useful to them in this regard—the vast extant literature on human aggression. It was predicted that compared with the control condition, exposure to any of the three incompatible-response-generating treatments would reduce negative feelings among subjects, enhance their impressions of the accomplice, and lead them to express greater preference for constructive as opposed to destructive modes of dealing with future conflicts (Tsang, 2006).



Some of the participants expressed how these previous difficult lessons learnt have developed within themselves a sense of confidence to deal with people who are resistance to change or negative influences more efficiently. For example, having a new opportunity to “showcase what they can do” or “being recognized for my skill” impacts their self-worth and confidence in themselves.

Previous research established that job-related Self-efficacy tempered the relationship between planned workload or planned working hours and psychological strain. This also impacts the relationship with individual workload on physical strain, psychological strain, and organisational commitment (Jimmieson, et al., 2004). Working hours, instilling discipline and the impact it has on participants emerged very strongly from the interviews. In most case participants believed that they should be trusted to manage their own workloads and work

hours and that of their teams without the perceived negative influences of the organisations policies and procedures.

In this organisation a new code of conduct of time and attendance was enforced by the organisation and participants perceived it as unfair. As a result of this new enforced policy, they found it difficult to gain commitment from their team members to go the extra mile or to give more time to complete tasks. This sense of fairness and the negative impact it has on achieving their goals, then lead to feelings of helplessness and ungratefulness towards the organisation. One participant (16) said *“if managers are allowed to manage their departments as they wished... flexi hours would really make a difference... would really make me feel more grateful”*.



Other feelings expressed in the interviews were acceptance towards ongoing efficiency practices such as cost improvement, which initially became a source of irritation that would prevent them from doing their work. In the interviews, participants indicated that commitment is gained when digging deeper and making sense of what would be best for the organisation, through discussion, reflection and having a positive mindset. Employees who experienced higher levels of change-related information and change-related Self-efficacy three months after the change, reported higher levels of psychological well-being, client engagement, and job satisfaction during these early phases of the change process (Jimmieson, et al., 2004). When these individuals who were initially ungrateful have an opportunity to grow through the process they see it as drawing from their intrinsic strengths.

According to Williams, Crafford and Fourie (2003), individuals draw on their own and others experiences to find meaning and relief in their own experiences. One participant (16) shares an apt example which demonstrates her Self-efficacy, *“I’ve been through a lot... got myself through it...and I’m still in one piece...internally grown strength... built character... gained through my experiences...I am most grateful for the things that happened... it made me stronger...”*. Expressing individual strengths enhances performances and means they are going with their own flow and natural abilities, also called talents. Strengths can be naturally applied through a feeling, thought or behaviour. It alters existing paradigms about fixing weakness to building on strengths (Linley & Harrington, 2006).

Fredrickson compares gratitude to a strength that has the potential to broaden people’s thought actions (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). In essence, various strengths are now being understood as pieces which make up a complete picture of human functioning rather than individual constructs such as optimism and gratitude being investigated as a single construct. Strength according to Clifton and Anderson (2002), as cited in Linley & Harrington, (2006) is referred to as a close to perfect performance in a given activity. On the contrary, Peterson and Seligman (2004) refer to strength as the psychological feature that defines and displays a virtue (Linley & Harrington, 2006).

THEME 2

5.2.2 Opportunities for personal growth, sense of achievement, realisation of personal goals

Almost all experts on the workplace agree that employees should be more proactive on the job and that proactive behaviour increases job performance. As cited in Burke et al. (2009), Crant (2000) considered antecedents and consequences of proactive behaviour in organisations. Proactive people are likely to identify opportunities and act on them, they may take initiative, and they tend to persevere until goals are reached or change is brought about (Burke et al., 2009). A few of the interviews highlighted the importance to influence the effectiveness of performance, either at a personal, departments or team level. When their suggestions which includes improved teamwork, quality work or running a department efficiently to bring about greater effectiveness for the business is supported by the leadership, they become grateful that they are able to achieve and knowing that their own needs as well as the team and organisation's needs have been realised.

Significant to this study, the authors describe a number of critical factors relevant to the enhancement and maintenance of positive emotions. They advocate to continuously increase well-being, suitable plans and practices must be conducted with effort and consistent commitment (Seligman et al., 2005). Participants acknowledged that much of the responsibility rests with themselves and how flexible they are to adapt their plans through a changing organisation. The belief that "anything is possible at work" and if they "hung onto the negative feelings such as resentment" their goals will not be met in their new job.

“Constant change has its pros and cons but the organisation is changing so much and grows so much which obviously gives us opportunities... also beyond the South African operations.”

This opinion is in line with findings that the quest of personal goals enhances well-being only if the actual goals set are achieved (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006).

Evidence implies that, beyond making people feel good, the experience of positive emotions such as joy, happiness, and contentment embraces several social, intellectual, and physical benefits for the individual (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006). As participants shared during the interviews, they provided evidence of what makes them grateful in the organisation. Participants believe that their work and time spent at work is significant and need to be happy. An example from one participants' (7) provides evidence which illustrates how this makes them grateful. *“Your time at work presents you with an environment where you can be happy...and motivated....trustworthy relationships with people to learn from ...constructive conflict and disagreements...that's the nature of humankind... that's really what I'm grateful for.”*

Wood et al. (2008), confirms this in his statement - experiences of gratitude have set a realistic and incremental contribution to both purpose in life and positive relationships with others. In addition, gratitude made a contribution to self-acceptance and personal growth of almost twice as much as would be considered reasonable. Research describes experiences of gratitude as pleasant and argues that it diminishes the aversive experiences such as resentment, envy and regret (Fredrickson (2004). From the interviews, participants have acknowledged that change had brought about opportunities for both professional and personal growth. In many instances, it was the recognition of the participants' evidence-based

potential, which was the trigger for new growth opportunities. The achievement of goals and what participants experienced while being involved in a different role or assignment is often the sources of gratitude. In this context, if people can see change as an opportunity, they can be positive about it or instead they can be resentful, frustrated or ungrateful for the change. Constant organisational change seems to manifest in the individual in two ways. Firstly, it influences the individual's beliefs about the change and secondly, it impacted their emotions and feelings towards the change (Williams et al., 2003).

According to Fredrickson (2004), the lasting effect of gratitude is questioned in light of the fact that feelings of gratitude can be a momentarily uplifting of the spirit in the absence of negative emotions (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). People who are grateful, experience regular and powerful grateful affect, viz-a-viz, they have a more positive outlook about their social environments, use dynamic coping strategies and display more positive behaviour (Wood, et al., 2008). Consistent with the interviews, powerful grateful effect was often referred to as obtaining it from a higher source, for example that they have made it “with the help of God” who is everywhere “even in the organisation” and ultimately directs their path. Other participants ascribe their gratefulness to their positive mindset.

THEME 3

5.2.3 Well-being and sense of purpose

Theoretically, gratitude is anticipated to be strongly related to well-being. Gratitude represents the archetypal positive personality trait, being a perspective of how others see the world and are accustomed towards observing and appreciating the positive in life (Wood et

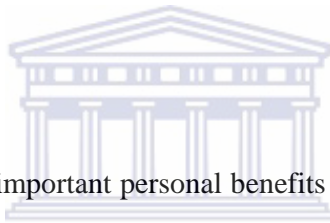
al., 2008). Participants shared experiences of their natural tendency to be positive and grateful. The way they describe this is when they are grateful they impact the well-being of other employees who then also have reason to be grateful. This implies that gratefulness is then amplified when empowerment takes place through leadership behaviours which reinforce having a sense of purpose.

When leaders see change as a sense of urgency and see it as their purpose to drive the change, they will walk their talk and not shirk their responsibility towards participation and providing support. When managers rush through tasks and agree to unreasonable deadlines trust diminishes in people (Williams et al., 2003). Possibly an insightful finding which dealt with “issues of trust” is where participants demonstrated their commitment and perseverance towards the purpose of their role. This comes with the realisation of how fortunate they are that they have been trusted in their role to drive continuous improvement. Participants also felt that through trusting team members, they are assured of reliability and less concerned that tasks will not be done properly. Probably the strongest source of well-being is psychological safety i.e. there is no ambiguity regarding how people will respond to change in a given situation. This requires a very high degree of trust.

Additionally, McCullough, Tsang, and Emmons (2004) found that daily experiences of gratitude were related to a host of well-being benefits. These benefits emerged particularly from the first question which referred to what in general do participants feel grateful towards in life and at work. From being grateful to families, health and leaders, participants also expressed how having relationships of fun, respect and trust at work and comparing

themselves to others who are just fighting for the basics in life makes them grateful and satisfied with life, including life in the workplace.

The experience of gratitude can increase both psychological (Watkins, 2004) and physical well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). In this investigation as well as other experimental studies, support exist that positive interpersonal consequences of gratitude is possible. The present study adds to the existing research by providing new support for some positive interpersonal consequences of gratitude. This is typically impacted through personal growth and self-awareness and how individuals are then able to appreciate where others are coming from, through showing openness to change versus tuning the anxiety that others may be feeling.



Although gratitude might have important personal benefits for the individual, gratitude is, at its foundation, a profoundly prosocial emotion (Tsang, 2006). One participant (4) makes sense of the above perspective through how they perceive that all people should be concerned about the well-being of each other. This is confirmed by the following: *“Gratitude at the end of the day is the responsibility of everyone both employer and employees as it takes just a small gesture like sending a thank you email or a card to a sick colleague that can start a chain of gratitude events in the workplace”*.

Researchers suggest that gratitude may have a causal relationship to feelings of happiness and well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Watkins, et al. (2003) found strong relationships between dispositional gratitude and various measures of happiness and subjective well-being, even though the researchers refer to the bias nature of self-report measures as a weakness.

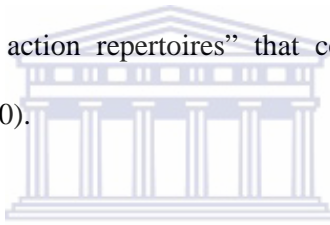
Happier people are people who frequently experience positive emotions such as joy, satisfaction, contentment, enthusiasm and interests. Some of the participants linked gratitude to happiness and having a positive influence. The perception is that *“a happy work environment will result in a happier workforce and one that feels valued and appreciated”*.

People who are more prone to taking risks are usually unrelenting in chasing new goals with more intense levels of inquiry. In organisational behaviour, there is evidence that happy employees receive higher performance appraisals, make better decisions and are much better at building relationships than their unhappy counterparts (Petersen, Waldman, Balthazard & Thatcher, 2008). A few profound quotations of participants provide evidence of the link that gratitude has toward being happy at work. Participant 13 helps capture the essence of how these gratitude-happiness-positive links are experienced. *“I think it’s that I am happy and positive... if I’m not happy...and if I’m not positive...then I wouldn’t be grateful...mentally and spiritually...I have lots of leeway...I can make my own decisions...and I have to do my own risk-assessments when I make those decisions”*.

According to Fredrickson (2003), people flourish when they have more positive than negative events in their lives and the desired ratio for optimal levels of human functioning has been observed as 3:1. To *flourish* means to live within an optimal range of human functioning, one that suggests goodness, generativity, growth, and resilience. To overcome the toxicity of negative affect and to promote flourishing, experiences of positivity may need to outnumber experiences of negativity. (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005, p. 685). Through experimenting with an adaptive version of the GQ6 which allowed the researcher to probe further into the

negative influences, it became obvious that grateful people will eventually see the benefit even if it means that they have an opportunity to demonstrate resilience or growth.

This focus evokes a response in others and contributes to a growing line of inquiry in organisational behaviour and applied psychology. In this study and in line with recent findings it complements the focus on cognitive mechanisms such as daily reflection on the experiences of gratitude and the collective emotions that employees experience at work. Another author's perspective refers to social, emotional and cognitive processes which influences the relationship between perceived performance and anticipated experiences of gratitude for a given situation (Grant & Wrzesniewski, 2010). This is primarily as a result of increased "momentary thought action repertoires" that come from experiencing positive emotions (Avey et al., 2008, p. 50).



Wood et al. (2007) investigated whether dispositional gratitude is associated with adaptive coping strategies, and whether this relationship could explain why grateful people seem to have higher levels of well-being. McCullough et al. (2002) found that gratitude was positively related to life satisfaction, vitality, and happiness, and negatively related to depression, and envy. In this investigation, it appeared that individuals are more likely to experience gratitude when they are able to find a sense of purpose in their work and then choose to focus on the good rather than the bad in times of adversity and organisational change.

Evidence regarding the relationship between gratitude and well-being is also provided by three experimental, longitudinal studies, which showed that if participants are manipulated

into focusing on the good in their lives for a number of weeks, there are substantial improvements in happiness, depression, and even physical health (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade, 2005; Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005). Such findings suggest that the relationship between gratitude and well-being may be causal. (Wood et al., 2007).

Watkins, Grimm & Kolts (2004) state that the three main components of trait gratitude are 1) a sense of abundance, 2) an appreciation for simple things in life and 3) an appreciation for the contribution of others to their well-being. Comparing the interviews participants 1) viewed their salary as providing them with enough and a sense of abundance; 2) they are grateful for the small things in life and 3) they are grateful to make a positive contribution to the well-being of other employees. The above insights provided may have potential links to the theory provided by Emmons and McCullough (2004) which refer to the effect of gratitude in organisations which is clearly needed and indirect evidence that positive emotions transform organisations which helps them to thrive is relevant.

Organisational transformation occurs because each employee's positive emotions can reverberate through others, simply because emotions are transmittable. Experimental studies have indicated that one person's expression of positive emotions for example in the form of feedback can produce positive emotions with those who they interact with (Cameron et al., 2003). Regardless of the definition of gratitude, studies suggests that gratitude acts as a predictor of well-being and leads to lower levels of stress and depression over time (Wood et al., 2008).

THEME 4

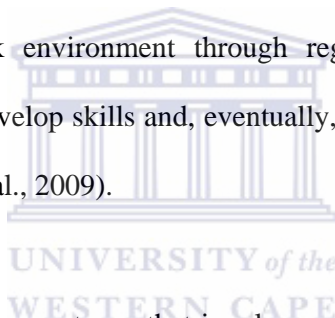
5.2.4 Leadership, trust, decision making, empowerment, recognition and reward

Due to the unique characteristic of the role of a leader, the leader may be more likely to regulate their emotion-generated behaviours through positive rather than negative emotional reactions. It is argued that successful leaders seem to exude an air of confidence, competency, and optimism as well as enthusiasm for work-related activities. By focusing on the positive outcomes it in turn gives rise to positive emotions (Michie, 2009). From the interview data evidence suggests that a frequency of the positive over the negative helps enable positive organisational change. Apart from the examples that participants share about what they are ungrateful towards, participants indicated that leadership vision, business acumen and an empowering style, adds the biggest value to their grateful disposition. According to Cameron (2008), when positive conditions exists, such as positive climate, positive relationships, positive communication, positive meaning, and positive energy, positive change is achievable.

Managing the complexities of change confronts leaders' at all organisational levels. Developmental change flows from an organisation-wide value of continuous growth and improvement that leads to increasing competitive advantage through dynamic stability. This competitive advantage relies on a culture of continuous dynamic yet manageable change and the same was echoed by participants who value sustainable responses demanded by current corporate practices. This type of change transpire when firms frequently scan their internal and external environments to create work settings that encourage and reward individual

innovation, growth, and development, while avoiding radical, infrequent yet disruptive large-scale change. Leader skills and behaviors should positively influence the execution of change initiatives for successful delivery (Gilley, McMillan & Gilley, 2009).

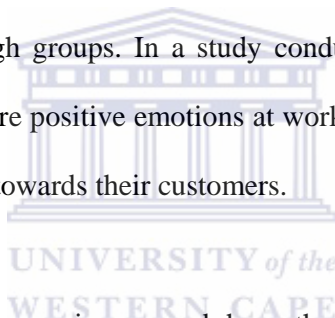
In this investigation it became apparent that specific leader skills and abilities have been positively associated with effectively implementing change. These include the abilities to coach, communicate, involve others, motivate, reward, provide support and build teams through integration and development opportunities. It is clear that a number of participants have benefited from effective leadership, by acting as mentor and coach, and creating a positive environment of learning and subsequent empowerment. Organisational leaders powerfully influence the work environment through regular interpersonal connections; therefore the opportunities to develop skills and, eventually, achieve success with change are significantly relevant (Gilley et al., 2009).



Humility entails a sense of self-acceptance that involves an understanding of your strengths and achievements and in addition understanding weaknesses and limitations. Humble or modest people are described to be those who have openness to learning, not usually motivated by self-interest, but instead capable of sustaining a tempered perspective of themselves. The humble individual places others in high regard and equally they do not devalue themselves. Humility in leadership joins hand in hand with economic success in organisations (Bright et al., 2005). It seems that individuals who describe themselves as humble have come a long way through organisational change, challenges and adversity and have realised humility as being a key ingredient for success. More than anything else this was not endorsed by self-interest or by placing others in high regard. The only endorsement

for humility was being prepared to work hard for your achievement. This is supported by the quotation shared by participant 7: *“humility is fundamentally important....through hard work and humility...those are key ingredients for success... it’s a silent thing... it’s an intrinsic quality”*.

Organisational leaders’ positive emotions may be especially contagious and studies have shown that the leader is able to predict the performance of the entire group. One of the participants who leads a team of diverse individuals believes that the best approach to iron out negativity in teams is to bring more positive people into the team. The same participant also acknowledges the role the leader has by sharing positive stories to team members who are negative. In addition, creating events in organisations that carry positive meaning can spread positive emotions through groups. In a study conducted by Cameron et al. (2003), sales people who experience more positive emotions at work are more helpful, more flexible, more empathetic and respectful towards their customers.



With the application of the neurosciences and how the brain can influence change in behaviour, personality and character, researchers in psychology are growing in understanding that people can change (Petersen et al., 2008). Depending on the worldview of the participants, it is probably that a few of them believe that changing people or forcing them to see things from their perspectives is close to being impossible. From the discussion in the interview it may be feasible to influence the latter viewpoint by allowing leaders to reflect on the growth and evaluate successes in their departments. This would be in support of creating an opportunity to take stock of feedback, seeing the positive changes as an observable reality and finding renewal.

THEME 5

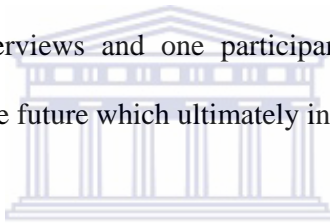
5.2.5 Competence

Competence in itself is something that leads to a grateful disposition. There is a contract in taking action and non-action. Negative emotions such as “apathy” are often linked to “incompetence” and participants believe that they have the “potential to influence competence through influencing a positive environment at work”. From a motivation point of view, managers often focus their energy on building employees’ Self-efficacy and expectancy beliefs, which helps to ensure that they feel confident and competent to carry out their tasks effectively (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). In conjunction with these efforts, it may be valuable for managers to focus on creating opportunities to express or encourage other-orientation at work, through activities such as perspective taking (Parker & Axtell, 2001) and interactions with the beneficiaries of the work (Grant et al., 2007).

When change occurs, it is necessary to continually match the challenge with the requisite skills, for optimal functioning on the job. Competent management is one basis of a sustainable competitive advantage in modern-day, rapid changing organisations (Gilley et al., 2009). Bright et al. (2005) refers to hope as an individual’s competence to see, expect, believe, or emotionally anticipate excellence for the future. Hope is also linked to a plethora of individual and social benefits. During the interviews several of the participants expressed their gratitude towards the organisation for the following reasons: 1) having competent leaders who understand the necessity of change; 2) being flexible to adapt to these much needed changes in the organisation introduced in order to keep abreast of the external environment; and ultimately 3) seeing the opportunity that the challenge of change brings, to

grow their skills. They also find acceptance of the change through personal maturity and understanding of self.

Bright et al. (2005) refers to optimistic individuals who are capable of having advanced social relationships in organisational settings, as well as higher levels of physical health, academic and athletic performance. They also recover well from illness and trauma, have a tolerance for pain, and have Self-efficacy and flexibility in thinking. Hope-optimism is a cultivated virtue that differs with social conditions. When hope-optimism is nurtured in organisations it leads to positive social outcomes, such as goal achievement, empowerment, and action. Except for evidence of flexibility, optimism and Self-efficacy, very little evidence of hope became apparent from the interviews and one participant shared that it is more about believing and having dream if the future which ultimately influences your goals.



Momentum has been achieved to build up the virtue capital in the workplace through the classification and formalized concept appreciative inquiry (AI). AI has been an approach introduced to change management and its objective is to focus on the positive organisational life in a manner which affirms strengths and potential of individuals so that they may realise their best. Gratitude has not been introduced explicitly in interventions although gratitude and appreciation are related through distinct constructs and the cultivation of gratitude in organisations may be an important element in improving the organisation's culture. Moods are important determinants of success, efficiency, productivity and employee loyalty. Gratitude can build personal and interpersonal resources to the extent that it evokes creative thinking, facilitates coping with stress and dealing with adversity (Cameron et al., 2003).

Given the economic climate of competition, it is essential for the impact of positive traits, states and organisations to manifest themselves in observable, measurable behaviours that can have direct performance impact (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Showing sincere appreciation and recognition for skills, talents, abilities, energy and even individual considerateness is perceived by participants to help people in organisations focus on their strengths, thus *“creating an environment of positive engagements where gratitude is present”*.

Research on optimism reviewed as an individual difference variable, shows optimism to be related to good mood, perseverance, achievement and physical health. Optimism is an attitude or belief that one’s future will be positive and satisfying. Others view optimism as a personal disposition associated with the expectation that good things will be common in the future. Optimism has cognitive, emotional and motivational components. Optimism has been found to be related to good morale, effective problem solving, success in various endeavors (academic, athletic, military, occupational political) and to longevity. Studies in the UK and the USA found that optimism was related to sales performance (Burke et al., 2009). A few wonderful examples of optimism have emerged from the interviews. One participant remained optimistic about the future inside of the organisation by looking at the value that ‘suffering and pain’ has brought. These gains at a personal level have been developing the ability to problem solve, introduce systems and start a department from scratch. Others were optimistic that the culture of the organisation was changing as a result of the influence of the new leadership.

Participants’ optimism are influenced by changes in how things were done traditionally (from fear) to how they are done currently (to opportunity) allows them to feel a lot more secure in

their jobs. This is influenced by visualizing an optimistic future growing within the organisation and the fact that participants are perceived to believe that they no longer have to fear the well-being of their career and families. In other samples, optimism has been found to be associated with higher levels of psychological and physical wellbeing in various. A study of burnout among information services professionals, found that optimism moderated the relationship of work resources and burnout, with optimism playing a larger role when work resources were low (Burke et al., 2009).

THEME 6

5.2.6 Teamwork, social exchange, relationships, reciprocity, amplifying effect and diversity

Smith (1976) proposed that gratitude is an essential social emotion which has a primary motive in showing benevolent behaviour towards benefactors. People are socialized to have gratitude which then serves as a reminder for them to reciprocate (Cameron et al., 2003).

Social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity characteristically offer the logic for employees who carry out Organisational Citizenship Behaviours (OCB) and they are also relevant in studying gratitude. An equivalent line of research has revealed that emotions with positive valence, specifically gratitude and happiness, increase trust. As a consequence, management's expression of gratitude toward an employee may motivate that employee's trust in management, consequently, enhancing the employee's engagement in OCB's (Schmit, n.d.). In this study it is evident that through the manager's trust in individuals, they are able to offer trust to others and expect to get the same in return. In return for this trust

they commit to doing their best and to add value to the team and the organisation. The return favour is probably out of appreciation towards the giver of the initial help, example trust or support given. Emmons and McCullough (2004) refer to these incidences of gratitude as an involvement of reciprocal changes in human nature. In accordance with literature people are motivated to reciprocate by sheer feelings of gratitude coupled with undergoing an experience of positive affect (Goei et al., 2007).

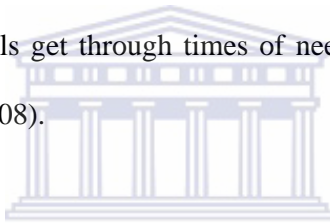
Reciprocity and gratitude are both integrated parts of moral behaviour, with gratitude being referred to as the “moral memory of mankind”. Intended reciprocity sets the condition for the possibility of interpersonal exchanges and favours which can be mentally pictured and recorded over time. This encourages a sense of obligation from either or both parties (Emmons & McCullough, 2004; McCullough, Kimeldorf & Cohen, 2008). One participant who felt dissatisfied with a gift received from the organisation believed that there had been no thought put into the gift and that there was no need to be grateful. This was most likely as a result of the giver’s intention that was overlooked by the receiver. In this case the giver, which was the organisation, was probably doing the right thing to give employees the gift which was in essence seen as appropriate given the time and celebration of a specific event. Moral behaviour, in this case, is defined as behaviours enacted solely to improve the benefactor’s wellbeing, not a self-interested purpose (Goei et al., 2007). However, this example did not lead to the well-being of the benefactor but instead left the benefactor with feelings of disappointment and confusion.

Experiments with human subjects demonstrate that gratitude, which is the positive emotion one feels after having received something of value, fosters prosocial behaviour. The recipient

of a favour is more likely to help both the donor (direct reciprocity) and a stranger (Nowak & Roch, 2006). From the data analysis of this study it is possible to demonstrate that gratitude and other positive emotions, enhances the willingness to help others. It is also likely that upstream reciprocity (being grateful towards the source) is a by-product of emotions that have largely evolved to facilitate direct reciprocity (teamwork) through directing and ensuring positive business results. A suitable quotation from one of the participants confers, *“something of value that I put on the table...and it’s used by a number of people...because it’s the right thing to do... people come up to you...”* in acknowledgement of the impact you made.

Gratitude is not the only probable response to receiving of a benefit. Individuals may also respond negatively to favors with feelings of indebtedness (Tsang 2006). It is cited that emotions of gratitude and indebtedness may serve as information (McCullough & Tsang, 2004), which alerts individuals to the significance of receiving a benefit from a benefactor. Gratitude and indebtedness explains the value of this norm in a given situation, and may influence fulfillment to the norm of reciprocity (Tsang, 2006). With an experience of gratitude, as a positive emotion it would point out that the individuals felt positive towards the benefit and the benefactor. It may then be assumed that one promising consequence of gratitude is prosocial behaviour toward one's benefactor. Very little support for feelings of indebtedness has emerged from the interviews; however, these are present when individuals perceived their overall experiences in the organisation as being in a position of fortune. This seems to evoke a natural flow of reciprocity in people especially when they believe that someone else could have been the benefactor and not them.

As an emotion, gratitude is interpersonal in nature and places importance on understanding its role in social life. In a study which focused on gratitude and relationships in everyday life, the researchers took advantage of institutionalised gratitude to examine gratitude on 3 levels, individual, dyad and groups. They applied a natural induction intervention, “Big Sister Week” where “Big Sisters” welcome the “Little Sisters” on campus with gifts in their first week. The “Little Sisters” were asked to report on the benefits they received through the week and a one month later, followed up the status of the relationship between the two. This study replicated previous findings of the association between the value of the benefit and the feeling of gratitude. The particular questions emerging from this study were how gratitude influences dyadic or group relationships in a social setting and whether these relationships have potential to help individuals get through times of need and flourish through the good times (Algoe, Haidt & Gable, 2008).



It may be assumed that the above intervention is replicated by a similar story which proved evidence of the experience of gratitude. In this instance the manager took 2 younger ladies under her wing, showed them the ropes, opened doors for them with their manager, in meetings and encouraged them to take control so that they can flourish in the organisation. Many times in an organisational setting it is necessary to help others who do not have the industry experience and the confidence to step into their role. Through sharing personal stories of how trust and confidence could be developed, and encouraging others to see the opportunities the business provides reminds the manager of how grateful they can be for their own personal career and life journey. They reflect on the adversity and the lessons they were able to learn and now share with others. This makes it possible for gratitude to be experienced by the giver and the receiver at a given time.

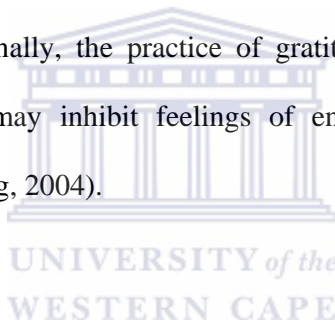
Positive affect may increase prosocial behaviour through self-focus and frame of mind. Gratitude has been shown to be an other-oriented emotion, and may therefore increase prosocial behaviour by focusing attention on the need and deservingness of the benefactor. No research to date has been conducted to isolate a prosocial effect of gratitude that may be independent from that of good mood (Tsang, 2006). Nonetheless, according to studies conducted by Bartlett and De Steno (2006), evidence exists that gratitude promotes prosocial behaviour and through gratitude social and economic exchange may be possible.

Kindness is a defining human trait which involves empathetic concern for others and it has been considered as important foundations of an ethical existence (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). In this investigation a few specific examples of kindness could be deduced for the feedback provided to questions from the GQ6. Kindness through compassion is often manifested in organisations when pain, suffering, or distress is experienced, however it may also described a generalized condition (Bright et al., 2005). One participant who was transferred to another department without prior involvement asserts that it had caused distress and anger. However, upon entering the new department, other team members in this new department demonstrated interpersonal interactions as a team norm. This was very different from the previous team culture where this individual had been transferred from. Self-interest and being task driven excluded the need for good interpersonal relations more often than not.

Kindness in organisations facilitates a sense of humanity, assists healing, and nurtures interpersonal relations. Restoring or enabling a sense of kindness, belonging, and life-giving relationships among people at work is a direct result of acts of compassion in organisations

(Bright et al., 2005). From the interviews, one participant referred to this kindness as a sense of “Ubuntu” where others are not obligated to demonstrate kindness but it is driven by being compassionate towards others and the will to go the extra mile for others. Examples include, making coffee for team members, baking a cake to bring to work or sending a text message to a team member who has booked off sick.

In addition, having the aptitude to appreciate one’s life circumstances and situations may also be an adaptive coping strategy whereby an individual positively interprets challenging life experiences (Fredrickson et al., 2003). The expression of gratitude is also said to stimulate moral behavior, such as helping, and to help build social bonds (McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons, & Larson, 2001). Finally, the practice of gratitude is likely incompatible with negative emotions, and thus may inhibit feelings of envy, bitterness, anger, or greed (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2004).



THEME 7

5.2.7 Adversity, resilience, counting blessings

Unless member groups and individuals change, organisational change will most likely not happen. This change is achieved by adopting different behaviors, processes, frameworks, routines, values, or goals. Consequently, knowledge of the individual, group, and organisational processes must emerge to drive positive change and proves to be essential for leaders (Gilley et al., 2009). In this investigation, it is evident that employees are able to cope with challenge when they can impact the change significantly. Receiving an opportunity to

implement new systems, processes or standards emerges as a positive experience – one in which individuals have potential to grow personally and professionally.

Psychological resilience is viewed as a relatively stable personality trait characterized by the ability to bounce back from negative experience and by flexible adaptation to the ever-changing demands of life (Fredrickson et al., 2003). This became evident in how individuals explained the importance of “counting blessings” for them, “having a positive mindset” and the “will to persevere”. These traits and intrinsic qualities help them to overcome adversity over long periods of discomfort which was brought about by change. Having setbacks are seen by most of the individuals experiences which they have become grateful for when they were able to reflect on them. More recent studies have been successful at enhancing positive mood and well-being through induction of habitual activities, such as “counting one’s blessings,” committing acts of kindness, identifying and using signature strengths, remembering oneself at one’s best, and working on personal goals (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006).

Emmons and McCullough (2003), investigated “counting your blessing” in an experimental study that showed compared to a control group, a conscious focus on gratitude led to a reduction of negative affect and increases in optimistic appraisal, positive affect, sleep quality and well-being. The degree to which well-being evaluations can be altered through short-term psychological interventions and sustained over time remains to be seen.

This research highlights the happiness-inducing potential of gratitude. If it is possible to demonstrate that through a short intervention, gratitude is induced, longer interventions may

be considered. Individuals expressed their understanding of how they could raise their awareness of being more grateful in the organisational setting. Apart from a few of them who said that they should reflect on and become more aware of the opportunities they received to add value to the organisation, most individuals confirmed that “counting blessings” and “living ones best possible self” is an intrinsic desire and gratitude is as a result of a natural flow of evaluating the positive against the negative both in your career and in life. One participant made this profound comment: *“I’d rather prefer to focus on things that I have than things that I don’t...I am grateful that I have work ...I count my blessings...all the time you know...try to focus on the good things...the bad will just get you down...”*.

Research advocates that change is a stressor, and therefore resilience should predict an individual’s ability to cope with change. Those who lack psychological resilience were less willing to participate in the change process whereas, resilient individuals were in fact more willing to participate in an organisational change. These resilient individuals exhibited improved coping skills in the midst of change. Evidence suggests that less resilient individuals are more reluctant to make changes because to do so is to admit that past practices were faulty, and therefore change entails an embarrassment (Oreg, 2003).

Expressing gratitude for life’s blessings such as experiencing a sense of wonder, thankfulness and appreciation may most likely elevate positive affect for a numerous reasons. Grateful thinking encourages the value of positive life experiences and situations. This allows for people to obtain the highest possible satisfaction and enjoyment from their situation. In fact, counting one’s blessings may directly offset the effects of *hedonic adaptation by preventing people from taking the good things in their lives for granted. (*Hedonic adaptation refers to

the supposed tendency of humans to quickly return to a relatively stable level of happiness despite major positive or negative events or life changes). This most probably became most evident amongst the participants who believe that by showing gratitude you will receive more and hence be more grateful. Recent experiments have shown that practicing grateful thinking on a regular basis can enhance positive affect and other measures of well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006).

In three experiments, Emmons and McCullough (2003) instructed participants to take on in self-guided exercises relating to “counting their blessings” either on a weekly basis for 10 weeks or on a daily basis for 2 or 3 weeks. Control participants, by contrast, focused their attention on daily hassles, downward social comparisons, or routine life events. During the intervention, those in the gratitude group reported higher positive affect (in the two daily studies) and physical wellbeing (in the weekly study) than those in the comparison groups. Similarly another study found that students who expressed gratitude once a week (but not three times a week) manifested short-term increases in well-being from before to after the intervention. However, the role of factors that may have contributed to the success of the intervention, such as participants’ commitment to the gratitude exercise or their perceived person–exercise fit, was not examined in any of these studies (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006).

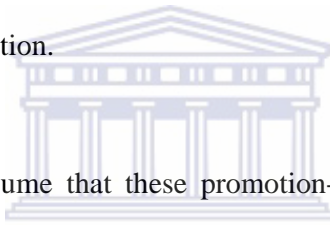
In a study subjects were then exposed either to one of three treatment conditions designed to induce positive states incompatible with anger (sympathy, gratitude, amusement) or to a no-treatment control. Finally, they rated their current mood, indicated impressions of the accomplice, and reported on their likelihood of handling future conflicts with him through

collaboration, avoidance, competition, compromise, or accommodation (Tsang, 2006). In this study leaders applied training that involved “short skits and having fun” in how they influenced the mood of the employees during times of organisational change.

Results from one study indicated that relative to the control condition, the three incompatible-response-generating treatments improved subjects' moods, enhanced their impressions of the accomplice, and increased their preference for constructive as opposed to destructive modes of dealing with conflict. In addition, disagreement expressed in a condescending manner produced significantly more negative effects on all dependent measures than disagreement expressed in a reasonable fashion. These findings were interpreted as suggesting that useful techniques for the effective management of conflict can be derived from existing knowledge about the control of human aggression (Tsang, 2006). In this study, when participants believe they are in control of the change process and what needs to be done, they seek understanding of others resistance to change and acceptance of the new processes. The support provided by others who also supported the change was mostly received with gratitude and appreciation.

Bombeck once described guilt as the “gift that keeps on giving” (Skow, 1984). Research underscores the hidden wisdom in this quip, suggesting that for other-oriented employees, anticipated guilt may serve as a motivational resource to prevent high core self-evaluations from leading to complacency. By worrying about letting others down, they are able to prevent themselves from actually doing so. However, it is not only anticipated guilt that drives other-oriented employees with high core self-evaluations to achieve high performance; anticipated gratitude, too, helps to motivate their performance (Grant & Wrzesniewski, 2010).

This was evident in how participants took pride in their ability, the work that they do, the targets that they have achieved and not be influenced by how the change such as a restructure impacted them personally. When it becomes evident they these participants are able to do even better in the new role and cope with even bigger workloads, a positive stimulus emerges within them and propels them to do their best once more. One participant expressed the following insight, “I don’t know if that’s the way they saw it when they made the change, but this is the way I see it”. Other participants consistently shared that they are not able to disappoint their leaders who gave them the opportunity and in the long run they are grateful regardless of how tough it was to meet the demands of the opportunity presented. Letting their leaders down was not an option.

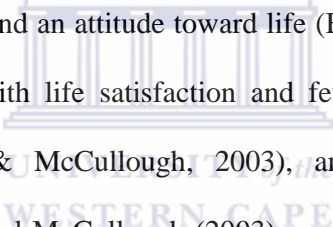


Researchers have tended to assume that these promotion-focused and prevention focused states are mutually exclusive. In pursuing their goals, employees are focused on either approaching a positive outcome or avoiding a negative outcome. Research challenges this assumption of mutual exclusivity by showing that other-oriented employees are more likely to experience both promotion-focused (gratitude) and prevention-focused (guilt) anticipatory emotions. The findings in Study Three are especially interesting in this regard since duty is often conceptualized as a prevention-focused trait; regulatory focus theory predicts that duty would be associated with higher anticipated guilt but not higher anticipated gratitude. Like the finding in the afore mentioned study, findings raise the possibility that duty heightens both prevention-focused states that call attention to avoiding negative outcomes and promotion-focused states that call attention to promoting positive outcomes. This is also consistent with recent findings that the broader trait of conscientiousness is positively

associated with both prevention-focused and promotion-focused states at work (Grant & Wrzesniewski, 2010, p. 116).

5.3 Conclusions

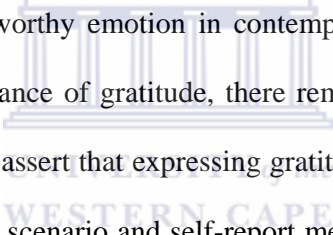
The aim of the current research was to investigate the experiences of gratitude during organisational change. Emphasis was placed on gaining insight into this phenomenon from the individual's personal experiences of gratitude during organisational change. Literature on the virtue of gratitude has been examined and states that gratitude involves feeling grateful for positive outcomes one has experienced.



Gratitude is an emotional state and an attitude toward life (Burke et al., 2009). Gratitude has been found to be associated with life satisfaction and fewer physical health complaints, positive emotions (Emmons & McCullough, 2003), and happiness, pride and hope (Fredrickson, 2004). Emmons and McCullough (2003) report findings from three studies of gratitude or grateful thinking and psychological and social functioning. Those individuals with the grateful outlook (thinking) groups indicated higher levels of well-being across most of their outcome measures.

Although this study only investigated the experiences of gratitude during organisational change, specific themes on relevant attitudes and behaviours is visible from the findings. This provides initial support that employees, who demonstrate gratitude, may indeed be a very important employee in positive organisational change (Avey et al., 2008). This research study provides evidence of the flexibility individuals require in terms of constant change. Constant

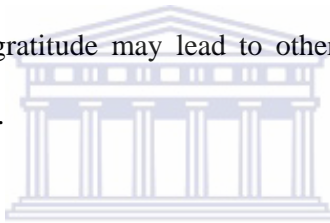
change has its pros and cons however where the organisation is changing so much and grows so much, it obviously gives people opportunities, and these extend beyond the South African operations. There is a perception that change is good but sometimes it happens so quickly that it becomes difficult to maintain systems and processes that has been put in place. Very often the plans put in place before you start with the implementation phase already require individuals to adapt the original plan in exchange for a new one. Sometimes, before you even an opportunity to introduce the change, change has happened again which can be difficult and requires employees and employers to be thinking ahead all the time. Through a positive psychology paradigm that builds on the strengths of individuals becomes crucial in how individuals and organisations may view this as a setback or not (Petersen & Seligman, 2004).



Whilst gratitude is such a noteworthy emotion in contemporary society and several world religions teach about the importance of gratitude, there remains a scarcity of psychological work on gratitude. Many people assert that expressing gratitude brings them happiness. Most of the research on gratitude uses scenario and self-report methods, which introduce potential limitations of social desirability and low psychological realism. In a recent experiment, these limitations were addressed by pairing a laboratory induction of gratitude with behavioural and self-report measures of gratitude (Tsang, 2006). The qualitative approach of the study provided insight into the complexities influencing the choice of information in the creation of efficacy beliefs. The stronger an individual's perceived Self-efficacy, the higher the goal aspirations people adopt, and the firmer their commitment to the goals will be (Anyster, Goodman & Wallis, 2006).

Evidence exists that gratitude has a positive emotional valence and that it is a plausibly pleasant and activating emotion. As a pleasant state, gratitude has been related to happiness, pride and hope and it was grouped as positive interpersonal feelings that included admiration, respect, trust and regard (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

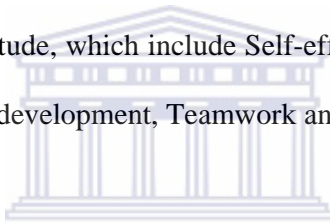
Michie (2009) maintains that pride and gratitude promote prosocial behaviours in organisations and specific results of a leader's tendency to experience authentic pride was positively related to 2 types of prosocial behaviour: social justice and altruism. In research where it has been demonstrated, gratitude causes happiness, emphasis was placed on the mystery that happiness enhances gratitude as well (Watkins et al., 2007). Besides its value as an inherently rewarding state, gratitude may lead to other positive subjective experiences (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).



Positive organisational change refers to focusing on the positive dynamics, positive attributes and positive outcomes in organisations. The term positive has come under scrutiny as this implies that most organisational science is negative. Opening up and expanding the term positive, has its paradox in how humans behave. Both positive and negative conditions are enablers for positive change; however it depends on where emphasis is laid. In the social sciences as well as the physical sciences, this evidence supports the natural tendencies of human beings towards that which is positive, and life bringing. Individuals and organisation that demonstrate positive energy are by far the most successful (Cameron, 2008. p. 17).

While the Positive Psychology paradigm focuses on facilitating positive psychological capital or resources in organisations, organisational psychology aims understand concepts at the

organisational level in order to understand the dynamics of how workers function in an organisation and how the organisation functions as a whole. Emphasis is placed on what it would take to keep employees healthy and resilient to hardships. (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2010). Industrial psychologists are concerned with people functioning effectively in relation to their working environments. Health-promoting factors that are encouraged are an internal locus of control, positive emotions, hope, optimism, self-efficacy, personal hardiness and a sense of coherence. The effects of the changing nature of the workplace and careers and the globally changing socio-economic context on the development of valuable skills (talent or human capital), requires that emphasis is placed on the employment relationship and the psychological contract. (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2010). The influencing factors to support this shift stems from sources of gratitude, which include Self-efficacy, Opportunities for personal growth, Well-being, Leadership development, Teamwork and developing Resilience.



In conclusion, for business to establish a competitive advantage through their employees, it would be worth the effort in building common understanding of gratitude and the effective application thereof (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). PsyCap consists of *efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience* and when combined has been shown to represent a second-order, core factor that predicts performance and satisfaction better than each of the four factors as a standalone construct (Luthans et al., 2007). Despite the proliferation of numerous theories, models, and multistep approaches, leaders continue to lack a clear understanding of change, its antecedents, effective processes, or the ability to successfully engage organisational members in change initiatives (Gilley et al., 2009).

5.4 Application of emerging themes presented by the experiences of gratitude during organisational change

The analysis of the themes has allowed us to generate a heuristic framework, which provides guidelines regarding sources of gratitude during organisational change. It gives some insights regarding what gratitude-linked interventions can positively influence people and allow them to thrive in a rapidly changing business environment. This is depicted in Figure 5.1 below.

Figure 5.1: Heuristic framework to understand sources of gratitude during organisational change

Emerging theme		Sources of gratitude during organisational change				
1	Self-efficacy and intrinsic strength	Positive impact of managers in how they develop their people	Show confidence in people, trust in their ability and empower them through decision-making	Show belief in the capability of people by assigning them to significant value-adding projects	Encourage people to share their self-efficacy, and in this way impact other team members positively	
2	Opportunities for personal growth, sense of achievement, realisation of personal goals	Ensure mentors with experience can guide key individuals, through sharing their knowledge and experience	Introduce new roles and responsibilities during a organisation restructure and change, in a way which provides opportunity for growth	Leverage short assignments externally to learn from new facilities and share local knowledge	Involve people in meaningful new projects which are significant to the company in terms of value growth.	Involve people in new business areas, including if their is a new geographic scope
3	Well-being and sense of purpose	Help people to appreciate having a job in the current environment and being remunerated well, as a source of happiness	Reinforce the core purpose of the business imperatives	Appreciate being part of a stable, profitable, growing company	Create coherence within people by ensuring that the job challenge and the skills are well matched, to minimise frustration.	Encourage a positive outlook about learning from events that happen, whether good or bad
4	Leadership, trust, decision making, empowerment, recognition and reward	Develop Situational awareness and develop leadership capability through providing challenging roles	Create opportunities for people to lead diverse teams. Allow them to build confidence to deal with challenges and be positive	Create adapting experiences where people work for many different managers with different leadership styles	Coach the development of good people and sound networking skills	Learn from feedback, and from the strengths of others in the business, across many functional disciplines
5	Competence	Continue to match peoples' skills with the job requirement.	Establish how matching competencies can lead to new roles and increased recognition and reward.	Move people whose skills do not match a changed job requirement, to positions better suited for them	Manage the movement of incorrect job-fit people, encouraging acceptance through reduced frustration and goal achievement	
6	Teamwork underpinned by social exchange, relationships, reciprocity, amplifying effect and diversity	Sustain and rebuild trustworthy relationships to ensure that effective social exchange takes place in the workplace	Encourage reciprocity which helps to amplify benefits which people have experienced themselves, and hence give back to others because they are grateful	Ensure that teams have a diverse composition to bring different perspectives and ideas	Ensure working methods are integrated and that team collaboration is happening	
7	Adversity, resilience, counting blessings	Allow people to experience difficult challenges, and support their development through helping them to reflect and show appreciation for the tough learnings	Encourage people to embrace the workplace challenges and changes, as it provides a leadership development environment	Support people through difficulties, and encourage them to seek out the positive aspects of the experience.		

5.5 Limitations of the study

Qualitative content analysis is the preferred choice of the novice researcher because it is easy to access and it works on one level of meaning – the content of the data text. Unfortunately, it is also the method of analysis that may lead to superficial and naively realistic findings because it captures what is presumed to be the “real world” (through the eyes of the research participants) in a straight forward, direct and formulaic way. The data cannot be interrogated, (Willig, 2009, p.102). To carry out a full analysis of the data, the interviews were audio recorded for transcriptions. Even though the researcher explained, why the recording were being made and how the data will be used, participants may not have been completely comfortable and relaxed with being taped and this may have affected what was being said (Willig, 2009).

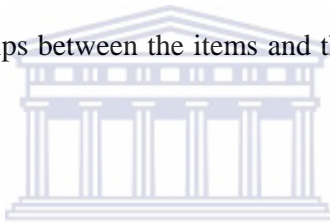


Unlike physical science, the results obtained in a behavioural study are not exact and error-free. The difficulty the researcher may encounter could be in the measurement and collection of data is in the areas of feelings, emotions, attitudes and perceptions. Being a qualitative study, the size of the sample may not be representative enough. This can restrict the rigour of the findings and it may not be possible for the researcher to meet all the hallmarks of science (Sekaran, 2003). The researcher attempted to overcome this by writing down any observations or comments which was made outside of the interview window.

Cross-sectional studies may limit the research as it is a single point method of data-collection and the researcher may not collect accurate feelings or emotions of participants on one single time dimension. Exploratory cross-sectional studies aim at understanding causal processes

over time and cross-sectional studies determine their conclusions based on observations made only one time (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

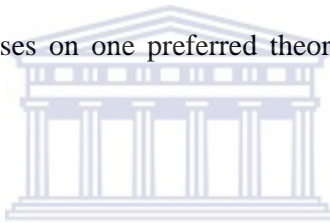
The limitation of this study may be that the scope of this project is too small due to financial and time constraints. Even though the researcher used an appropriate sample, the manner in which the questions have been framed and the degree of bias or incorrectness in the responses may result in the research not being rigorous enough. The sample may not be diverse enough and the research may exclude individuals from all the various sectors such as private and public which restrict the scientific value and usefulness. The more scientific the investigation is, the greater the degree of confidence of the study. More statistical analysis could be required to assess the relationships between the items and the construct and the reliability of the findings (Sekaran, 2003).



In qualitative research, where participants are required to respond based on their perceptions of gratitude, the responses may be diluted due to individual subjective influence and the fact that a few of the participants may prefer to respond only to the qualitative Section A. With a small sample size ($n=16$), it may be difficult for the researcher to extrapolate data from the sample to previous research in the study of gratitude in organisations (Sekaran, 2003).

The major disadvantage of content analysis is that it is often limited to the data that had already been required through written or oral methods and may not be subject to further scrutiny (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

Qualitative research methods, that is, structured or in-depth interviews have been useful and applicable for studies in psychology and many theories are applicable. However several uncertainties exist for the novice researcher and they may find it difficult to access “pragmatic knowledge”. In particular, the process of data analysis and interpretation requires the researcher to be guided by the context of principles, actions and decisions to be made. For the novice researcher it becomes extremely difficult to determine the major theory, for example phenomenology, grounded theory or epistemology, having been exposed to very different approaches guided by quantitative studies in the past. Hence choosing an approach is difficult and lends itself to several uncertainties as knowledge is acquired. Selecting a linear model is less favoured and this research study does not attempt to develop a specific process model, however it focuses on one preferred theoretical approach, namely, content analysis (Schilling, 2006).



The interview situation is unknown to many participants and as a result both the researcher and interviewee can take on another role during the process (Babbie & Mouton, 2008). The researcher relied on the relationship and trust established with the participants as well as a professional code of ethics that has been practised in the past.

There is no clear answer to conducting a qualitative study, except for the fact that within a qualitative study, it requires a great deal of flexibility, a reasonable understanding of the assessment process, the steps involved and adhering to the basic assumptions of the paradigm (Schilling, 2006). Given that the qualitative researcher finds their own tools and techniques to suit their specific study, it provided the researcher with an opportunity to be creative and flexible with a continuous outlook to improve the research process (Babbie & Mouton, 2008).

Some limitations of the research should be noted to put the findings into a broader context. The sample of participants in this exploratory study was small (n = 16) made it impossible to determine the representativeness of those employees that participated. All data were collected using self-report questionnaires raising the possibility of response set tendencies. The data were collected at one point in time making it difficult to determine causality. Finally, all respondents worked in a single organisation.

Gratitude beliefs, the perceptions individuals have about their disposition of gratitude effectively influences their work-related behaviour and performance. Hence, individual competencies and past performance records are not automatically great predictors of future performance. Gratitude beliefs are influential in shaping how individuals apply their knowledge, skills and talents. Though there is agreement that gratitude is significant for individual performance at work and in the end business achievement, there is not enough research about the basis on which people support their gratitude appraisals. Quantitative research in this area has thus far been unsuccessful to explain the complex processes involved in the founding of such beliefs (Anyster et al., 2006).

5.6 Recommendations

Future research needs to involve a larger and representative sample of participants drawn from several different organisations. In addition, the qualities and constructs examined enabled the inclusion of many different concepts inside of the organisation and it may be useful to focus only on the themes that would expand the understating of the relationship of

gratitude with individuals and organisational contexts. In addition, future research should incorporate longitudinal designs to permit examination of causal directions and reciprocal relationships. Incorporating measures of gratitude at individual, unit and organisation levels would illuminate the link between various levels of analysis. Finally, efforts to increase the levels of gratitude at individual and team and organisation levels appear to be a promising and a necessary endeavour as well (Burke et al., 2009).

The integration of positive psychology into the field of organisational behaviour has provided bounteous opportunities for researchers to learn how to leverage individual-level positive constructs for improved organisation level outcomes (Avey et al., 2008).

The measures to determine gratitude may need to integrate both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to capture some promising constructs and mechanisms that may be difficult to assess through traditional survey methods. More rigorous approaches using non linear and interactive mechanisms should be encouraged to facilitate further development of the construct for positive organisational behaviour (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Further research may augment the understanding of constructs that positively affect organisational change. Larger, more heterogeneous samples should be tested and cross-validated with the results presented in this study (Gilley et al., 2009).

Previous research indicates that anger and aggression can both be reduced by exposure to events that generate positive states incompatible with these reactions. To determine if this principle could be applied to the reduction of organisational conflict, male and female subjects played the role of executives and discussed important organisational issues with

another person. This individual was actually an accomplice who disagreed strongly with their views. Such disagreement was expressed either in a calm and reasonable manner or in an arrogant and condescending fashion (Tsang, 2006).

The potential of happiness-increasing interventions is further demonstrated by recent research showing that practising certain virtues, such as gratitude (Emmons and McCullough, 2003), forgiveness (McCullough et al., 2000), and thoughtful self-reflection (Lyubomirsky et al., 2004) can bring about enhanced well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).



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ADDENDUM 1

PSYCAP QUESTIONNAIRE (PCQ24)

Using the scale below as a guide, write a number beside each statement to indicate how much you agree with it.

1 = strongly disagree

2 = disagree

3 = slightly disagree

4 = slightly agree

5 = agree

6 = strongly agree

1. I feel confident analysing a long term problem to find a solution.
2. I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management.
3. I feel confident contributing to discussions about the company's strategy.
4. I feel confident having to set targets/goals in my work area.
5. I feel confident contacting people outside the company (e.g., suppliers, customers) to discuss problems.
6. I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues.
7. If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it
8. At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my work goals.
9. There are lots of ways around any problem.
10. Right now I see myself as being pretty successful at work.
11. I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals.
12. At this time I am meeting the work goals that I have set for myself
13. When I have a set back, I have trouble recovering from it, moving on.
14. I usually manage difficulties one way or another at work.

15. I can be “on my own” so to speak, at work if I have to.
16. I usually take stressful things at work in stride.
17. I can get through difficult times at work because I’ve experienced difficulty before.
18. I feel I can handle many things at a time at this job.
19. When things are uncertain for me at work, I usually expect the best.
20. If something can go wrong for me work-wise, it will.
21. I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job.
22. I’m optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work.
23. In this job, things never work out the way I want them to.
24. I approach this job as if “every cloud has a silver lining”.



ADDENDUM 2

GRATITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE - GRAT 44 ITEM SCALE						
		1 = Strongly Agree 5 = Strongly Disagree				
Item Number	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	I couldn't have gotten where I am today without the help of many people.					
2	I think that life has handed me a short stick.					
3	It sure seems like others get a lot more benefits in life than I do.					
4	I never seem to get the breaks that other people do.					
5	Often I'm just amazed at how beautiful the sunsets are.					
6	Life has been good to me.					
7	There never seems to be enough to go around and I'm always coming up short.					
8	Often I think, "What a privilege it is to be alive."					
9	Oftentimes I have been overwhelmed at the beauty of nature.					
10	I feel grateful for the education I have received.					
11	Many people have given me valuable wisdom throughout my life that has been important to my success.					
12	It seems like people have frequently tried to impede my progress.					
13	Although I think it's important to feel good about your accomplishments, I think that it's also important to remember how others have contributed to my accomplishment.					
14	I really don't think that I've gotten all the good things that I deserve in life.					
15	Every Fall I really enjoy watching the leaves change colours.					
16	Although I'm basically in control of my life, I cant help but think about all those who have supported me and helped me along the way.					
17	Part of really enjoying something good is being thankful for that thing.					
18	Sometimes I find myself overwhelmed by the beauty of a musical piece.					
19	I'm basically very thankful for the parenting that was provided to me.					
20	I've gotten where I am today because of my own hard work, despite the lack of any help or support.					

21	During Festive periods, I never seemed to get as many presents or presents that were as good as others received.					
22	Sometimes I think, "Why am I so privileged so as to be born into the situation I was born into?"					
23	One of my favourite times of the year is Thanksgiving.					
24	I believe that I am a very fortunate person.					
25	I think that it's important to "Stop and smell the roses."					
26	More bad things have happened to me in my life than I deserve.					
27	I really enjoy the changing seasons.					
28	Because of what I've gone through in my life, I really feel like the world owes me something					
29	I believe that the things in life that are really enjoyable are just as available to me as they are to other South African celebrities.					
30	I love to sit and watch the beauty of nature.					
31	I believe that I've had more than my share of bad things come my way.					
32	Although I think I'm normally better than most, I haven't gotten my just reward in life.					
33	After eating I often pause and think, "What a wonderful meal."					
34	I really enjoy a crackling fire on a cold winter's day.					
35	I think that it's important to sit down every once in a while and "count your blessings."					
36	I think it's important to enjoy the simple things in life.					
37	I basically feel like life has ripped me off.					
38	I feel deeply appreciative for the things others have done for me in my life.					
39	I feel that "someone up there" doesn't like me.					
40	The simple pleasures of life are the best pleasures of life.					
41	I love the green of Spring.					
42	For some reasons I never seem to get the breaks that others get.					
43	I think it's important to appreciate each day that you are alive.					
44	I'm really thankful for friends and family.					