

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

AN EXPLORATION OF PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL (UKZN)'S COLLEGE  
REORGANISATION PROCESS: THE VIEWS OF  
PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT STAFF IN THE COLLEGE OF LAW  
AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES.

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Commerce: Management

School of Management, IT and Governance

College of Law and Management Studies

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2015

## DECLARATION

I, Ntombilungile Ntola declare that

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Mr Adarsh Maharaj, for his guidance and encouragement throughout this research journey, I really appreciate your time and patience.

To my study participants, without whom this study would not have been successful, to colleagues and friends at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, who offered support and encouragement, a big thank you.

To my late father, Mzupi Samuel Ngwadu whom I love and miss very much. It is through your teachings and nurturing that I continue to endure life hardships and persistently work hard to achieve success and greatness in life and for that I am truly grateful. You will forever be missed.

To the rest of my family especially my elderly mother, Nomagilasi Ngwadu, my nieces and nephews who sometimes took care of my young son Yanga Ntola, my little nephew Ncedo Ntola and the rest of the household in my absence, thank you so much.

To my little boy Yanga Ntola, thank you for your understanding and patience. I was truly blessed to know that I have my little one to return to at the end of each day during my pursuit of this research. Your smiles, hugs and kisses cheered me on and gave me strength to carry on while looking forward to spending more fun times with you. Your encouragement motivated me to work harder and achieve for both of us, and for that I love and appreciate you very much.

To UKZN Librarians for their very kind assistance and patience. Their dedication and love for students is appreciated: Mrs Claudette Kercival (Howard College – EG Melherbe Library), Mrs Anita Somers (Westville Library), Ms Kadephi Majola (Howard College – Law Library).

To team spirit and support from friends and fellow M-Com students, it is most appreciated.

I give all thanks and greatness to God Almighty, with whom all things are possible. Amen

## ABSTRACT

One of the main components of the UKZN College Reorganisation was the reduction of the three-layer into the new two-layer structure consisting of only 4 Colleges and 19 Schools, the creation of fewer, larger “*mega*” schools, and according to *Recommendations 1&2*, the perennial poor performing schools would be identified and either be merged or closed. The implementation process started in 2011 and the new structure came into effect in January 2012. The administrative staff and in particular professional support, were the most affected in terms of deployment. Some positions became completely redundant as tasks were moved or combined, allowing for creation of new and revised job portfolios.

Due to the study being of an exploratory nature, the *exploratory research design* was applied in order to explore perceptions and experiences of UKZN’s College Reorganisation Process. A *qualitative research approach* was used to answer questions based on objectives set to establish and understand the existence of perceptions and experiences. The aim of this research was to accumulate descriptive data from participant’s own spoken words relating to their perceptions and overall experiences.

*Non-random purposive sampling strategy* was applied, and using this particular method, the researcher purposely selected a sample from the target population most relevant to provide quality information to fulfil study objectives. A total number of 15 participants was achieved, a number deemed appropriate for a qualitative research study, where overall workforce concerns can be identified using smaller sample sizes. Three data collection methods (interviews, observation, and focus group discussion) were used. Data was analysed through *content analysis using triangulation*. Two theories were applied and used interchangeable as primary and secondary, as they influenced each side, the organisation and its people.

Both positive and negative, strong and passionate views were equally heard and expressed throughout the entire process of this research project. Feelings of anger, fear and uncertainty, stress and worry, were reportedly experienced almost across the board. Newly appointed staff feared losing their jobs as they felt less advantaged than their long serving peers. A tremendous increase in workload was reported throughout, mainly due to staff reduction but equally, jobs became more focused. A number of challenges were reported on the views about communication, opportunities for training and growth, whilst other views pointed to lots of opportunities that still continued to exist. For others, personal satisfaction and growth was achieved. The institution was fondly described as having gained a positive outlook overall. Operations were centralised leading to easy access and convenience for students and visitors; it turned into a one stop-shop; it came out effective and user-friendly; it worked well for the institution, though staff issues were still a concern.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **RESEARCH OVERVIEW**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The University of KwaZulu-Natal implemented the College Model in 2011 and in January 2012, the new structure came into effect. Makgoba (2011) Some of the main objectives for this College Reorganisation were to achieve both structural and functional efficiency and to streamline decision-making through a flatter and a competency-performance-based structure.

It also aimed to ensure that academics focus better on research, academic and scholarly rather than administrative matters; to bring UKZN in line with best international practice and modern trends in high impact, efficient and competitive higher education for the realisation of its vision and mission. Makgoba (2011) The employees of the University and to some certain degree the students, have often spoken and shared among each other, their experiences and opinions over the process.

Research conducted to understand and share issues of interest from past major events are necessary for bringing understanding, trust and commitment, for the benefit of the institution and its stakeholders. Other stakeholders and in particular the University community that were affected by the University's College Reorganisation Process will undoubtedly find interest in reading this research as it might relate to their own experiences.

This research allowed for an opportunity for hearing and understanding the views of professional support staff, on how they experienced the journey of transition, how the reorganisation affected them personally and professionally - concerns, issues and challenges, losses and benefits, the lessons learnt, growth and maturity brought by the experiences. The study was meant to open up issues such as the support and coping mechanisms; the people integration process provided by the employer to help ease the change process; the aspects of their jobs and careers; and how they would have handled them differently in order to prepare themselves for future changes in the University.

### **1.2 Background of the Study**

"The College Model was developed in the context of the merger between the former Universities of Durban-Westville and Natal" UKZN Documents (2010a) Makgoba (2011). It was reviewed by a panel of international experts and The UKZN Council accepted the implementation plan based on the recommendations of the review report in December 2010. The implementation process started at the beginning of the year 2011 and the new structure began operation by January 2012. Makgoba (2011)

The College Model is “a system to empower the academic sector in a large and complex context; a system that has best supported the institutional research endeavours by allowing the creation of substantial critical masses across cognate and allied academic disciplines that are managed at College level” UKZN Exec (2010).

**Table 1-1: UKZN College Reorganisation - Restructured Schools, UKZN Documents (2010b)**

COLLEGE	NEW RESTRUCTURED SCHOOL
College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science	School of Agricultural, Earth & Environmental Science
	School of Chemistry & Physics
	School of Engineering
	School of Life Sciences
	School of Mathematics, Statistics & Computer Science
College of Health Sciences	School of Clinical Medicine
	School of Laboratory Medicine & Medical Sciences (LMMS)
	School of Health Sciences
	School of Nursing & Public Health
College of Humanities	School of Religion, Philosophy & Classics (SRPC)
	School of Arts (SoA)
	School of Social Sciences (SSS)
	School of Applied Human Sciences (SAHC)
	School of Built Environment & Development Studies (SoBEDS)
	School of Education
College of Law & Management Studies	School of Law
	Graduate School of Business & Leadership
	School of Accounting, Economics & Finance
	School of Management, IT & Governance

Adapted from: UKZN Documents,

[http://crtt.ukzn.ac.za/Libraries/DOCUMENTS/List\\_of\\_New\\_Restructured\\_Schools\\_for\\_CRTT\\_website\\_1.sflb.ashx](http://crtt.ukzn.ac.za/Libraries/DOCUMENTS/List_of_New_Restructured_Schools_for_CRTT_website_1.sflb.ashx)

Threat and eventual loss of jobs was inevitable as the process of deployment was implemented concurrently through recruitment and selection and all administrative positions were re-advertised, some positions became completely redundant. One of the main components of UKZN's College Reorganisation was the reduction of the three-layer into the new two-layer structure consisting of only 4 Colleges and 19 Schools, the creation of fewer, larger "mega" schools (*Recommendations 1&2*), see *table 1* above. UKZN Exec (2010) According to guiding principles underpinning the implementation plan, "the perennial poor performing schools would be identified and either be merged or closed" UKZN Exec (2010).

It is always important that issues that could possibly affect staff morale, confidence and commitment, are recognised in order to create a positive and healthy working environment for the remaining staff; to rebuild trust; assurance and commitment; to strengthen relationships and to collectively work towards the vision and goals of the institution.

Ndlovu (2012) investigated support staff's experiences of the placement and redeployment process in the reconfigured UKZN and particularly addressed findings based on experiences before the reconfiguration versus after the reconfiguration. While Mbongwe (2012) conducted a quantitative study of impact of restructuring on College Support Staff of UKZN with the aim of establishing the nature of relationships between restructuring and the dependent variables such as job security, emotional factors, attitudinal factors and health and wellbeing.

On another private industry-based study, Matyesha (2011) looked at the impact of organisational change on employee motivation and performance levels, Matyesha (2011) where some of the study participants indicated that employees should always stay ahead of events and looking for opportunities to advance themselves in order to remain relevant and acquire skills that would meet the organisation's future needs.

This study looked at understanding the whole experiences and viewpoints relating to the change impact, the transition period and aftermath of the College Reorganisation. Instead of having one or two focus areas, this study was open to views from all angles. Professional support staff were given an opportunity to touch on all aspects as they felt necessary, the beginning and journey of the change process, their current jobs, performance and commitment to the institution, as well as the impact on their professional and personal wellbeing. It was also interesting to see from findings, that employees were able to recognise some positivity from the change process, based on its context of being viewed as negative.

### **1.3 Research Problem / Statement**

When UKZN started the implementation process of the College Model in 2011, the process of deployment was implemented concurrently through recruitment and selection and all administrative positions were re-advertised. Some positions became completely redundant. The major factor being the reduction from the three-layer into the new two-layer structure consisting of only 4 Colleges and 19 Schools, the creation of fewer, larger “*mega*” schools (*Recommendations 1&2*), “the perennial poor performing schools would be identified and either be merged or closed” UKZN Exec (2010). If one follows this plan clearly, people’s jobs immediately become at threat.

The administrative staff and in particular professional support, were the most affected in terms of deployment. It is hoped that the professional support staff were able to appreciate this opportunity to air their views openly and to know that the information will serve as record that provides feedback to the employer and the community at large. Study participants were guided by a few general specific questions so that they were able to relate personally and to their employment circumstances. This research was conducted with an underlying interest or purpose of wanting to establish whether affected employees could possibly identify beneficial and positive aspects from a situation that is generally viewed as threatening and negative such as change.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

According to Zikmund et al., (2012, p. 64) research objectives represent a contract of commitment binding the researcher to produce the needed research; they drive the rest of the research process as it forms its basis. They are structured around a central question or problem as identified by the researcher; they state what the researcher would like to accomplish and systematically sets out the key aims and purposes of the study. Pellissier (2008, p. 50) Research objectives are necessary for the evaluation and making sense of the project and as such, the purpose of this study was:

- To establish how the reorganisation affected employee’s current occupations and the way they view and relate to the institution
- To establish whether employees’ needs and expectations were addressed
- To explore the availability of mechanisms for supporting / counselling employees to cope with the reorganization (issues of insecurities and stress)
- To explore the kinds of challenges and opportunities presented to the institution and its employees

- To examine the overall employee's perceptions and experiences of the UKZN's College reorganisation process

## **1.5 Research Questions**

For the purpose of gathering information relevant to addressing the needs of the study and its objectives, it is critical that research questions be formulated. These key research questions are also used as a guide in developing further questions for the data collection process by interviews and focus group discussions. It is also important that research questions be relevant to the focus of the study. Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 8) Therefore, in an attempt to address the reasons and purpose of conducting this research, the following key research questions were answered:

- How did the reorganisation affect employee's current occupations and the way they view and relate to the institution?
- How were employees' needs and expectations addressed?
- What mechanisms were available / put in place to support/counsel employees to cope with the reorganization (issues of insecurities and stress)?
- What challenges and opportunities did the reorganisation present for the institution and its employees?
- What are the overall employee's perceptions and experiences of the UKZN's College reorganisation process?

## **1.6 Significance/Importance/Contribution**

Recognition and addressing of issues that could possibly affect staff morale, confidence and commitment, is important for the institution and its employees as it would assist to rebuild trust, assurance and commitment and thereby creating a positive and healthy working environment for the remaining staff. It would also help to build and strengthen relationships and to collectively work towards the vision and goals of the institution. Through this research, it is hoped that the professional support staff will appreciate the opportunity to air their views openly, with the knowledge that information will serve as record that provides feedback to the employer and the community at large.

## **1.7 Rationale for the Study**

As most employees of the University had witnessed its changes over the years, the researcher's interest was to find out how these individuals feel, specifically about the reorganisation and the new

institution. This research was also intended to fill the gap and break the silence in the history of the UKZN institution, as feelings, thoughts and experiences of the affected staff would be revealed. It was also in the researcher's interest that the findings serve to provide useful feedback to University management who conduct surveys and compile reports for future reference in the institution, to other University community and stakeholders who might find the views expressed in this report intriguing and insightful.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

### **1.8.1 Research Design**

Due to the study being of an exploratory nature, an *exploratory research design* was applied, to explore perceptions and experiences of UKZN's College Reorganisation Process. Guided by interview questions, the study participants, the professional support staff in the College of Law and Management Studies were given an opportunity to share their views, feelings, thoughts and experiences on the journey of transition, on how the reorganisation affected them personally and professionally – the concerns, issues and challenges, losses and benefits, the lessons learnt, growth and maturity brought by the experiences. This study looked at understanding the overall experiences and viewpoints relating to the transition period and aftermath of the College Reorganisation. The main aim of using an exploratory design was to gain background information about the general nature of the study's research problem, to define terms and obtain additional information that might give new insight.

### **1.8.2 Research Approach / Paradigm**

A *qualitative research approach* was used in this study to answer questions based on objectives set to establish and understand the existence of perceptions and experiences of UKZN's College Reorganisation Process as viewed by the professional support staff of the College of Law and Management Studies. The aim of this research was to accumulate descriptive data from participant's own spoken words relating to their perceptions and experiences. Its interest was to understand participant's views, feelings and thoughts.

### **1.8.3 Target Population and Study Site**

The study was conducted using participants based from the various sections of the College of Law and Management Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal. These study participants were employees from the category of professional support staff, both male and female. These were employees that had occupied administrative positions before and after the College Reorganisation Process. They occupied administrative support positions in the field of teaching, examinations, supervisory and



management; or College academic administration in the field of student admissions; funding; registrations; graduations; supervisory and management.

#### **1.8.4 Sampling**

Non-random purposive sampling strategy was applied, where items were selected for the convenience of the researcher, being readily available, nearby and/or willing to participate. Using this particular method, the researcher purposely selected a sample from the target population most relevant to provide quality information to fulfil study objectives. The researcher knew the characteristics of the population group to be targeted and had decided and arrived to the required number of participants, in a certain location convenient for the researcher. A sample size of 15 - 20 professional support staff was selected to participate in the study and a total number of 15 respondents was achieved. Professional support staff from all UKZN Colleges perform duties from very similar job profiles, they had all been affected by the reorganisation process one way or another and therefore the selected participants' views and answers to interview questions even though they cannot be generalised to the entire population, they are regarded as a fair representation.

#### **1.8.5 Data Collection Methods**

Various sources of data collection methods were applied in this study with the intention of using triangulation as a data analysis tool, which allows for comparison of results while checking for similarities. Triangulation also allows the researcher to check for consistency or absence of it, on the information obtained, and validity is established when each of the methods reveals similar conclusions

- (i) semi-structured interviews;
- (ii) focus group discussions; and
- (iii) observation

The above methods were deemed most suitable as the study's purpose was to explore and understand from the participant's point of view, from the word of mouth, their perceptions and experiences, feelings, thoughts and concerns arising from the event/s of the College Reorganisation. Different methods also allowed the researcher to check for consistency or absence of it, from the information obtained. Results and study outcomes of this research are based on a set of data collection methods instead of dependence on a single method, which gives the researcher more confidence.

### **1.8.6 Data Quality Control**

*Trustworthiness and credibility for a qualitative discourse:* A venue setting and time best suitable to accommodate both the participants and the researcher was chosen. The instruments were organised and tested in advance to ensure their best working condition and reliability i.e. the recording tape; the documents containing questions and consent forms; writing pens etc. The interview was voice-recorded word-for-word directly from the participants and co-supported by note-taking. Recordings and minutes/interview notes were later interpreted and analysed conjunctively.

### **1.8.7 Data Analysis**

Data from interviews and focus group discussions was analysed qualitatively as was recorded through voice-recording and minute-taking. The researcher was present among the focus group discussions as a complete observer only i.e. the researcher did not participate in any activities that would have otherwise influenced operations. Digital recordings and minutes/interview notes were later interpreted and analysed conjunctively in the form of *content analysis*. A synthesis of key issues raised by participants was produced from the notes, and recordings were transcribed i.e. converting spoken words into written text. Qualitative data were analysed by following the process of data reduction, data display and finally drawing conclusions and summary of findings. Conclusions were drawn from analysed data to answer research questions, by looking at the common or differing responses and views that emerged from the data.

### **1.8.8 Ethical Consideration**

Approval of ethical clearance was obtained from UKZN Ethics Committee prior to commencement of data collection and interviews, where issues of sensitivity and credibility were assessed. With ethics and anonymity being part of the process, the personal identity information of participants is not revealed in the study and as such, consent was obtained from the direct senior and directly from participants with the assurance that information obtained would be treated with confidentiality and only be used for reporting study outcomes only. All participants' category were working and experienced adults who were fully informed to understand the purpose of the study and how the information would be used.

### **1.8.9 Limitations of the Study**

Study participants were selected from a single College/division identified by the researcher. Due to time constraints and the study being of a small scale, findings cannot be generalised to the whole population i.e. professional support staff of the five campuses of UKZN.

Study participants were full-time employees from sections of one College and therefore proper planning was necessary as it was not possible to keep a single group of employees away from their duties for a prolonged time. Sessions were planned around lunch breaks and groups were formed among employees from different sub-divisions. It was also very difficult to arrive at the expected number from the sample because most employees seemed uncomfortable with participating in research due to fear of prejudice.

### **1.9 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter the researcher intended to give its audience, an ice-breaker in the form of research overview and background for the whole study. The chapter provides an outline of the main subject matter that is meant to draw attention and inform the audience about the research problem; the importance and contribution to the field of study; what the researcher intended to achieve by conducting the study and briefly stated the research methodology to be followed. The following chapters focus deeper into the subject matter of change and restructuring in higher institutions of learning; from literature review that covers the history, current trend, the world views and experiences; to explaining the theories used to measure the objectives of the study. The research methodology chapter discusses in detail, the way in which the actual research was undertaken, from design, approach, study population and selection of participants, how the data was collected, administered, analysed and explained. Following that chapter will be presentation and discussion of findings from data collection, and the last chapter – 5 provides conclusion and recommendations for the future.

The following chapter on literature review focuses on the background history of change and restructuring in higher institutions of learning, public and private organisations. It covers issues that necessitate change in organisations and institutions, current trend, the world views (national and international) and experiences, to explaining theories used to measure the objectives of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Researchers are bound to do extensive reading, interpretation and understanding of other researcher's point of views, and to critically engage on similar topics on the field of research interest with the view of finding and/or filling the gap with their own research. Reviewing literature is about engaging with trusted material published by other scholars; recognised authors; independent researchers; research institutions; journal publications etc. It shows that relevant books, publications, documents and files, other written material means were consulted in order to determine available knowledge on the field of research. It allows the researcher to observe a particular point of entry in the literature or field of study. Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 15)

According to Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 14), literature review gives the researcher an opportunity to access a combination of ideas on what has already been done, what has been written or is still inadequate in terms of its concept or methodology where the researcher intends to clarify or fill the gap in the existing literature. The most recent material is usually used so that data intended for use is current and up-to-date. It is important that sources from consulted material are acknowledged by providing a reference list. Brynard and Hanekom (2006, p. 27)

For the purposes of this particular research, various factors or influences that cause organisations to embark on change processes are identified, such as economic, social and environmental factors, new information technology, accelerated global competition, and changes in the way businesses operate globally. HR Magazine (2007) Dachapalli and Parumasur (2012). Organisations need to be able to quickly change in order to maintain a competitive advantage. The need to seek strategic alliances and maximising the benefits of a well-managed supply chain will continue to drive organisations to change, and the manager's ability to manage and cope with change is one of the important performance criteria, with the focus on adaptability, continuous improvement, lifelong learning and sustaining competitive advantage. Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 123)

According to Rich (2006), the twenty-first century environment for higher education requires a rethinking of asset allocation which could only be achieved through modifying the grouping of faculties to better serve the emerging societal and scholarly needs. Other factors that call for restructuring in higher education are the major shifts from traditional to new fields of scholarship and

innovation. Changes are also necessary especially for the institutions of higher learning, to sustain academic success and to remain competitive, and this can mainly be achieved through redeployment of some faculties and creation of new ones in new arrangements and always with the focus on academic improvement. Rich (2006)

## **2.2 Organisational Change**

It is the significant alteration of some elements of an organisation such as in the form of changes in structures, processes and strategy, technology etc. Burger et al., (2008). When organisations go through the process of restructuring such as downsizing, outsourcing, mergers and acquisitions, employees assess their work situations and often respond with feelings of job insecurity because implementation of change inherently impacts on aspects of their occupational roles leading to increases in role overload, role insufficiency, role ambiguity, role responsibilities etc.

According to Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 73), change is all embracing, dynamic, challenging and brings a sense of excitement when it is designed to drive the solution methodology, within the constraints of cultural and systems environments affected. Shock, anger, anxiety and/or excitement are common emotional responses that occur during a change process. They comprise of psychological, emotional and social factors and will always happen irrespective of whether the anticipated change is positive or not, it is a response to stimulus and is therefore more of an immediate response than resistance. These emotional responses eventually subside when people get through the stages of shock, defensive retreat, acknowledgement, acceptance, adaptation and reconciliation with change. Matyesha (2011) Fugate (2008).

People constitute both an essential factor and the biggest obstacle to successful change and therefore the meaning that they find in the organisational context is important as it contributes to their resistance or readiness to change. Burger et al., (2008). Readiness to change the opposite of resistance to change is the preferred state of mind, attitude and behaviour that would positively contribute to the success of change initiatives. Herholdt (2012, p. 53). Job insecurity has emerged as one of the critical issues in working life, along with the issue of insecure working conditions, due to dramatic changes caused by economic recessions; industrial restructuring; accelerated global competition etc. These demands often give organisations very few options to ensure their survival, forcing them to either improve profits or cut costs through staff reduction. Dachapalli and Parumasur (2012).

Dimensions of job insecurity and biographical variables such as age; race; gender; region; tenure (the period or term of employment); and service record, usually constitute a significant influence on the overall job insecurity. Older people (age 30's and 40's) were found to be more susceptible to

experience job insecurities because of family responsibilities and other long-term financial commitments. Dachapalli and Parumasur (2012) therefore suggest that change managers take notice of these influences and develop suitable strategies for these different groups of employees in order to help reduce the prevalence of job insecurity and retain talent.

In trying to establish the relationship between barriers to change and work engagement, Bell and Barkhuizen (2011) identified four categories of barriers to change that are critical for organisations to identify and work on a plan to reduce or remove:

- project related barriers (challenges in dimensions of direction, planning, implementing and controlling the project)
- people related barriers (inadequate leadership, uncertainty, resistance, change fatigue, personality conflicts etc.)
- organisational barriers (culture and climate; structure, systems and procedures; inadequate resources etc.)
- environmental barriers (challenges in engaging with customers; partners and suppliers)

It is believed that when a positive and inclusive organisational change platform has been created, employees become fully engaged with higher levels of energy in their work and its identification, leading to positive job performance and positive financial turnover in organisations. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011)

### **2.3 Global Trend: Restructuring of Higher Education**

On the global *history and background* of restructuring in the field of higher education such as Colleges and Universities, Martin Trow quoted in Forest and Altbach (2006, p. 247) reveals that the growth in higher education started after the World War II in the European countries when the number of enrolments grew constantly due to great social and political changes. That led to a growing demand in European and American economies for graduates of above secondary school education. That eventually led to transitions in higher education systems through development, changes in all aspects of their structures and functions including the size of the system, the curriculum and forms of instruction, and the academic standards. Forest and Altbach (2006, p. 252)

Nowadays various other education institutions have adopted the College Model, for the purpose of achieving both structural and functional efficiency through effective devolution and consolidation of schools or faculties for leaner structures; greater collaboration; academic improvements; innovation;

devolution of decision-making and financial resources etc. Makgoba (2011) UKZN Executive Committee (2010) Fearn (2011) Mavaneni (2011) Rich (2006).

Some of those Universities from which UKZN learnt its lessons are Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Manchester and Nairobi. UKZN Documents (2010a) Mavaneni (2011). Experiences from the University of Edinburgh revealed that among other positive outcomes, due to decision-making and financial resources devolved to Schools, there was an improvement in administrative processes; increased flexibility and responsiveness; a higher level of support for academics in Schools and the University's strategic goal became clear and understandable. Mavaneni (2011).

Denmark's Aarhus University undertook an organisational reform, cutting the number of faculties, departments and departmental administration. Their aim was to consolidate their University on one site in order to meet requirements for research funding as public funding was becoming less. Fearn (2011) Their faculties were reduced from 55 to only 26. One main element of the reform that seemed challenging for them was the creation of a single administrative service for the entire University. Some of their senior staff chose to leave while others moved back to their old research portfolios, a career move that is regarded as a norm in Denmark. Fearn (2011). The institution's management still felt that even though the idea did not appeal to other academics, it would be a complete opposite – an attraction for others.

Rich (2006, p. 37-40) argues that higher education environment has started undergoing dramatic transformation and has become more turbulent, more threatening and must compete more aggressively. He further states that Universities have therefore been pressured to take greater responsibility on issues of access, financial wellness, greater outputs in research and learning outcomes. This has encouraged University managers to view challenges as business problems that require business solutions, which meant that they had to import ideas and new business methods of dealing with issues, from the private sector.

Universities have also had to look for guidance from the private sector, in response to the global restructuring forces. Its core challenges and restructuring needs still remained i.e. the need to strengthen key ingredients of academic success; excellence in teaching, scholarship, and serving the public. Most importantly, changes in allocation of academic assets, research, and administration of Universities in the most cost efficient and productive business manner.

Organisational restructuring experiences from private companies report brighter endings. When the global holding company, Dubai World completed their organisational restructuring in 2009, moving to their own, the management of several businesses such as Jumeirah Golf Estates, Jumeirah Lakes Towers, and Dubai Maritime City real estate activities, they reported significant cost savings;

increases in efficiency and an anticipated three-year forecast benefit of more than US\$800 million dollars in operating savings as a result of the overall restructuring. Arabia 2000 (2009). Their organisational restructuring led to more appropriately sized divisions necessary to cater for their current market conditions at the time and putting them at an advantage for eventual economic recovery. During their restructuring process, each division had reviewed their business plans and developed a clear strategy in line with its specific area of expertise. Ownership of their key assets remained unaffected. Arabia 2000 (2009)

Singapore Airlines restructured their organisation with the aim of aligning more closely, their commercial, operational and corporate planning activities, and according to the company Chief Executive, by aligning closely-linked activities within commercial, operational and corporate planning areas, they would be in an excellent position to quickly respond and take on new challenges and pursue fresh opportunities for growth. Jeziorski (2011). With due plans for implementation of the new structure in February 2011, they began by restructuring their executive management portfolios by consolidating all commercial areas under different Executive Vice-Presidents, and were also planning to form a separate Corporate Planning division to be headed by another Executive Vice-President, and the airline's Senior Vice-President, all reporting to the company CEO. Jeziorski (2011)

On their bid to taking the company to new heights through expansion, another airline company, China's Shandong Airlines reported its plans to purchasing 15 Boeing 737-800s single-aisle jetliners with deliveries expected from March 2014 through to the third quarter of 2015. Dennis (2011) The effort was meant for both expansion by launching services to more domestic and international destinations, as well as replacement of the airline's 11 ageing 737-300s. Dennis (2011) On its journey of improvement, the carrier's plan was to continue implementing its big triangle strategy focusing on growth at its main Shandong base and capacity increases from two other bases. Air Transport World (2014)

## **2.4 Change Management**

### **2.4.1 The Role of Change Management**

Ford et al., (2008) describes *change* as a situation where normal patterns of an organisation are interrupted thereby calling for participants to agree on and implement new patterns, a system where a lot of ideas, pre-planned and emergent processes need the attention and engagement between change agents and recipients or change. When institutions go through transitions, *change management* becomes one of its important components that need careful implementation and monitoring. It is the means of defining and adopting corporate strategies, structures, procedures and technologies to deal with change. HR Magazine (2007).



According to Cropper (2008), organisations who constantly engage in change efforts (learning organisations) are better equipped and are more successful in helping its people to embrace change. Organisations differ in size and shape, in core business mandate, culture etc., and therefore its success cannot be achieved through following a single format but it emerges naturally when strategies are put in place. Edmonds (2011) The ultimate goal of change management is to ensure a smooth transition throughout the processes. Among other mechanisms, communication can play a vital role in stimulating culture change especially when used for disseminating practical organisational information and for sharing organisational values and goals, and thereby influencing employee's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. Pillay and Pillay (2012)

Effective and proper channels of communication between management and staff need to be established in order to ensure the integrity of information communicated and feedback through consultative workshops. At UKZN these were heavily conducted by various internal and external experts prior to implementation, educating staff and as a means to get the buy-in from employees. Feedback sessions continued throughout the adaptation period conducted by internal experts from UKZN functional departments such as human resources; the registrar's office, public relations and executive management. With the new structure coming into effect from 2011, the University had made it clear, the critical importance of effective and regular communication and its intention for making provision for bottom-up as well as top-down communication. UKZN Exec Committee (2010)

Nelissen and van Selm (2008), believes that management should pay attention to proper dialogue and listen to employees in order to reconstruct and understand their behaviour and thinking, because employees can play a major influential role or challenge the assumptions and goals set by management. According to Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 5), creative and effective management of change is among the top core competencies required by organisations, the ability to replicate and quickly adapt to hard and soft innovations and other industry challenges placed on old conventions, traditions, belief systems etc., due to converging industries, products and customer markets.

In terms of transition management during change, Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 11-12) suggests four sets of interlocking processes that can help guide management action i.e. trigger layer where reasons and plan for change is communicated; the vision layer defines future and the intended new structure; conversion layer involves recruiting and detailing structure; and maintenance and renewal where change efforts are reinforced, justified etc. Their purpose is to implement, sustain and ensure ongoing change achievements and should be recognised as existing necessary steps in change management.

The purpose of maintenance and renewal process is to ensure that initial events that triggered change are kept moving and do not lose relevance over time. It also helps managers to realise that change is a

constant feature in modern organisations, and its proper handling can contribute to addressing some of the factors that lead to resistance to change. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011) stresses the importance of effective change management, through proper planning and implementation of initiatives for readiness to change. This would help reduce barriers to change that manifest through resistance in changing environments.

#### **2.4.2 The Change Agents**

Change agents are those individuals who through their role or capacity in an organisation, become responsible for identifying the need and determining the time for change, those who create the vision and specify the desired outcome. They are problem owners; facilitators; project managers; or even a work group or special task force responsible for the effective implementation of change. Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 54-55) They could also be managers, change consultants or strategists who plan, formulate and implement change.

Nowadays, the success of human resources practitioners and their departments is largely defined by their ability to induce and manage change within their organisations. Notably, it is unfortunate that training, competencies and tools required for this field, do not necessarily form part of the formal Human Resources training. Herholdt (2012, p. 169-173). Their major roles or competencies as HR change agents, as suggested by Herholdt, are identified as:

- Ability to manage change: through a planned approach of implementation
- Consultation: that leads to formulation of strong relationships and promotion of understanding and commitment among all stakeholders
- Problem solving and analysis: a useful capability when it forms part of recruitment and selection of HR professionals
- Influencing and coalition: through relationship building and organisational awareness, ability to promote harmony and consensus, possession of special skills necessary for handling disagreements and conflicts; being aware of internal environment as well as forming internal and supportive networks

According to Ford et al., (2008) change agents can also contribute to resistance by employees through their action or non-action (ignorance and violation of trust). Research suggests that change agents who positively engage with and work on repairing damaged relationships during the change process, restoring trust of participants, are less likely to encounter resistance than the latter.

Their job must include taking responsibility for the types of relationships that evolve during the change process i.e. they must take charge of the change dialogues that include inquiry that is welcoming and ready to address resistive behaviours and engaging in necessary actions needed to maintain and improve relationship between agents and change recipients. Ford et al., (2008)

Facilitators are also responsible for encouraging participation and involvement of all affected parties, with the aim of stimulating interest and commitment, to minimise fears and reduce uncertainty, opposition or resistance, as well as encouraging positive action. They organise and ensure engagement processes such as facilitation workshops and support services, promotion of individual awareness and identify training needs where necessary. Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 55). For successful change implementation, employees' positive attitudes, engagement through support and willingness to participate is crucial. Every effort must be made by change leaders to encourage employees' personal involvement and participation in the overall organisational change, strategy, and transformation. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011)

The initial task of managing the change process begins by identifying and managing stakeholders; working on objectives; setting full agenda; building appropriate control systems; and planning the change process. Focus should always be on establishing roles; building teams; nurturing coalitions of support; managing the change process through ongoing communication and transparency; making use of supporting power bases; and the final handing over process; are the critical life stages of the change process to be handled by the change agent. Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 55)

### **2.4.3 People Management during Change**

From an organisational development perspective, organisations are about people, their development, enhancing their performance which in turn builds and strengthens the organisation. Emphasis on meeting customer satisfaction to the highest standard; and taking care of the organisation's people, are the two underlying themes for any successful organisation. And according to Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 166), success comes from customer satisfaction that is generated from motivated people, and the organisation's ability to produce or provide goods and services depends on its ability to gain commitment and loyalty from its people i.e. the manager's behaviour and attitudes towards the individual.

The importance and contribution of organisational structure, technology, and management, should not be treated in isolation of individuals because it is people within the organisations who deliver the needed organisation's performance standards. Therefore people should be provided with opportunities for growth and development, and recognition of this fact is one of the drivers for basic principles of organisational development (OD). Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 171) Opportunities

for individual development happen concurrently with the organisation. They occur during the organisational change process and should be viewed as the positive aspect, notwithstanding the above facts relating to the manager's behaviour and attitudes towards people.

According to Herholdt (2012, p. 20), the change agents and project teams should carefully consider and have realistic expected level of major change impact, prepare themselves, and involve people in ongoing dialogue and interaction to get them ready for change. Further, giving people a chance to talk rather than listen is what will buy their commitment to change. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011) states that the moments of engagement and disengagement is influenced by the employees' experiences of themselves, their work life and their work contexts, and when organisations go through change, they feel the loss of their identity, which leads to anxiety and grieving. And Herholdt (2012, p. 60) therefore stresses the need for organisations to consider with importance, the meaning and impact brought by change in the lives of employees and the continued survival of the organisation. Taking cognisance of and addressing people's issues instead of ignoring them, should definitely contribute in reducing resistance.

The role of people management during change mainly rests on the abilities and approaches applied by the change agents as they positively engage with and work on repairing damaged relationships, restoring trust of participants. Change agents also take responsibility for the types of relationships that evolve during the change process i.e. taking charge of the change dialogues, they organise and ensure engagement processes such as facilitation workshops and support services, promotion of individual awareness and identify training needs where necessary. They encourage participation and involvement of all affected parties, with the aim of stimulating interest and commitment, to minimise fears and reduce uncertainty, opposition or resistance, as well as encouraging positive action. Ford et al., (2008) Paton and McCalman (2008)

The central characteristic of the modern, complex society is interdependence and that also applies in business organisations as we depend upon each other in achieving individual and organisational goals. Managers need to strike a balance, and in order to manage people effectively, their approach should focus on the longer term view and not become involved in the daily operational issues. Developing a 'hands-off' management approach is a suggested key elements of managing change, according to Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 165-170)

Senge (2006), recommends that learning organisations discover how to tap employee's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in order to be successful and truly excel in the future. Individual employees must see themselves as being part of the system, as learning individuals that have to change along with the learning organisation. Senge (2006). Equally, Wang and Ahmed (2003)

believes that even though learning begins with the individual, it is ultimately the task of the learning organisation to integrate individual learning into organisational learning.

#### **2.4.4 Resistance to Change**

Herholdt (2012, p. 144) defines resistance as an engagement by individuals or groups, in actions aimed at blocking the organisations attempts to introduce change. It can take many forms such as withholding information; lack of cooperation by means of active resistance such as industrial action or strikes. Ford et al., (2008) states that resistance is a form of conflict and is believed that it can strengthen and improve the quality of decisions and also the commitment to implementation of decisions by participants, and therefore the change process can benefit from it, especially where it happens on reasonably grounds.

Resistance to change is a possible reflection on the quality of relationships between both parties and therefore resistance should not be viewed as only brought about by unreasonable barriers from recipients as it has seemingly been assumed by most studies. It should not be portrayed independently of the reactions and relationships between change agents and recipients. Ford et al., (2008) believes that consideration should also be given to the possibility that change agents assign the term resistance as their interpretation to the behaviours and communication reactors from change recipients.

Erwin and Garman (2010) supports views on the nature of influences that trigger individual's positive or negative reaction to change. He states that consideration should be given to issues such as threats and benefits of change; communication; understanding; trust in management; management styles; participation; the type and nature of relationships between change agents and participants as these play a major influence on the level of resistance from employees. According to Self and Schraeder (2009), resistance can either be reduced or managed more effectively through matching the primary sources of resistance to some specific readiness strategies that could involve information sharing workshops; management's ability to convince employees about the legitimacy of change; benefits; and other preparation techniques to stimulate and get everyone on the tune. Logotherapy is a recognised model of psychology that deals with "search for meaning"

Burger et al., (2008) found that logotherapy, which is a recognised alternative model of psychology, can be used as an organisational development (OD) intervention to assist with discovery of meaning and purpose among employees who would normally resist change because of the threat of losing something meaningful such as the loss of security and stability, status, competence or self-efficacy. Burger et. Al., (2008) Through influence of behaviour and attitude change, OD could contribute to employees viewing change as an opportunity rather than a threat. Logotherapy refers to 'therapy through meaning' and according to Burger et al., (2008), logo-OD could be used as a positive trigger

event for organisational change implementation as it might help in reducing employee's resistance to change by assisting them in their search for meaning amid organisational change.

Resistance to change can be a resource and potential contribution to effective management because resistance to persuasion leads to thoughtful consideration of matters at hand. When looked from this perspective therefore, resistance to change can be a positive rather than negative influence. Resistance can be a useful challenge when it leads to refining strategic and action plans. It is one of the four stages of reactions that individuals go through during change i.e. denial; resistance; exploration; and commitment. Erwin and Garman (2010). It could arise due to communication breakdowns, where chances of success are being misrepresented or failing to prove legitimacy for change or failure to acknowledge and involve all parties into action.

Ford et al., (2008) lists some benefits from resistance to change:

- It could potentially contribute to increasing the likelihood of a successful implementation
- It could help build awareness and momentum for change
- It develops counterarguments and calls for compelling justifications for change
- It could contribute to elimination of counterproductive or unnecessary elements in the design or conduct of the change process
- It could be a response to perceived injustice and broken agreements

The views expressed on Ford et al., (2008) imply that resistance to change should be seen in light of being a result of the agent-recipient relationship, where contribution by both parties is acknowledged i.e. reconstruction of resistance to change based on three dynamic elements:

- The recipient action
- The agent sense-making of the action or situation
- The agent-recipient relationship

Branson (2008) also believes that the widely acknowledged resistance to organisational change could also be motivated by the failure to address the values alignment element of the change process in the current organisational change strategies. While Paton and McCalman (2008) simply state that it results from fear, prejudice, anxiety and ignorance, which can be reduced when change provides challenges and stimulation.

## 2.5 Organisational Culture

### 2.5.1 The Role of Organisational Culture

Another critical component that plays an important role in guiding and facilitating the process of dialogue during times of change, is *the organisational culture*. It provides material and moral support for discussions and decision-making about what issues and procedures need to be handled and taken forward to the newly transformed institution. Those discussions and decisions are eventually documented as the organisational culture which assists with implementation of new plans. Ntuli (2005).

Dialogue allows for an opportunity for creating a shared set of meaning and a common thinking process among different cultural and racial groups within organisations, and might be useful in designing, implementation and evaluation of communication in organisational change settings. Nelissen and van Selm (2008) The type of organisational leadership, the strategy adopted for change implementation, the discipline in the organisation, the type of integration between the organisation and its systems, processes and people, are all key elements that describe the manner in which things are done in a particular organisation, thereby determining its culture. Pillay and Pillay (2012) And accordingly, the organisational change processes have implications for the type of organisational culture that emerges later, leading to the success of an organisation with leadership being the key role player in the process. Pillay and Pillay (2012) The availability or lack of resources (human, financial, physical etc.) also influences the culture of an organisation, it is an important factor in creating an enabling environment for service delivery, and is critical in achieving efficiency and effectiveness while contributing to the type of impact on staff motivation and morale. Pillay and Pillay (2012)

The University's Strategic Plan (2007 to 2016) outlines a number goals and strategies, one being an institution of choice for staff and students. This strategy would be achieved by, among other things, providing top-class working conditions and, through effective and efficient management, by establishing effective channels of communication that are responsive to staff interests and concerns, and opportunities to engage with issues. Corporate Relations (2008). These elements are also endorsed in the institution's success indicators. In a case study of organisational change and culture in UKZN, it was found that the University's communication system (email, newsletter and communiqués) was perceived positively, but employees appeared to want greater consultation on important issues. Pillay and Pillay (2012)

Organisation's cultures can be viewed as the net values and expectations that are shared by groups of individuals in an organisation. Parumasur (2012). Those cultures change together with their organisations, and accordingly, management need to give sufficient attention to leadership, culture

and its management of change and be able to choose an appropriate type of organisational development (OD) intervention that will succeed.

OD is a comprehensive, global approach to organisational improvement that was developed due to rapid growth and transformation of organisations. Parumasur (2012) It is important that interventions are compatible with the structures, systems, strategies and designs of any particular organisation, and that they are aligned with the organisational (local) cultures. Herholdt (2012, p. 54-56) believes that OD practices should be based on behavioural scientific knowledge and humanistic values that support the overall purpose of reaching organisational goals and improved effectiveness through implementation of planned change in various organisational subsystems. He further recommends the application of OD interventions in facilitating change initiatives in order to help trigger positive emotions and reduce resistance in employees.

Research denotes that repeated exposure to the interventions leads to sustainable positive attitudes about change, but also believe that a single type of OD may not be sufficient for longer-term sustainability. Burger et al., (2008) argues that due to complexity of organisational change accompanied by the difficulty in changing employee's attitudes towards change, it is unlikely that one type of OD intervention can succeed. According to Kvedaraitė and Jankauskienė (2011), organisational culture constitutes the basis for cultural diversity management when it emphasizes its employee's differences as a value and thereby developing their mindset.

Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 210) describes OD as a concept of changing organisations from current undesired state to another, using social science techniques to change. It is an ongoing process designed and planned to resolve issues through effective diagnosis and management of the organisation's culture. It employs behavioural and social science techniques and methodologies, using action research approach to instigate change in organisations. He further identifies some objectives from which OD programmes should ideally be based:

- increasing levels of trust and support among the organisation's stakeholders
- to increase openness of communication without fear of prejudice
- to aim for improved levels of personal enthusiasm and satisfaction in the organisation
- to improve level of confrontation with organisational problems both within and among groups
- to increase an environment in which authority of assigned role is aligned and based on knowledge and skill
- to improve levels of all stakeholder participation during planning and implementation phase



The most important feature of organisational development is that it strives to maintain control over an organisation undergoing constant change. It plays a major role in facilitating progress using more than one element within an organisation. A well-defined OD strategy that is tied into the organisation's overall business strategy is necessary to ensure ongoing success of change initiatives. Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 210-215)

### **2.5.2 Cultural Diversity and Management**

*Cultural diversity* in people and within their existence, is another sensitive issue that cannot be ignored during a transitional period of organisational restructuring as it forms part of everyday human interaction in business and in society. Kvedaraitė and Jankauskienė (2011) *Diversity* is the differences and similarities between members of one group, and *Cultural diversity* exists within a certain national culture and it includes other dimensions such as age, gender, race, sexual orientation, physical capability, religion, social status, customs and beliefs. It encompasses two dimensions, namely, ethnic belonging and nationality. Kvedaraitė and Jankauskienė (2011)

Thomas (2011) defines *diversity management* as the ability to handle challenging situations and making quality decisions in the midst of any set of differences and similarities, with its related tensions and complexities. According to Thomas, one of the themes useful for addressing diversity is to recognise the fact that diversity generates tensions and complexities which are by-products that need to be accepted and worked through in the process of managing diversity. Thomas (2011) Other dimensions of diversity that exist over and above the traditional people's dimensions of race, gender and ethnicity include, the levels of experience and number of years spent in the organisation, followed by non-people diversity dimensions such as products diversity; and diversity among organisation's functions and processes. Thomas (2011)

*Cultural diversity management* is associated with the assurance of equal opportunities for all, the representation of the different cultures and social groups, and utilisation of potential from all employees in order to yield economic benefits and competitive advantage. It also ensures toleration of personal differences between employees by turning them into a complementary special value. Kvedaraitė and Jankauskienė (2011). UKZN policies support promotion of staff equity in both academic and support sector of the institution. Makgoba (2007) In acknowledgement of, and compliance with the Code of Good Practice, and as a means to driving the University's objectives, the Policy on Students and Staff with Disabilities ensures the inclusiveness and universal accessibility to tertiary education and the working environment by all students and staff including those with disabilities. UKZN Council (2004) With the University being committed to the removal of cultural, physical, social and other barriers that prevent people with disabilities from entering, being employed, using or benefiting from the University, the policy was developed in accordance with Section 54(1)(a)

of the Employment Equity Act, No. 55, 1998 and is based on the Constitutional principle (Act 108 of 1996) that no one may unfairly discriminate against a person on the grounds of disability. UKZN Council (2004)

As an academic learning institution and as part of its commitment to transformation at an institutional level, and its commitment to the development of isiZulu as an academic language alongside English which remained the main language of learning and instruction, UKZN requires that all new students registering for undergraduate degrees for the first time at its institution from 2004, and unless an exemption has been granted, be registered and pass or obtain a credit for a prescribed isiZulu module before they can graduate. Vithal (2013a) This rule was approved in principle by the UKZN's Senate, giving tangible expression to its language policy and plan about promoting and facilitating the use of the isiZulu as a language of learning, communication, instruction and administration. Each degree programme were to determine the appropriate level and type of proficiency, and according to Vithal, the implementation of this rule was in line with the University Language Policy and Plan and its Transformation Charter which seeks to develop African languages as academic languages. Vithal (2013a) UKZN Registrar (2006) Academics with expertise in African Languages were also committed in assisting and offering their service to UKZN, in the drawing up and implementation of a Language Policy that reflects the needs of the regional community. School of isiZulu (UKZN) (2005)

With isiZulu basic short course being offered for staff members as well at UKZN, through this language development initiative, both staff and students would develop communicative competence in isiZulu and English sufficient for academic interaction. According to the University and its language policy, proficiency in isiZulu would contribute to nation-building and would assist the students in effective communication with the majority of the population of the province (KwaZulu-Natal). UKZN Registrar (2006) Vithal states that the institution has an obligation to ensure linguistic choices result in effective learning solutions, especially at a University where more than 60 percent of students are isiZulu-speaking, and in a country that continued to be divided on the basis of linguistic identities, therefore language was expected to serve to bring diverse learning communities together and promote social cohesion. Vithal (2013b) Since this policy implementation and before, numerous efforts by language departments and academics at the University, have contributed by committing to working individually, collaboratively, creatively and efficiently, as part of a truly South African institution of higher learning, and by following through the vision and mission of the University, to providing excellent and appropriate teaching in language study, and by involvement in research and community service grounded in an ethically-based understanding of a multilingual South Africa in the global context. School of isiZulu (UKZN) (2005)

Other studies also support the importance of preserving language in transformation, emphasising the desirability of all learners acquiring a working competence in at least one indigenous African language, for reasons of both personal enrichment and intercultural communication and understanding. Horsthemke (2009) With some philosophers referring to the idea of mental decolonisation being an essential component in the discourse around educational transformation, with particular reference to the significance. Horsthemke (2009)

Swain (2006, p. 29) talks about the importance of negotiating and understanding human differences, where each individual increases understanding and appreciates different thinking and behaviour of others in order to turn those differences from conflicts into positive outcome that is born of the diverse group's energy. A well-functioning team could be derived from valuing diversity and openness by individuals and groups from a range of disciplinary backgrounds and personalities, so is valuing diversity among different units and among different approaches to working towards achieving goals; and valuing open communications. Swain (2006, p. 29-32)

*Cultural psychology* studies by Nisbett (2004) found that people from different countries believe, think and act differently and according to the culture followed in that geographical country i.e. Western or Asian or African. And accordingly, people think about, see and even view the world differently because of differing ecologies, social structures, philosophies and educational systems that date back to Ancient Greece and China. Nisbett (2004) It is believed that the difficulty in fostering excellent interpersonal working relationships is due to the fact that people are too different from one another, a factor that often lead to misunderstandings and tensions. Swain (2006 p. 28-29) Individuals have different psychological preferences that affect their communication patterns, work styles and interpersonal relationships.

According to Thomas (2011), all approaches to diversity fall into one of the following core strategies:

- Managing workforce representation
- Managing workforce relationships
- Managing diverse talent
- Managing all strategic diversity mixtures, in order to maximise stakeholder engagement

World-Class Diversity, the ability to recognise and deal with diversity beyond race, gender and ethnicity, is a status, that when achieved, could be useful in situations that involve diversity of thought. Through this growth, individual, organisations and communities' ability to deal with other diversity dimensions, is enhanced. Thomas (2011)

Unlike globalisation, *workforce diversity* addresses differences among people within given countries. It is one of the most important challenges currently facing organisations i.e. adapting people who are different. Robbins (2009) Embracing diversity in the workforce does not happen automatically but could be achieved through addressing different people's lifestyles, family needs, work styles etc., and according to Robbins (2009), it has important implications for management practice.

The UKZN has greater racial, cultural diversity and demographic representation in both students and staff. Its diversity was mainly achieved when the new institution was formed from the merger of the Universities of Natal and Durban Westville in 2004, and as endorsed in the University's Strategic Plan (2007-2016). Makgoba (2007) The University, being a public institution with a mission of becoming a truly South African University, and as a leading institution of higher learning in South Africa, it is committed to academic excellence, innovation and research, and critical engagement with society, as well as in its Mission to becoming demographically representative in terms of race, gender, disability and redressing the inequities of the past. Division of Human Resources and Equity (2009) As a result its policy, guided by the country's Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998, locates employment equity as an essential component within the larger commitment to transformation and goals of excellence articulated in the Mission and Vision of the University. Division of Human Resources and Equity (2009)

Cultural diversity needs to be managed due to the presence of competences (skills, knowledge, experiences and attitudes) between different working groups and individuals from different racial, social, religious and cultural backgrounds. Kvedaraitė and Jankauskienė (2011). *Intercultural competence*, the individual's ability to communicate and interact with individuals belonging to other cultural groups, has four key dimensions: knowledge, attitude, skills and critical cultural awareness. Kvedaraitė and Jankauskienė (2011).

The way in which cultural psychology plays itself in a business environment and among business people, in particular those in managerial positions is of critical importance. The characteristic of preference between individual vs. group dynamics or teamwork affects the outcomes in setting goals and individually or collectively working towards achieving them. Nisbett (2004).

## **2.6 Reasons for Success or Failure of Change Interventions**

The low success rate is one remarkable aspect about the organisational change efforts, according to Burnes and Jackson (2011) who further cited the lack of alignment between the value system of the change intervention and that of the organisation and its people, as the potentially significant reason for this failure. Yet amidst all the challenges and obstacles that prevent long-term success and viability of change processes, the speed, magnitude, unpredictability and importance of change and keeping

abreast of times, has increased considerably forcing companies to act – the only hope for survival. McKinsey & Company (2008)

Battilana and Casciaro (2012), believes that when intended changes do not affect the organisation's alignment with existing institutions, organisational members are more motivated to participate in the change initiation and implementation. Moreover, organisations must be able to convince the public of their legitimacy. Branson (2008), supports the view that successful achievement of organisational change depends on values alignment within the organisational culture, a foundation rather than just an integral part of the change process. This failure to align value systems to organisational change strategies and employee's personal values could also lead to resistance by change recipients, hence the interdependence between these perceived important change elements. By recognising and acknowledging organisational and employees' values in the change strategies i.e. the building blocks - purpose, identity, culture, values and beliefs, behaviours and the environment, a strong and personal relationship is built.

On the same note, surveys by McKinsey & Company (2008), as well as other leading management consultancies, Senturia et al., (2008), have found that about two-thirds of all change initiatives do not succeed and the challenge has been due to limited attention to research about the many factors and reasons for the failure. The other mistake that individuals and organisations make, according to Paton and McCalman (2008), is repeating past successful approaches that are no longer appropriate. In an effort to ensure successful implementation and positive responses from employees, Nelissen and van Selm (2008) stresses the importance of role played by management communication, during the change process through to handling of issues faced by survivors in the restructured organisation. This idea comes from studies that have indicated that responses to organisational change are influenced by management communication about objectives and consequences of change.

Burger et al., (2008) suggests the application of logotherapy as an organisational development (OD) intervention and a recognised alternative model of psychology that would benefit employees with discovery of meaning and purpose in life irrespective of the circumstances. Logotherapy refers to 'therapy through meaning' and according to Burger et al., (2008), logo-OD could be used as a positive trigger event for organisational change implementation in order to assist reduce employee's resistance to change. By raising self-awareness and self-regulation behaviours, the positive trigger event would cause a shift in employee attitudes and create readiness for change. Burger et al., (2008) OD contributes to employees viewing change as an opportunity rather than a threat. Logo-OD can play a role in fostering readiness to change thereby reducing resistance through attitude change.

Erwin and Garman (2010) says that over and above systems processes of policy and procedures; mission and strategy; and organisational strategy; greater attention must be focused on other factors

that influence success of organisational change, i.e. individual behaviours; needs; values; and motivation. And according to Bell and Barkhuizen (2011), people need to be involved, commit; contribute and engage meaningfully in order for the organisational change initiative to occur successfully. In order to address issues in real context, organisations need to gain more knowledge about the adverse effects of organisational change initiatives on people.

In the context of evaluating success or failure of organisational change initiatives, the acceptance of the content from which the change is based, as well as the approach taken towards implementation are the two components that need assessment. Consideration of the human element should be priority in any process that seeks to change the actual organisation because the individuals create an organisation and the organisation itself is a collection of individual people. Therefore the organisation's long-term success and viability depends on the organisation's ability to involve all the elements of values alignment in its implementation of the change process, and in order to constructively cope with the needed changes to ensure this. Branson (2008)

Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 86-87) believes that consideration of systems relationship can be a key to success if examined and seen through a relationship map that clearly identifies and shows interlink from all role players such as customers; investors; suppliers; competition; government; employers; employees; and unions . According to Paton and McCalman, when this happens, the problem owner or the change agent may begin to appreciate the linkages or interfaces and complexities that participate in the change environment.

## **2.7 The Integration Process**

Knillans (2009) describes integration as the process of combining two or more companies into one entity and involves the synthesis of people into one corporate culture consisting of the best aspects of both corporate cultures. Knillans (2009) It also involves the merger of company systems such as IT, human resources and company policies and procedures, and production processes, into a uniform system. Any integration process takes time to understand as organisations and its people go through a change curve, and therefore management teams need to realise this and put in place programs that will help with the alignment as it guides everyone towards the established vision. Knillans (2009)

Steynberg and Veldsman (2011)'s theory model (Model TP) for holistic people integration process during mergers and acquisitions (M&As) strongly recommends the adoption of an ongoing action learning mental model by the integration team, throughout the integration process. It is believed that this action learning mental model ensures that people are successfully integrated. It encompasses steps such as 'diagnose and understand, plan and design, undertake action, reflect and learn, diagnose and understand' Steynberg and Veldsman (2011).

In the context of UKZN's reorganisation process, people integration process played a significant role during the shifting and relocation to different campuses and new Colleges and Schools; new job profiles and work-stations; new line managers/reporting lines etc. The effectiveness of people integration process or the absence of it - has a direct bearing on the trauma experienced by people and beyond. Steynberg and Veldsman (2011). Its proper handling contributes enormously to reduction of stress and depression; role conflict and many other problems that hinder success. Various other important aspects that are handled during people integration process are: governance; organisational and work design; people practices; systems and processes; physical integration; geographical location etc. Steynberg and Veldsman (2011)

The degree of intensity of a particular change in organisations can range from nominal to radical. Three levels are identified: 1) incremental changes - where new routines are adopted; 2) change that involve major modifications or implementation of new strategic vision; 3) radical changes such as mergers or acquisitions. Clark et al., (2010) The most intense change is where significant transformation involving organisational identity change takes place. When this happens, relationship with stakeholders, employee's responses to threats, organisational commitment and organisational adaptation to new environment becomes critical because it affects employee's personal and professional identity as well, where people then try to adapt to new professional roles. Clark et al., (2010). Generally, ongoing support should be provided in terms of training and skills development, new or improved software training and adaptation, workshops and seminars, to assist employees in coping with newly acquired positions, new systems etc.

According to Bell and Barkhuizen (2011), research and experience has clearly shown that organisational change initiatives generally affect the operation of systems and processes, including people in that environment. It affects people's thoughts, behaviour, their perceptions, the level of engagement and their ability to adjust and perform in the changed environment, hence the importance of organisations to explore and understand the relationships between the barriers to change and work engagement of employees in order to address them in their readiness to change initiatives and to ensure success over time. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011)

The key role players in the integration process as cited by Knilans (2009), the people, culture, and leadership all individually and collectively contribute to the success, performance and profitability of the established organisation. Knilans further contests that proper planning, vision and communication, and proper handling of people's issues will improve chances for a successful integration process. When integration processes automatically happen before thought and planning has begun, that is the basis for failure of many integration initiatives.

Knillans (2009) identifies three components of a successful integration:

- Integration processes or steps as planned by the organisation's management e.g. development of workforce integration project plan; determining leadership assignments; preparation of employee communications strategy; defining of transition data requirements; development of employee retention strategies etc.;
- Integration tools such as mentoring programs and networking opportunities
- Measuring integration success through implementation of special measurement tools that would later determine success or failure of the project.

Also important are key integration drivers that are regarded as key influence in the success or failure in the cultural integration initiative, they complement the above-mentioned components i.e. integration teams; speed; leadership; communication; retention; culture; and results or outcomes. The integration process is driven by a detailed plan of the overall change management as the change process goes through the stages of awareness, acceptance and adoption.

## **2.8 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.8.1 Definition and Purpose of Theory**

A *theory* is a statement of concepts and their interrelationships that shows how and why a phenomenon or an event occurs. Corley and Gioia (2011) It can also be described as a well-developed, logical explanation of an event. Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 17). Mayer and Sparrowe (2013) describes it as a place where management scholars gain insights as they engage in research to better understand the many aspects of management. Some of the reasons for researchers to specify a theoretical framework are to signal where the research is coming from; to assess the validity of the theory's propositions in the study being undertaken; or to use the theory's propositions in the design and conduct of the study. Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 17)

### **2.8.2 Theoretical Background**

With the view of the above, we will now consider Peter Senge's theory of the "Fifth Discipline" Senge (2006) which will be applied in this study as a primary theory and for guidance in addressing issues from the organisational point of view. Senge (2006, p. 5-13) believes that organisations should adopt a culture of learning and become *learning organisations* i.e. organisations that constantly go through discovery and change, in order to survive and remain competitive. He recommends that in order to be successful and truly excel in the future, those organisations need to discover how to tap employee's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels. Individual employees must see themselves



as learning individuals that have to change along with the learning organisation i.e. being part of the system.

Wang and Ahmed (2003) states that the concept of organisational learning and learning organisation only emerged after the 1980's and its idea resulted from the creation of "action learning" process i.e. the involvement of small groups and deriving group's positive emotional energies. He further argues that even though learning begins with the individual, it is ultimately the task of the learning organisation to integrate individual learning into organisational learning.

### 2.8.3 The Fifth Discipline: Theory 1

Senge (2006) developed the theory of five disciplines that he believes are necessary to bring about a learning organisation: (1) systems thinking - the discipline that integrates the other disciplines, fusing them into a coherent body of theory and practice. In order to realise its potential, it requires the disciplines of (2) building shared vision, (3) mental models, (4) team learning, and (5) personal mastery. The figure below shows the life stages and how these five disciplines should co-exist in order for each to be successful.



**Figure 2-1: Five Learning Disciplines, Cropper (2008)**

Adapted from: The Change Forum, [http://www.thechangeforum.com/Learning\\_Disciplines.htm](http://www.thechangeforum.com/Learning_Disciplines.htm)

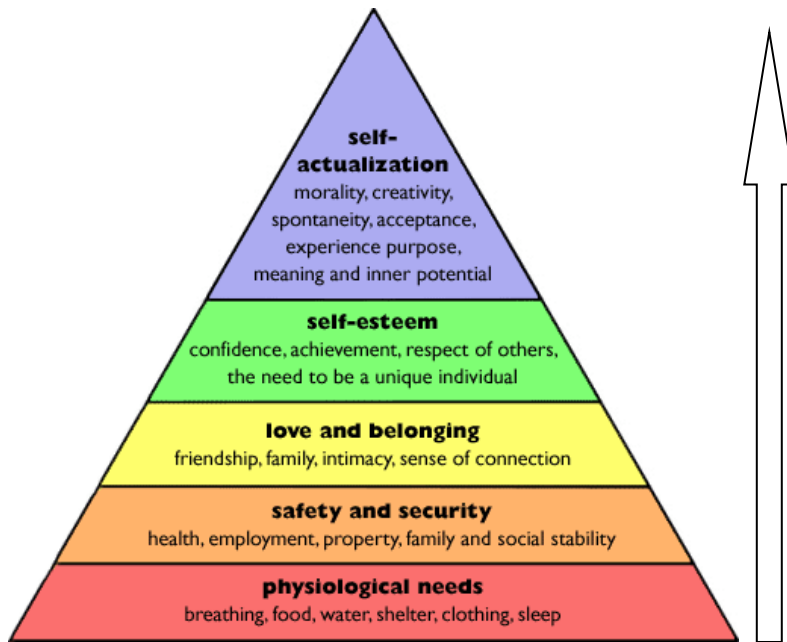
Building shared vision fosters a commitment to the long term, while mental models focus on the openness needed to unearth shortcomings in people's way of seeing the world. In a support statement to Senge's theory, Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 66) describes mental models as the images, assumptions and stories that people carry in their heads, and which impact their behaviour in an unconscious manner. The learning discipline of team learning develops groups' skills to look for the

larger picture beyond individuals perspectives; personal mastery fosters each individual's personal motivation to continually learn how people's actions affect the world. At personal mastery level, people are able to shift from reactive mindset to being part of the problem or system. Senge (2006, p. 12) The idea is for these disciplines to be managed interchangeable as they can prove critical to each other's success. Each of them can be thought of on three distinct levels i.e. practices; principles; essences. Royal Dutch/Shell was one of the first large organisations to understand and experience the influence of mental models and it led to Shell's success, rising from one of the weakest of the big seven oil companies during a period of major changes in the world oil business in the 1970s and 1980s. Senge (2006, p. 8)

According to this theory, not all organisations can reach the status of a learning organisation, some have learning disabilities that can eventually lead to its death, and accordingly, even the most successful organisations can be poor learners, they survive but never leave up to their potential. Senge (2006, p. 17-18).

#### **2.8.4 Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: Theory 2**

The secondary theory, Abraham Maslow's (1954) hierarchic theory of needs as explained by Gawel (1997) Simons et al., (1987b) will be appropriate and complimentary to the primary theory as it addresses the human aspect, describing the needs and expectations of people that are considered necessary to achieve personal fulfilment for employees to engage effectively and efficiently at work. This theory will be a useful guide in assessing the behaviour and personal experiences from the College Reorganisation process, as will be described by the study participants – the professional support staff.



**Figure 2-2: A.H. Maslow (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, Brough (2012)**

Adapted from: <http://www.researchhistory.org/2012/06/16/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs/>

His first theory “Motivation and Personality”, referred to the way people satisfy various personal needs based on their job/work context. Gawel (1997) This general pattern of needs recognition and satisfaction followed by individuals would be satisfied from the lowest to highest level as the individual grows together with his/her needs and expectations. On his research, Stum (2001) compared Maslow’s theory of individual motivation - the hierarchy of needs to a hierarchical model of organisational commitment (the performance pyramid) in an attempt to understand workforce motivators that influence employee’s level of commitment i.e. physiological need vs. Safety/Security; Safety need vs. Rewards; Social need vs. Affiliation; Esteem need vs. Growth and; Self-Actualisation need vs. Work/Life Harmony. According to Stum (2001) Maslow’s theory suggests that a substantially satisfied need no longer motivates. Therefore it is possible that on reaching the self-actualisation need (work/life harmony) which is the highest level, employees are at their comfort zone waiting to retire at their respective job and company and the reorganisation process would have caused major interference at this level for employee’s personal goals and career lives.

### **2.8.5 Combination and Application of Theory 1 & 2**

Senge’s theory will be applied in this study as a primary theory to assess the existence and contribution of these five disciplines during the UKZN’s College Reorganisation process; and how they were managed by staff, other stakeholders and management (as change agents) to facilitate the process; how they contributed to the journey and outcomes of the reorganisation process. On the

other hand, Maslow's theory will be a useful guide in assessing the behaviour and personal experiences from the College Reorganisation process, as will be described by the study participants – the professional support staff. Senge's theory is relevant to this study as it will help to establish how the five disciplines were effectively integrated to influence the experiences of professional support staff at UKZN. Should the findings reflect that these disciplines were not effectively managed, lessons will be drawn for future change processes.

The secondary theory, Abraham Maslow's (1954) hierarchic theory of needs will be appropriate and *complimentary to the primary theory* as it addresses the human aspect, describing the needs and expectations of people that are considered necessary to achieve personal fulfilment for employees to engage effectively and efficiently at work. According to Gorman (2010), social and emotional wellbeing of individuals can be derived and is dependent of many factors that can either be internal or external. Maslow's theory will be a useful guide in assessing the behaviour and personal experiences from the College Reorganisation process, as will be described by the study participants – the professional support staff, as well as how their social and emotional wellbeing was affected.

In its strategic plan (2007 – 2016), the UKZN outlines a number of goals and strategies, one being an institution of choice for staff and students. This strategy would be achieved by, among other things, providing top class working conditions and second, through effective and efficient management, by establishing effective channels of communication that are responsive to staff interests and concerns, and opportunities to engage with issues. Corporate Relations (2008) These elements are also endorsed on the institution's success indicators.

## **2.9 Chapter Summary**

The literature review chapter looked at the background history of change and restructuring in higher institutions of learning, public and private organisations. The reasons and evolving times that cause and forces organisations to embark on change initiatives, as well as its impact on the work-life balance of individual employees; the stakeholder-relationships; and future success or failure of organisations. Several important terms and issues that relate and build the field of organisational restructuring were explored and explained. Those are issues of organisational culture; organisational development initiatives; people management during change; and measures for addressing resistance and readiness to change. The chapter also touched on important issues such as the reasons and motivation for change in organisations and institutions, current trend, the world views and experiences, the key players in the system, the role of human resources and change agents, change management, the contributing factors to success or failure of change initiatives, the integration process, and finally explaining the two theories that were used to measure the objectives of the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Choosing an appropriate methodology is critical for research as it determines the whole approach from data collection, process, analysis and final outcomes. It is the process that calls for reflection on planning, structure and execution of research in order to comply with the demands of the truth, objectivity and validity. Brynard and Hanekom (2006, p. 36). Research methodology speaks to the process of research and the decisions necessary for the undertaking of the research project. As such, for the purpose of this study, this section outlines its important building blocks – the research design, in the form of research approach; study sample and population; data collection method/s; data administration and analysis; validity and ethical consideration.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

As supported by Pellissier (2008, p. 24), qualitative research studies apply *exploratory*; non-directive research design in line with their data collection approach. The aim of this study is to explore perceptions and experiences from the UKZN's College Reorganisation Process. Guided by interview questions, study participants, the professional support staff in the College of Law and Management Studies were presented with the opportunity to share their views, feelings, thoughts and experiences on the journey of transition, on how the reorganisation affected them personally and professionally – the concerns, issues and challenges, losses and benefits, the lessons learnt, growth and maturity brought by the experiences.

This study looked at understanding the whole experiences and viewpoints relating to the transition period and aftermath of the College Reorganisation. The main aim of using the exploratory design is to gain background information about the general nature of the study's research problem, to define terms and obtain additional information that might give new insight.

##### **3.2.1 Research Method / Approach**

A *qualitative research approach* was used in this study to answer questions based on objectives set to establish and understand the existence of perceptions and experiences from UKZN's College Reorganisation Process as viewed by the professional support staff of the College of Law and Management Studies. This research aimed at accumulating descriptive data from the participant's own spoken words relating to their perceptions and experiences. Its interest is to understand participant's views, feelings and thoughts. According to Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 66),

individual's perceptions are created from interpretation or impression based on understanding, that is also based on knowledge and experience from certain life circumstances. This is possible through mental modelling i.e., the images, assumptions and stories that people carry in their heads.

Brynard and Hanekom (2006, p. 36) describes qualitative research as research that produces descriptive data i.e. generally the participant's own written or spoken words relating to their experiences and perceptions. According to him, "the indispensable condition or qualification for qualitative methodology is a commitment to perceiving the world from the point of view of the actor or participant; the researcher is concerned with understanding, rather than explaining". Brynard and Hanekom (2006, p. 37) He further elaborates that this methodology allows the researcher to know people personally and to experience their daily struggles when confronted with real life situations, which gives good opportunity for the researcher to interpret and describe people's actions.

Maylor and Blackmon (2005, p. 220) stresses the importance of applying qualitative methods especially in business and management research, which deals not only with organisations but also with people within those organisations. The research questions from this method focus on understanding of a particular issue. According to Pellissier (2008, p. 20), qualitative is advantageous over quantitative research because it guards against failure to research a topic in greater detail through probing and understanding of respondent's attitudes, motivations and behaviour. The challenge with this approach is that its validity can be questioned by a variety of other experts who approach the research problem from a different perspective. Pellissier (2008, p. 20)

Other different types of qualitative methods include: (i) case studies; in-depth interviews of key informants; participant observation; questionnaires; and perusal of personal documents e.g. life histories; diaries and autobiographies. Brynard and Hanekom (2006, p. 37-38). Each researcher determines which combination is best to use for a project or study. In qualitative research, data is presented in words; smaller sample sizes; meaning is derived; reliability is low vs. validity is high; grounded theory is earned; overall workforce concerns are identified; free response etc. Pellissier (2008, p. 25)

### **3.2.2 Study Population**

In sampling terms, the population may refer to objects; cases; events and activities; subjects etc., being studied by the researcher to establish new knowledge or to add to existing knowledge. A population is regarded as a group that is identifiable by some specific characteristics. Examples are: individual human beings such as University students or government employees; cultural objects; social activities or events; organisations or institutions. Brynard and Hanekom (2006, p. 55)

This study was conducted using participants from a single large division - the College of Law and Management Studies; University of KwaZulu-Natal. Study participants are employees from the field of professional support staff, both male and female. These employees had occupied administrative positions before and after the College Reorganisation, in the field of teaching, examinations, supervisory and management; or College academic administration in the field of student admissions; funding; registrations; graduations; supervisory and management.

### **3.2.3 Sampling**

Brynard and Hanekom (2006, p. 54) refers to sampling as a technique that is employed for the purposes of selecting a small group with a view to determining the characteristics of the whole group i.e. the entire population. According to Pellissier (2008, p. 25), in qualitative research, smaller samples work better, data is presented in words, and the overall workforce concerns are identified. For the purposes of this study, a non-random purposive sampling strategy was applied where, items were selected for the convenience of the researcher, being readily available, nearby and willing to participate. The sampling strategy used was deemed relevant as it allowed the researcher to purposely select sample from the target population most relevant to provide quality information to fulfil study objectives, to best enable the researcher to answer the research questions. With the researcher being aware of the characteristics of population group to be targeted, a decision was made to arrive at the required number of participants, in a certain location convenient for the researcher.

A sample size of 15 - 20 professional support staff was selected to participate in the study and a total number of 15 participants was achieved. Due to size of the research project, the researcher had decided that at that stage, the information gathered from the 15 participants was large, valuable and strong enough for the researcher to analyse and to see whether the objectives of the research were met through the analysed findings and supported by literature review. A strong relationship from participants' responses was also observed on both positive and negative viewpoints, pointing to the high level of significance from the data already obtained at that point, and therefore the researcher was satisfied enough to have confidence and present results based on the acquired number of participants. Professional support staff from all UKZN Colleges perform duties from very similar job profiles. They had all been affected by the reorganisation process one way or another and therefore the selected participants' views and answers to the interview questions even though they cannot be generalised to the entire population, they were regarded as a fair representation.

### **3.2.4 Data Collection Methods**

#### **3.2.4.1 Semi-Structured Interviews**

This method of data collection allows the researcher to explain questions in instances where the respondent becomes unclear on what is being asked; it also allows for probing more deeply following answers from respondents. Pellissier (2008, p. 40). Other advantages of using interviews include the usefulness in stimulating thought, and in securing valuable research material.

According to Pellissier (2008, p. 24), an interview guide that identifies topics to be raised, in rough order, is normally used in qualitative studies so that researchers vary the way questions are asked; and to follow up on relevant new topics introduced by respondents. For the purpose of this research, the interview process took place at the interviewees' place of work, office or boardroom at the UKZN campuses. Written request to participants included a brief overview of the study and issues being explored. Interviews were held one-on-one basis and were semi-structured in order to allow flexibility for both the researcher and study participants. Responses were recorded by means of handwritten notes during each session.

An interview schedule consisting of 7 questions and 1 general comments section, was prepared in order to ensure that the main questions / points were covered within which participants were able to respond and elaborate as they wished. Each interview session was completed in about 35 minutes in length. The interview notes were later studied and re-written into a separate document where responses to each question were grouped together. In order to get overall views, responses were then analysed in detail according to similar views to each question.

#### **3.2.4.2 Observation**

Observation is one of the leading roles that the researcher may decide to take in a qualitative research study, one being complete observation, where the researcher is present in the group but does not participate in any activities that may influence operations, responses or outcomes. Pellissier (2008, p. 22). According to Brynard and Hanekom (2006, p. 46), this technique is used to determine the way groups of people or individuals react under specific circumstances, either natural or artificial. He further emphasises that every recording made should be a true reflection of what was observed at the precise moment, and that guard should be given against being bias or giving a distorted picture. Observation technique gives an opportunity to observe, study and verify real-life behaviour.

In this study, using an observation schedule created specifically for this purpose, the researcher recorded and later presented outcomes based on reflections of events that took place during the data collection sessions of interviews and focus group discussions i.e. events as observed by the researcher,



and not necessarily told by the participants. Its purpose was to capture events such as the form of body language, the time response to questions, level of understanding, the comfort or ease and familiarity with the topic under discussion, organisation and preparedness, the setting or environment and participation, and level of information sharing.

### **3.2.4.3 Focus Group Discussions**

Its purpose is to capture the most important aspects of an issue, as viewed by respondents but usually expressed in a fairly nondirective way. Maylor and Blackmon (2005, p. 256). That information could then be used in the next phase as a means of shaping the structured interview or questionnaire. According to Pellissier (2008, p. 25) one of the pitfalls to look out for in focus groups is that participants tend to focus on the negative, complaining about the issues, though they are good for generating ideas.

For the purpose of this study, the focus group discussion took place during lunch breaks and the group consisted of 5 staff members from different sub-divisions. The researcher was present during the discussion as an observer, but did not participate in the activities. The whole session was completed in 35 minutes and was voice-recorded for later thorough interpretation and analysis.

### **3.2.5 Data Administration and Analysis**

Data was analysed through content analysis using triangulation. According to Guion et al., triangulation is used for the purpose of studying the same phenomenon from several perspectives, and is necessary to enhance qualitative research. Guion et al., (2011). Data was administered in the form of content analysis based on information collected through the chosen methods, in order to make sense of the accumulated information. Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 27-28) identifies three steps of data analysis that could be applied depending on the size of study and data collected i.e.

- (i) Scanning and cleaning the data e.g. by reading the data; checking for incomplete, inaccurate or irrelevant data.
- (ii) Organising the data i.e. by describing, comparing; and categorising data by identifying patterns or themes from the responses.
- (iii) Re-presenting the data, often by summarising data into tables, graphs; or selected quotations such as powerful statements from interview responses etc. Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 27-28)

In this exploratory study, data were analysed qualitatively from interviews and focus group discussions that were voice-recorded word-for-word directly from the participants and co-supported by note-taking. The researcher was present among the focus group member discussions as a complete

observer only i.e. the researcher did not participate in any activities that would have influenced operations. Digital recordings and interview notes were later interpreted and analysed conjunctively in the form of *content analysis*.

A synthesis of key issues raised by participants were produced from the notes, and recordings were transcribed i.e. spoken words were converted into written text. That process allowed for tracing particular themes or issues back to the individual interviews. The qualitative data was analysed by following the process of data reduction, data display and finally drawing conclusions using patterns emerging from the data.

### **3.2.6 Triangulation**

Guion et Al., (2011) refers to the method of collecting, analysing and comparing data results from multiple qualitative / quantitative methods, as methodological triangulation, where results from interviews; surveys; focus groups or observation; can be compared to check for similarities. Triangulation allows the researcher to check for consistency or absence of it, on the information obtained, and validity is established when each of the methods reveals similar conclusions.

This method of analysis gives confidence, it increases validity - the accuracy levels of the research conducted, and having enough responses to justify the findings that the researcher claims on the outcome of the research because data has been collected and analysed from different perspectives instead of dependence on a single approach. Multiple methods; multiple sources of data; multiple measures; and multiple viewpoints, are some of the different approaches to triangulating one's research. Maylor and Blackmon (2005, p. 259). Researchers may decide to use or not to use several data collection methods given the time and resources to do so. Guion et al., (2011) points to some advantages that were also noted in this study, that triangulation is indeed a time-consuming process and it requires greater planning and organising; resources that might not always be available for researchers; but on a positive note, the use of triangulation allows for increased confidence on research data; it gives unique findings that are validated from multiple data collection methods and it allows for an opportunity for clearer understanding of the problem.

### **3.2.7 Validity**

According to Maylor and Blackmon (2005, p. 158) validity refers to how accurately the research has been conducted. It means having enough responses to justify findings or outcomes that the researcher claims. It is also described as an effort made to examine whether a particular measure reflects accurately of the intended finding, or whether the meaning and interpretation of an event is sound. Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 32). There are various ways in which researchers check for validity, e.g.

doing multiple observations of the same event; considering rival explanations for the same issue or question etc. Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 33)

The data analysis tool used in this study i.e. triangulation, is perceived to be strong enough to give confidence and increase validity on the outcome of the research because data has been collected and analysed from different perspectives instead of dependence on a single approach. Qualitative research mainly produces descriptive data i.e. generally the participant's own written or spoken words relating to their experiences and perceptions, it is therefore very unlikely that people's own written or spoken words can be altered.

### **3.2.8 Ethical Consideration**

Participant's involvement and continuation in the study was based on signed consent and knowing that participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. Consent was received from participants on understanding that the information obtained would be treated with confidentiality and anonymity, and with the understanding that it would be used for research purposes and for reporting study outcomes only. All participants were in the category of working and experienced adults who were fully informed to understand the purpose of the study and how the information would be used.

### **3.3 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented with detailed contents of the research methodology building blocks and the research design followed in carrying out this research study. The information provided gives definitions to terms; it explains the process and steps; it has also been supported by trusted material from publications by scholars; recognised authors, independent researchers; other research institutions; journal publications etc. The proposed design and steps were chosen as best suitable for this research study taking into account major contributing factors, such as the research problem, study site, population, data collection and validity issues. The next chapter is the main focus of the study, where collected data was studied and analysed; being ready for presentation and discussion to see whether the chosen research methods were appropriate; whether they contributed positively to meeting study objectives; and whether the study tone and standards set by the researcher were achieved for the desired outcome.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the raw data as collected and interpreted by the researcher through the three qualitative data collection methods that were used and as outlined in chapter 3 i.e. interviews, focus group discussion and observation. For the purpose of this study, data is presented in various topics and in alignment to research objectives and questions, the suggested theories, followed by comments in relation to other studies, and closing off by discussion of the overall research findings or summary.

The aim of this research project is to explore perceptions and experiences of the UKZN's College Reorganisation Process, by getting the views of professional support staff in one specific College, Law and Management Studies. Participants are members of professional support staff who were in the employ of the University during the reorganisation process and who were either affected and/or experienced its effect somehow in their professional and personal lives.

The target number of participants was 15 – 20 and the actual number achieved was 15. The full biographical information of participants is detailed in a separate section below.

#### **4.2 Data Collection Setting**

The whole process of data collection was completed within 5 days (between 25<sup>th</sup> of November and 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 2014). Both interviews and focus group discussion took place at the participants' place of work. Interviews were semi-structured in order to allow flexibility for both the researcher and study participants. Interview sessions were held one-on-one basis with the individual participants in a quiet enclosed area or office, and the focus group discussion was held in one boardroom pre-booked by the researcher.

The researcher made a rough working plan and arranged meeting times, dates and venues, and all these were confirmed in advance between the researcher and the participant. With the researcher having read the project informant sheet, and on understanding of the terms and conditions, the participant then signed to give consent and permission to participate in the project interview. Each interview session took between 20 – 35 minutes in length.

A group of five individuals, all females, participated in the focus group discussion. The project informant sheet was provided and on understanding of the terms and conditions, the participants then agreed and signed to give consent for participation in the discussion. The focus group discussion took 35 minutes and the whole session was voice-recorded for later thorough interpretation and analysis.

An observation schedule was created and used as a guide for recording key observation information about the participants' nature of response in behaviour and the way in which the group or individuals react, in order to provide outcomes based on reflections of how events took place during data collection sessions, events as observed by the researcher. The researcher was present during the discussion but did not participate in the activities that would have otherwise influenced operations, responses or outcomes.

### 4.3 Demographic Information of Participants

The following table contains a brief description of demographic profile of participants. The aim of providing this information is to reflect and relate the responses from data collection, to the views and comments from participants as they present their views on their capacity as individuals from different backgrounds.

**Table 4-1**

<b>Gender / Sex</b>	
Males	2
Females	13
<b>Race</b>	
African	3
Coloured	1
Indian	7
White	4
<b>Age Group</b>	
25 - 35	2
35 - 45	4
45 - 55	2
55 - 65	7
<b>Marital Status</b>	
Married	11
Single / Divorced	4
<b>Highest Level of Education</b>	
Postgraduate Level	5
Undergraduate Level	7
Matriculation	3
<b>Job Level</b>	
Supervisory / Management	2
Administrative / Technical	13
<b>Service Record (No. of Years)</b>	
15+	7
10+	4
5+	3
0 - 5	1

#### **4.4 Presentation of Research Objectives**

As was initially stated in the research overview chapter of this project, the following research objectives were used to evaluate and address the purpose of the study:

- To establish how the reorganisation affected employee's current occupations and the way they view and relate to the institution
- To establish whether employees' needs and expectations were addressed
- To explore the availability of mechanisms for supporting / counselling employees to cope with the reorganization (issues of insecurities and stress)
- To explore the kinds of challenges and opportunities presented to the institution and its employees
- To examine the overall employee's perceptions and experiences of the UKZN's College reorganisation process

#### **4.5 Presentation of Research Questions**

Equally, the following research questions were formulated for the purpose of gathering information relevant to addressing the needs of the study and its objectives and to use as a guide in developing further questions for the data collection process:

- How did the reorganisation affect employee's current occupations and the way they view and relate to the institution?
- How were employees' needs and expectations addressed?
- What mechanisms were available / put in place to support/counsel employees to cope with the reorganization (issues of insecurities and stress)?
- What challenges and opportunities did the reorganisation present for the institution and its employees?
- What are the overall employee's perceptions and experiences of the UKZN's College reorganisation process?

#### **4.6 Discussion of Findings**

The following section discusses in detail, analysed findings from three data collection methods used, such as interviews, focus group discussions and observations. The outcomes were as follows:

#### 4.6.1 Findings from Interviews

Interview sessions were held one-on-one basis with individual participants in a quiet enclosed area or office. With the researcher having read the project informant sheet, and on understanding of the terms and conditions, the participant then signed to give consent and permission to participate in the project interview. The duration of each interview session took between 20 – 35 minutes in length.

Interview notes were later studied and re-written into a separate document where responses to each question were grouped together. In order to get overall views, responses were then analysed in detail according to similar and related views to each question and having taken into consideration, responses from all 15 participants.

A sample of the interview schedule is provided in Appendix III of this document and responses discussed per question reflected the following views and opinions:

*First question* was aimed at gathering brief information about participants, their work experience within UKZN and their views on how they were affected by the reorganisation process, professionally and/or personally. *And the responses were:*

Participant ‘A’ was previously working in a different job category before the reorganisation and as a result, the new position was viewed as a promotion and enormous opportunity that was taken together with the risk and actually turned out well in the end, proving that the situation worked in the personal favour of some employees. This participant felt that there were lots of opportunities and as someone who was open to them, luck struck and a newly created post was secured. For those employees who might have not recognised any positivity in the restructuring process, Burger et al., (2008) found a positive relationship between resistance to or readiness for change, through an application of logotherapy ‘therapy through meaning’ as an organisational development (OD) intervention and a recognised alternative model of psychology that would assist employees with discovery of meaning and purpose in life irrespective of the circumstances. OD contributes to employees viewing change as an opportunity rather than a threat. Burger et al., (2008) It was also noted that respondents who did not have attachments relating to marriage or young kids, were more flexible to changing campuses and other change-related activities such as moving to a different location, a revised job description or new position.

Generally, staff were under enormous pressure as they had to reapply for advertised posts and go through interviews for jobs that they felt already entitled to. The process of redeployment was devastating because jobs were not guaranteed. One of the perceived negative aspects about change is the uncertainty and not knowing about future. A view that is shared by authors such as Dachapalli and Parumasur (2012), who had found that job insecurity and unsecure working conditions were some



of the critical issues in working life, caused by dramatic changes in the economy, industrial restructuring etc. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011) puts uncertainty on the category of people-related barriers to change, along with resistance, change fatigue and inadequate leadership. It is also believed that role quality and leadership of the change agents can determine the level of stimulating interest, involvement and reduction in fear and uncertainty. Paton and McCalman (2008) Bell and Barkhuizen (2011) Ford et al.,(2008)

It is a recognised fact that change is good and necessary sometimes, and as strongly suggested by Rich (2006), institutions of higher learning need constant change more, in order sustain academic success and to remain competitive. With that view in mind, some study participants realised that it can be very stressful and unsettling at first because all that people could think about at the time, is keeping their jobs. It can also take a while to adjust and settle in new jobs, the newly acquired positions, for people to be happy with new challenges and new work partnerships, and to finally come to the realisation that it had actually been for the better. Thereafter, positive feelings illuminate in both the professional and personal lives of employees. “Having strong faith helps when one goes through change of such magnitude”, Participant ‘F’ realised as she was going through the emotions of stress and uncertainty. Some employees did not allow the process to affect them as they already knew that change is inevitable and during its course, situations become what people make of it and therefore taking things on a positive light help to ease and alleviate stress. In some instances stress levels were exacerbated by challenges outside the actual change process. It was difficult to access venues for interviews due to lack of user-friendliness for people with physical challenges, it was revealed.

Some employees, through seeing opportunities for growth and better prospects, had applied and secured completely new and more relevant positions and careers. Therefore in a good way, opportunities were opened even for unaffected positions in the scarce skills professions where abandoned positions had to be refilled. As Participant ‘G’ calmly and happily states, “My previous position was safe but I decided to apply when a new position became available from a different division and I was offered the post. It’s a completely new position but more relevant to my field and career path, the previous job was more administrative but at a management level. So, in a good way, the reorganisation opened opportunities.” In a nutshell, a change process affects employees in different ways depending on their attitude and mindfulness to recognise opportunities, whether their current occupations are affected or not, while others might experience a slight change in their careers through downgrading of positions or salary scales and sometimes a move to lower level positions. In those instances, affected employees were only grateful for having a job especially when the take home salary remained unchanged. One of those employees in that certain category would be participant ‘C’, as she openly and willingly shared information on the affairs of her employment status, “On a personal level there was no effect in anyway, but career-wise, the position was downgraded but I was

not bothered much as it did not affect the take home salary. Should it have affected my salary, it would have been bad.” Fortunately for Participant ‘L’, the reorganisation had a positive effect as the current position was upgraded through realignment with similar posts. Participant ‘L’ had always felt that in some instances, grading did not align properly as jobs with similar duties and skills were on different grading.

For some employees, the impact was felt both personally and professionally because of experiences from previous major changes in the institution such as the merger between the former Universities of Natal and Durban-Westville. The reorganisation therefore came as a shock mainly because those certain employees were not ready or had not expected another change process to follow in a certain space of time. Similarly, other participants had reported seeing positive outcomes from those major changes of the merger and College reorganisation. On views about the influence caused by the reorganisation on employee’s current jobs and the way they relate to the institution, Participant ‘I’ fondly exclaimed, “It has been a proud honour to be associated with the UKZN and its top management, for driving and following its vision and especially when compared to other institutions that have gone through the changes of merger and reorganisation, the UKZN has done proud.” Participant ‘I’ continued to elaborate on the matter, adding that challenges still continued to exist as certain divisions were allocated limited resources but with greater expectations for success and performance, employees felt as though they were expected to perform miracles in their jobs. Participant ‘H’ said “The institution is going from strength to strength. Ratings have improved and that makes one proud to be associated with the institution.”

To this end, it is important to recap on the background of this study. The ‘College Model’ that led to the College Reorganisation Process taking place 6 -7 years later, was developed in the context of the merger between the former Universities of Natal and Durban-Westville. Makgoba (2011) UKZN Documents (2010a) The College Reorganisation process was also meant to play a major role and as a means to integrate the two previous institutions, the various centres and campuses of the single newly-formed institution. It is from this perspective that the UKZN experienced these progressive changes, for the better of the institution, as a means to realise its vision and mission by bringing UKZN in line with best international practice and modern trends in high impact, efficient and competitive higher education. One of the main aim of the College reorganisation being to ensure that academics focus better on research, academic and scholarly rather than administrative matters. During the preparation stages of the College Reorganisation process, the University community was urged by management, to take advantage of the opportunity to ensure the University emerges stronger and better. Makgoba (2011)

While responding to research interview question, Participant 'H' said "The institution is going from strength to strength, ratings have improved, and that makes one proud to be associated with the institution." While Participant 'I' reported being proudly honoured to be associated with UKZN and its top management, for driving and following its vision. According to views of participants, despite the still existing challenges, UKZN had done fairly well to earn its pride especially when compared to other institutions that had gone through the changes of merger and reorganisation. According to Participant 'C', the institution needed the reorganisation process in order to get rid of the dead wood, it wouldn't have come at any better time, people were now more productive, jobs were more challenging, and non-performers were gone. Participant 'C' was very ecstatic and positive in her views, she loves and embraces change. According to Fugate et al., (2008), shock, anger, anxiety and/or excitement are common emotional responses and will always happen irrespective of whether the anticipated change is positive or not, it is an immediate response to stimulus rather than resistance.

Ford et al., (2008) describes the recipient-action as one of the three dynamic elements that emerge from a reconstructive resistance to change, followed by agent sense making of the situation, and agent-recipient relationship. And as findings from this study revealed, certain employees among the recipients of change, not expecting further changes to follow soon after the merger process, they reacted with shock and fear but in reality and as some participants' views indicated, employees experienced shock as they suddenly had to think and react when consequences from the implementation of reorganization process suddenly became a reality. But it was back at the time of the merger in 2004 where an agreement was reached that the College Model would be reviewed after five years. Makgoba (2011) Hence the planning and preparation of the reorganisation process in 2011 after its five-year review in 2010, followed by its implementation in the beginning of 2012. In its concluding remarks, the external review panel of the 'College Model' said that UKZN had come a long way since 2004 and the initiation of the merger, and it had succeeded in putting in place and operating a 'College Model' based on sound principles. UKZN Documents (2010a) The panel wished UKZN well on her path to becoming the 'Premier University of African Scholarship'. UKZN Documents (2010a)

Fortunately for some divisions, as Participant 'H' stated, teams had passed the forming and norming phase of change, and were working well together. Process flows had been developed and that helped to guide them through and had made things easy. But still, as Participant 'H' added, "it wasn't smooth-sailing, there were challenges and resistance." Certainly, some divisions and employees were able to find creative ways of dealing with the current situation, to document procedures and work processes that would better suite and serve their working environment, hence the belief that change forces people to think out of the box as it drives motivation and creativity. For other employees, previous occupations had become completely redundant forcing them to face the situation head-on,

and despite all that, some study participants reported both positive and negative influences as they felt that jobs became more focused while workloads increased tremendously. A lot of multi-tasking became necessary.

Employees appreciated the special training workshops that were organised to help them cope with added tasks as they also felt pressured to produce quality work notwithstanding the minimum number of staff and limited resources compared to other Colleges. There were also concerns that processes were overlapping because of College size and volume i.e. large number of students to service with less number of allocated staff members. Workforce shortages were reportedly experienced in some sections of different Colleges in comparison to others with similar or less number of clients, and employees felt that the situation negatively impacts one's wellbeing, emotionally, physically and mentally. According to Pillay and Pillay (2012), in order to achieve the intended results and for efficiency and effectiveness to be achieved, it is critical that organisations provide necessary resources in terms of workforce, adequate financial budgets etc. as these might in the long run, have a negative impact and seriously weaken service delivery and thereby impacting staff motivation and morale.

According to Vithal and Jansen (2012, p. 17), some of the reasons for researchers to specify a theoretical framework is to assess the validity of the theory's propositions in the study being undertaken, and we learnt from Maslow's theory, that growth opportunities contribute to employees gaining a sense of achievement and increased levels of self-esteem. The reorganisation process had, on another viewpoint, led to positive outcomes for those employees who occupied same positions for a very long time. It brought greater exposure and opportunities to do other duties beside what was the norm. Some employees got opportunities to fulfil their dreams of moving to higher level jobs, leading to a very positive change influence both professionally and personally. While others were successful in reapplying for their positions and therefore only experienced slight changes in reporting lines, with duties remaining pretty much the same. A sense of intimidation was also reported as certain employees that had recently joined the University, being in new employment, they feared that they would be the first ones out, should the rule of 'last-in first-out' be applied. Employees also went through agony as they witnessed their colleagues losing their jobs, and people competing for positions.

*Second question* aimed at finding out about participant's first thoughts and reaction when the reality of impact from the reorganisation kicked in, and the *responses were*:

"The first thought and reaction was that some people would lose their jobs even if they were not informed as such" said Participant 'K'. While Participant 'F' reported a sudden feeling that overcame people they thought of having to go through interviews again at an older age, "it was really stressful" said Participant "F". On the other hand, some employees still could not understand and questioned the

necessity of the reorganisation since people had occupied their jobs for such a long time. Participants' views revealed that people were worried to a point of even getting sick but when looking back, it was meant well and things had turned out okay. In the beginning, people were not sure about the future and how the reorganisation would affect their jobs. It was shock due to uncertainty of events to follow and impact on jobs. In support to views about employee's first thoughts and reaction to change, Matyesha (2011) Fugate et al., (2008) also found that emotional responses from threat are indeed a hard reality but they are meant to eventually subside when people get through the stages of shock, defensive retreat, acknowledgement, acceptance, adaptation and reconciliation. They are emotional responses and reaction threat, rather than resistance.

It was a completely new experience for most people and they had to prepare for the unknown, and had to move and adjust to new divisions, new work circles and partnerships, colleagues and line management. The whole experience was challenging and stressful because people felt that they were pushed to the right-end and were forced to learn quickly and function effectively in the new jobs. It was not a comfortable sort of a move or change. The beginning stages were also confusing because information was not clear and everything was hearsay, in terms of the planned processes for job selection and placements. Newly appointed staff feared losing their jobs as they felt less advantaged than their long serving peers. Jobs were re-advertised, all employees except for the executive staff, had to reapply and people were not sure of getting back their jobs. According to reports from study participants, going through the process was all emotional and stressful. Redundancy, early retirements and retrenchments were on the cards, each individual feared losing their jobs and nobody felt secure. Individual needs were shaken, the self-esteem were at the lowest.

Some employees were quite safe at their old positions but when their eyes were opened to the potential of the reorganisation they decided to use the opportunity presented to them and through excitement, they decided to apply for higher level positions and some to completely different fields of work. They benefited instead as more suitable jobs were secured. For those employees who love and are flexible to always experiencing new things in life, they did not fear or worry but instead, with positive mind-set, they were ready to face change with its challenges. Burger et al., (2008) found that proper organisational development (OD) interventions such as logotherapy 'therapy through meaning' could work in favour of the change agents during organisational change efforts. According to Burger et al., (2008), an application of logo-OD assist employees to find discovery of meaning and purpose in life irrespective of the circumstances, the fear of losing something meaningful such as loss of security and stability, status and competence or self-efficacy. OD reduces resistance to and foster readiness to change, through attitude change. It contributes to employees viewing change as an opportunity rather than threat. Burger et al., (2008) It was easily identifiable from participants' views that, female employees who were financially secured from spouses, responded positively to challenging stressful

situations and had less emotional attachment to jobs, as opposed to those that came from female single-headed families and those faced with supporting and schooling young children or siblings. Meanwhile, there were other responses that pointed to a view that salaries from both spouses are necessary and should complement each other.

As much as employees were welcoming and looking forward to hearing about their fate in the reorganisation process and its impact on their lives thereof, Participant 'I' said "It was nerve-wrecking because going through interviews is stressful and I had to go through that, but I was prepared because I have qualifications and relevant work experience, in the end, the reorganisation helped me to secure nice career progress." Those who had confidence in their own qualifications and work experience were better prepared than others. It was also exciting because some divisions got opportunities to venture into new heights in terms of some divisional core operations and new staff. With Participant 'C' being an individual who loves change, she emphasised her views stating "I feel that the institution needed change especially to get rid of the dead wood, the lazy ones, now people are more productive, jobs are more challenging, and non-performers are gone." It is clear that those employee types had undoubtedly embraced change and were happy within their work spaces. The reorganisation process was believed to have resulted in higher productivity from employees and that jobs became more challenging and non-performers were no longer at sight.

Findings revealed that there were employees who had faith on the system as they believed that proper consultation processes had made things easier and had reduced fear. Participant 'H' said "At operational level, there was fear of change by people but intensive training played an important role in overcoming fear and to build confidence, while teambuilding helped for bonding to unfold." The characteristics of a learning organisation were witnessed throughout, and it is equally plausible to note that staff training and development needs were also addressed together with the organisational development initiatives of a changing institution. Some study participants felt that the reorganisation opened doors for nice progress but people need to approach any change process with a positive mind and learn to adjust to new environment and carry on with what is left. According to Participant 'E', in the event that individuals were afforded opportunities and had secured jobs but still not happy in their new roles, with open mind, they would soon realise that life has endless possibilities waiting to be explored. Participant 'E', not happy with people who are always negative and overly complaining, she said "keeping a positive mind is the only way, but if things had not turn out well for anyone, and if not happy, people could always decide to just leave."

*Third question* aimed at understanding participant's experiences of the atmosphere and feelings around the University since the reorganisation process:

Most views from respondents revealed that there were feelings of anger, fear and uncertainty about the future. People felt that they were not properly informed about the severity of impact and not enough awareness was given to prepare them for forthcoming events of the reorganisation. They were angry with management as they knew they would end up at the losing end of the stick, and according to their opinion, the institution and management was to blame. Participant 'B' said there was evident tension among staff in the whole University because everybody felt very threatened and people feared losing their jobs. According to Participant 'C', union memberships grew as people rallied to join unions in the hope of getting support and protection.

The actions of some employees point to the notion of Senge's theory and as Paton and McCalman supports the theory, describing the learning discipline of mental models as images, assumptions and stories that people carry in their heads, and which influence people's behaviour in an unconscious manner. Due to hearsay about planned events of the reorganisation such as the redeployment process, people were driven into a reactive mode and through fear, shock and nervousness. According to Maslow's theory, their safety and security need drove them to seek protection while others fell into stress and depression. Mental models can also play a positive role as they focus on the openness needed to unearth shortcomings in people's way of seeing the world, and as we learnt from this study, some employees were able to turn challenges into opportunities and were able to secure better challenging jobs, teambuilding exercises gave hope and direction, the University was described as going from strength to strength.

Reportedly, at College level things were stable and staff were working well as a team, they had embraced change and moved on. "Other sections of the College had followed on trend and each cluster were continuously meeting on regular basis as a team, to discuss areas of concern and better ways of managing their individual portfolios" Participant 'H' proudly stated. It is believed that the 'College Model' had resulted in higher levels of accountability in terms of operations, duties and tasks, something that could only be possible with complete dedication and individual commitment. According to Senge's theory, at personal mastery level of the 'Five Learning Disciplines', people are able to shift from reactive mind-set to be being part of the problem or system, and at UKZN experiences from the reorganisation process had taught individuals to think out of the box and to take control of their lives to determine direction for the future.

The achievement of optimum performance standards was also made possible by the University's human resources systems of instilling work ethic and values by monitoring accountability through performance management and by recognition of good work through talent management. The University approved the "Integrated Talent Management" policy in 2011, and in line with its strategic priorities and with the purpose of facilitating and promoting the achievement of institutional

objectives through a process of identifying, attracting, nurturing and retaining talent across the whole University. Mosia and Gorbada (2011) "Total Performance Management" policy which came into effect in 2010, is better explained as a systematic process for improving organisational performance by developing the performance of individuals and teams, and as a means to getting better results from the organisation and its workforce, through understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards and competence requirements that are aligned to the strategic aims of the organisation. UKZN Human Resources (2008)

Some study participants reported being very happy at their personal spaces within their office environment, but in the wider University at large, a lot of negativity was reportedly experienced, and according to participant's views, confusion and mixed feelings were reportedly evident. Participant 'F' said, "In my personal space and office environment, it has been quite nice but, in the wider University at large, it has been very negative. Seeing people leave as well as other negativity and political unrest in the University, I mean, things have happened". A sense of negativity and political unrest was felt especially in relation to different Conditions of Service and related matters; lack of clarity on issues of human resources and management. Lots of issues had unfolded and people were seen leaving their jobs. Certain individuals had embraced change and were taking advantage of the new opportunities presented to them and were happy while it was believed that others were unhappy because they had been exposed and removed from their comfort zones.

According to Participant 'A', two different ways in which people dealt with change were witnessed, they either embraced it or were still fighting it because they had not moved on to change the way of doing things. There were still very unhappy, complaining, and grumpy individuals, which meant that they had not settled and had not yet embraced change, though it was reportedly getting better after the 3 - 4 years since the initial implementation of the reorganisation process. Over and above the recognised occurrences of resistance to change, findings revealed that challenges still continued to exist as certain divisions were allocated limited resources but with greater expectations for success and performance, employees felt as though they were expected to perform miracles in their jobs.

There were shortages in some areas in terms of staff and overall projects assistance. Due to reduced workforce, the remaining personnel had to bear the blunt of work overload. There was a feeling that the required improvements and growth had not been fully catered for. According to Pillay and Pillay (2012), for the intended results and for efficiency and effectiveness to be achieved, and in order to avoid a negative impact on service delivery and staff motivation in the long run, it is critical that organisations provide necessary resources in terms of workforce, adequate financial budgets etc.

Despite the University having put in place these important policies, procedures and guidelines, findings from this study revealed that changes from the reorganisation process brought more



unhappiness and confusion as there were already unresolved issues pertaining to human resources and management, and especially issues arising due to different sets of ‘Conditions of Service’ being applicable to its staff. According to findings on organisational change and culture at UKZN, the performance of Human Resources and Finance Division was viewed negatively, with the performance management process regarded as a matter that required further attention and clarity as its intentions were questionable in the absence of rewards for performance. Pillay and Pillay (2012) This matter was also viewed as of particular importance as it forms part of organisational culture that impacts on employee performance, behaviour and organisational politics. Pillay and Pillay (2012)

Many of the views pointed to the belief that the work load had become very heavy across the board, and employees were not appreciative of the fact that they had to join and merge with other Schools including changes in reporting lines. Being used to operating differently, the social environment was mainly affected but after a while people adjusted and got along well, though complaints and unhappiness was still evident in some areas. There were feelings of anger and despair over loss of jobs by long-serving colleagues, as some departments were downsized or shutdown e.g. printing, finance and human resources.

According to study participants’ views, people experienced lots of pain and sadness because they were forced to leave, they left jobs unprepared and the impact was huge on their part. Others were negatively affected as their positions got redundant forcing them to reapply for new posts. From the viewpoint of Abraham Maslow’s theory, it was evident that employee’s needs for “safety and security’ and needs for “self-esteem” were severely affected. Those needs encompass issues of health, employment, property, family and social responsibility. Accordingly, through sadness and despair, employees lost their sense of confidence, achievement, and respect of others, because the threat and feelings of losing something meaningful in your life such as the career and employment, which comes with earning respect of others and sense of achievement, taking care of one’s self and family, these important and critical needs are at jeopardy and can no longer be met.

Participant ‘N’ said, “Everybody is just randomly introduced to new things, it is constant changes so people cannot relax because anything can happen”. People do not know where they stand, the reorganisation might still continue.” Some employees had not embraced or moved on from the experience. There was still uncertainty about further reorganisation and changes, employees felt that the reorganisation might still continue because after all, work life is about constant changes and therefore people could not relax, they could not help but feel that anything could still happen, they were still not comfortable at their newly established workspaces.

Due to unhappiness and uncertainty, a number of people were trying to leave the institution wherever possible. Complaints were still very common, people got sick from stress and depression. They got

admitted to hospital while others resigned immediately when they could not take it. Again, the needs for safety and security; self-esteem, and a proportion of self-actualisation needs (in terms of acceptance, morality, meaning and inner potential) were partially compromised, and ultimately the most basic of physiological needs were at risk because the threat of losing a job leads to increased stress levels, sleep deprivation and loss of concentration. And without a job people cannot afford basic needs of food and shelter. While everybody was scared and worried, others were trying to console and motivate others to look at the brighter side of things. Participant 'E' could not understand what the big deal was all about, and according to her opinion, people could take the chance and reapply for jobs, see to the outcome, deal with it and move on!

*Fourth question* was designed to probe information on the influence caused by the impact of the reorganisation on participants' jobs and the way they view the institution. And the *responses were*:

Through the change process, some employees acknowledged that they had learnt a whole lot of new things, and jobs were more challenging. They were proud of the institution and its management because change had allowed for redirection of focus into working towards the institution's vision and mission in order to achieve more in research and teaching. They felt that it had opened more platforms for growth. They had a sense that it had been a positive change, their jobs had been enhanced and were exciting. UKZN was finally well on her way to building a strong learning organisation, having put forward a concrete foundation of a system where all its internal stakeholders were working with understanding and commitment, towards building a shared vision through restructured processes and operations. Amazingly enough, there were those who felt secured at the University with no feelings of threat about the future, but only seeing things on a more positive and better light. For some, the newly acquired positions were more interactive with University and staff from various backgrounds and levels, giving an opportunity to gain broader knowledge of the University and its activities especially in research. A lot of positive things were becoming clearer giving some employees, hope for the future of the University.

With much enthusiasm and assurance, Participant 'J' said, "The reorganisation gave a positive outlook of the institution overall because operations had been decentralised and streamlined leading to easy access and convenience for students and visitors. It emerged as a one stop-shop". The reduction in work force was felt hard because the remaining staff ended up with severe workload. Though it was recognised that the new systems had turned out effective and user-friendly. It worked well for the institution, owing to the still ongoing staff issues that still needed to be resolved. Employees were able to be involved and partake in other jobs within their sections and according to Participant 'J', even though it had not given real fruits financially, they were able to grow their skills and learn to multi-task, a good characteristic of a learning organisation where the discipline of team learning

makes possible, the emergence of group's skills and allowing people to look for the larger picture beyond individual perspectives. Some employees' jobs had little impact from the reorganisation as they remained in their old positions while awaiting internal divisional plans to merge and realign some administrative portfolios, with added tasks that required multi-skilling and teamwork, office relocations and new reporting lines. Those employees still possessed the same attitude towards their jobs and were happy and enjoying work.

Another positive outcome from the reorganisation was the opportunity to make one accountable for many things, and according to Participant 'H', the reorganisation opened room for putting processes and guidelines in place to make sure that errors are reduced or completely eliminated. "People have been made aware of the importance of auditing and managing each task. They have learnt to take responsibility and to be more thorough in their jobs, knowing that they would be held liable for their actions". The reorganisation therefore opened way for positive influence through the discipline of personal mastery and increased responsibility and accountability was realised. Processes had been decentralized making way for creation of posts in the Colleges, which now ensures the effectiveness and efficiency of the job function. Human resources, finance operations and management style had been restructured to resemble the private sector, in terms of performance and talent management, Participant 'L' noted. Participant 'H' said "The institution is going from strength to strength, ratings have improved, and that makes one proud to be associated with the institution". Being a learning organisation and a system that fosters commitment to the long term, through building shared vision, UKZN employees recognised that they had all been given a platform to improve their education and to grow skills which will result in better ways of handling students; to provide better service to the University's clientele and thereby improving the overall image of the institution. By view of some positive statements from participants, it could be said that the University's operational changes through reorganisation, were positively influential in fostering a culture of employees who are self-motivated and those who work and see themselves as part of a single system, through the disciplines of team learning, personal mastery and building shared vision, as suggested in Senge's theory of 'The Fifth Discipline'.

According to other respondents' views, the impact was positive and so the institution just had to change and adapt. Employees had gained a sense of pride in the institution and its top management, for driving and following its vision and especially when compared to other institutions that have gone through the changes of merger and reorganisation, the UKZN had seemingly done well. There were some challenges though, such as, limited resources but with greater expectations for success and performance. Shortages continued to exist in some areas, in terms of staff and overall projects assistance. There was a feeling that the required growth and improvements had not been fully catered for.

On the other hand, there was lots of uncertainty among employees. Participant 'K', overcame from emotions and sadness when thinking of colleagues who were severely affected, she said "Things have changed so much, being in this University feels like living in a different planet from what one had started with". It was revealed that some employees could not foresee a better future with the institution and even senior staff members were leaving. Participant 'K' said, "People feel like the institution had suddenly become unfriendly or rather unkind to people who had kept it going". For employees who had taken added tasks on their jobs, they felt that it had been a growing point in terms of expansion and new things. Those that were placed in completely new positions were able to just focus and learn new duties while others felt that they were still not sure of their fate. Jobs were no longer stable and they could not help thinking about looking outside the University.

*Fifth question* was intended at finding out how the family status and standard of living would have been affected in the unfortunate event of job losses or demotion:

Generally, uncertainty, job losses and demotion affect people's morale and confidence, leading to stress and depression. In the unfortunate event of demotion, study participants reported that, due to the country's current economic climate, any individual would still be grateful to have a job and salary. For others, being used to regular income, they would have made alternative plans for earning a living.

Employees that had been previously employed in different fields within the University felt that there were lots of other opportunities because they had vast knowledge from previous experience and therefore would have sought other employment opportunities even outside the University. Others were financially secure from working spouses and therefore were less stressed, while others stated that the situation would have forced them to realise their long-term dreams of starting their own businesses. "Being married and having financial support from my husband, a negative job outcome would not have caused much effect instead it would have forced me to now realise my long-term dream of starting own business. So there would still be positive means of survival". Participant 'C' calmly stated. And on the same note, Participant 'E' revealed, "If things had turned out really bad, I would have left work and went to open my own business because I am in a position to do so. I also have a working spouse who provides support".

Looking back, some employees came to the realisation that 'when one door closes, another opens' and therefore people need to just move with the flow. Undoubtedly, the impact would have been drastic because under normal circumstances, families need income from both spouses in order to maintain the standard of living, and salaries are meant to complement each other. Sole bread winners would have been hit hard as families depended on them for financial support. Responses from female study participants of younger to middle-aged group (25 – 35 and 35 – 45), both single and married, showed more concern for their wellbeing in terms of employment and financial security, and those of their

loved ones. They also showed greater compassion towards the whole situation and for colleagues and friends that were hardly hit by the impact of the reorganisation, either due to job losses or ill-health. On the other hand, study participants of the upper middle-aged group (45 – 55), single but especially the married group, were less stressed, more confident and secured, and were willing to accept any outcome so that they could forge a way forward from life ahead. Others had just recently joined the institution in the hope of better prospects. For single-headed families and for those who had other challenges in life, the impact would have been really devastating.

Most study participants spoke to the concern of sudden drastic changes in one's standard of living because bills must be paid and in some cases, the need for complementary income from a spouse. Some employees were prepared to settle for demotion as long as they would still have some sort of employment. For others, the unpreparedness and due to changes being introduced in a short space of time, the situation had severe health impacts such as stress and severe depression that could have led to untimely death. Dependants' children's future would have been negatively affected. Heavy responsibilities and financial commitments require proper planning before termination.

*Sixth question* went beyond the impact felt by participants but extended to situations witnessed in the lives of other people who might have been negatively affected by the reorganisation, participants' colleagues and friends.

A seriously concerned Participant 'K' stated that, from the outset, the negative impact started from the very fact that employees only found out about their fate in the eleventh hour. Some departments were somewhat completely shut down or moved and merged and in the process, lots of employees were let go. Staff members were forced to leave through early retirement and retrenchment. Most of them got really sickly as they had young kids to support. According to Participant 'K', those who had young children had no idea where they would sleep the next day or even food to eat, and not to mention their children's education. "They did not know how to go out there and market themselves to find other jobs because the University was the only employer they knew" said Participant 'K'. A lot of those employees experienced severe depression, anxiety and anger. Participant 'L' added that some employees were breadwinners at their homes, they had occupied their positions for decades and were not expecting any retrenchment, and on addition to that trouble, Human Resources Division was seen as having failed to show recognition and compassion to those long-serving employees of the University who were loyal for many years. And according to Participant 'L', exit interviews were not conducted.

Imaginably so, respondents had a lot to say about their colleagues and friends' traumatic experiences. From the outset, when employees heard that jobs would be advertised, it was panic and horror. Employees had to reapply and compete for jobs as most positions got redundant, the interview process

was nerve-wrecking. Another proportion of employees ended-up in the pool where they would later be placed in other vacant positions if lucky. Exiting employees were given early retirement packages while others were retrenched, and in certain circumstances they had to choose between the two, a very difficult situation if one had initially planned for normal retirement age. Many people had to change and adjust to new jobs and working conditions. It was a daunting experience because people were secured and happy in their previous jobs.

According to respondents' experiences, many of their colleagues that were affected got so severely stressed and depressed that they had to go for counselling where they broke down in tears, others were admitted to hospitals. They felt that they had been treated unfairly after having served the institution for many years. Reportedly, one employee got so ill, was then diagnosed with cancer and passed away in a matter of few months. Other employees, who had worked in some instances for over 30 years, were not eligible for posts that they had occupied because they did not possess the required qualification and were therefore retrenched. Families went through tension and were overwhelmed from financial and emotional strain as staff went through the process of being redundant, being in the pool and eventually retrenched. It was all sad and people felt that they were not treated with compassion but were forced to leave early without being given a fair chance to complete their employment terms through retirement.

From the human point of view and in consideration of Maslow's theory, it could be identified from participant's responses and in addressing their views to this question that, at certain stages of the reorganisation process and in particular the redeployment stage, employee's morale and dignity came crushing down as they were hard hit by the realities of retrenchments and job demotion while certain divisions were shutdown. For those particular employees, the whole hierarchy of needs, from lowest to highest, Gawel (1997) came crushing down with them as they experienced all emotions and realities of losing all. The employees' basic (physiological) needs from food, shelter etc., to safety and security needs of health, employment and property, self-esteem, and self-actualisation which is derived from morality/values, acceptance, and inner potential, was all devastated.

While remaining employees witnessed the agony and desperation of their departing colleagues, their level of motivation, organisational commitment, dignity and morale was also negatively affected. That finding is supported by Stum (2001), who compared Maslow's hierarchy of needs to a hierarchical model of organisational commitment (the performance pyramid) in order to understand workforce motivators that influence employees' level of commitment, and found that an interdependence exists between a satisfied need and motivation. Making reference to research literature and findings in this study, it can be concluded that at some point during the reorganisation process at UKZN, employees' motivation was negatively affected and at low levels. We have also

learnt that emotional responses eventually subside when people get through the stages of shock, defensive retreat, acknowledgement, acceptance, adaptation and reconciliation with change, and therefore normality and motivation levels would also follow track and rise. Fugate (2008) Matyasha (2011)

Some employees were placed in the awaiting job pool for 2 years and after being moved between different jobs, were eventually retrenched, while others would eventually get permanent placements in completely different fields and environment from what they knew, and their experience had been a very lonely and sad journey. On certain occasions, employees felt compelled to accept any job offer that they could secure and as a result, some of them were still unhappy as the jobs were not their first preference. According to Participant 'L', people had lost passion for their work, they were no longer motivated and job performance had decreased. When people get stressed and take sick leave, productivity gets affected, and according to Kalyani and Sahoo, employees are the most important resource that organisations can invest in, because improving technology and cutting costs can only enhance performance up to a point, and to move beyond that point and to increase its competitive advantage in the long term, most organisations have over the years, come to the realisation that they need to take care of its employees. Kalyani and Sahoo (2011, p. 280)

*Seventh question* explored people's overall experience of the process, lessons, general thoughts and views:

One respondent simply described the experience in two ways. (a) "Some people saw the change process as an opportunity and then embraced it. Through resilience, they cope well and have seen the opportunity". (b) "The other group which remains stuck in the old, either because they generally do not cope well with change or due to lack of training, they feel that they are old and will be leaving employment soon".

Participant 'B' believed that through the reorganisation process, people had learnt that life and jobs are unstable and therefore they needed to multi-task and learn other functions from colleagues, from within and outside their workspaces. The experience had taught employees the need to seek further training in order to prepare for future developments. For most people it came as a wake-up call from complacency, it taught people to start working harder, to get trained, for their own benefit and for the University to be productive as well. Participant 'H' said, "The process tapped in people's skills and opportunities that they did not know they had. It created a platform for self-improvement, it brought about the self-sufficiency, team spirit and willingness to learn new skills, almost in a forced manner".

People had realised that change is constant and they had to accept it. Participant 'J' said with a feeling of betrayal, that "People were promised that jobs were safe but then ended up being retrenched

and some placed in the pool and having to reapply. Lots of people never expected that the University could embark on such a process. They used to think that jobs are for life”. Due to reduced workforce, everybody had taken more workload which is not an ideal situation. Participant ‘J’ also believed that management should have come in the open, to inform and educate staff in advance of changes and things to anticipate because they plan in advance through strategic planning. According to Participant ‘L’, if one had to compare the support received, to private sectors who would normally appoint professional people to help go through a transition, there was no real support. Proper planning, implementation of initiatives for readiness to change, and monitoring through effective change management is necessary in order to ensure smooth transition throughout the process, and in order to reduce barriers to change that manifest thorough resistance. Edmonds (2011) Bell and Barkhuizen (2011) The latter could be achieved by defining and adopting corporate strategies, structures, procedures and technologies that are deemed necessary to deal with change. HR Magazine (2007) Participants’ views on the overall experience of the process, lessons, general thoughts and views revealed that, in summary:

- Employees learnt the importance of education and continuous skills improvement through learning and to appreciate building experience and good track record of work delivery.
- People should get as much work experience as possible. They must work hard and learn new tasks in a wide range of activities
- Always prepare for the future; empower oneself, improve areas of performance and keep growing one’s skills in order to remain relevant and be in a better position to be kept and needed
- Individuals must be reliable, indispensable, and work as part of a team.
- The institution could have potentially lost well experienced and efficient staff, which other institutions are waiting to grab.
- Employees owe to value their jobs.
- Life is uncertain, people must not be complacent, do not relax and do not take things for granted.
- Life goes on. Change can be survived and can turnout better than before.

(a) Participants’ views and general comments on availability of support systems for addressing employee’s needs and expectations



Respondents agreed that support systems were available and were plenty. There were workshops, seminars and roadshows for people to engage but it could have been made clearer in order to cause less stress. Consultative platforms were also made available and were chaired by Executive Management and Change Teams e.g. Deputy Vice-chancellors, Directors, the Registrar etc. where staff could raise their fears and concerns. Still, study participants revealed that it was a common feeling among employees, that there was still ample room for improvement, what was provided was not enough, and change management process should have been on-going.

On one hand, some respondents felt that there was not much support and equally not much awareness, but only months or few weeks' notice and thereafter posts were immediately advertised, and according to Participant 'J', people were just told that jobs were being re-advertised and so staff just had to reapply for advertised posts and go for interviews. They felt that workshops were provided only at the beginning of the process, they were also not enough and were one-sided. In some instances employees felt that when they raised concerns, there were no meaningful answers. "There was no proper process to advise and educate staff in order to prepare, it was head-on" Participant 'J' reported. According to Herholdt (2012, p. 169 - 173), it is the responsibility of human resources and change agents, to ensure proper consultation, problem solving and analysis through planned approach, influencing and coalition initiatives. Change agents should make every effort to encourage employees' personal involvement and participation in the overall organisational change, strategy and transformation, with the aim of stimulating interest and commitment, to minimise fears and reduce uncertainty, opposition or resistance, and to encourage positive action. Paton and McCalman (2008) Bell and Barkhuizen (2011)

Participant 'K' was concerned that the process of addressing employees' needs was not handled well as they were told that their jobs were safe but to the contrary, with early retirements, retrenchments and so forth. Some respondents were of the view that whatever support mechanism, though not enough, only happened after people had gone through shock. They had nowhere to go for help and advice or even guidance. No one was available to address staff issues, support was almost non-existent and everything was just a challenge, even human resources division could not help much with answers to queries and to clear areas of uncertainty.

(b) General participants' views and comments on information distribution, provision for communication and feedback during the reorganisation

According to some respondents' views, a lot was done. Information, communication and feedback platforms were made available but some people chose not to engage. Participant 'C' agreed, adding that there were plenty of information and communication, so everybody was aware of what was happening. According to Participant 'H', constant feedback was made available via University and

College communiqués therefore all people were kept informed. There were also departmental and College meetings where everyone was kept to-up-to-date with matters and opportunities for raising issues of concern.

Participant 'B' was of the view that even though there were meetings and roadshows to inform everyone about the process, "that was just it." Participant 'F' said, "There were patches of grey areas between the beginning and end in terms of communication, it could have been clearer". And according to Participant 'N', there was no proper consultation or communication, instead it all seemed as though management had already decided and were just sending down final actions to be taken.

Participant 'G' strongly advised on the importance of having transparency and consultation with affected staff in order for the full nature of the job to be understood. While Participant 'I' was of the view that Human Resources were not supportive enough and information distribution was not very effective, according to this participant, workshops were few and wide, they were close to the change process, and were not enough. There was a view that very limited assistance was available for addressing issues, and according to Participant 'L', pros and cons were not given i.e. benefits and losses from the reorganisation, people were not given enough time to adjust and think about what was to come, it all happened very fast. Participant 'O' said, communication platforms and workshops were only made available mainly for affected staff, and still also not enough".

(c) General participants' views and comments on challenges or opportunities for growth / training

A number of participants responded positively while others mentioned a number of challenges when it came to training and growth opportunities. It was believed that the reorganisation presented with lots of opportunities and that they continued to exist, and for others, personal satisfaction and growth was achieved. There were lots of training and growth opportunities and invitations for scheduled training workshops were constantly being circulated to staff, advising and motivating them to attend. Opportunities were available in the form of higher level positions if people had the necessary qualifications. Participant 'F' said an enthusiastic, "Yes it has been great", as she elaborates on a cherished opportunity to move on nicely in the career map and having learnt more duties while working with senior staff members, thereby building more confidence. According to Maslow's theory which is supported by participant's views in this research, people's needs for self-esteem and the need to be a unique individual are encouraged through achievement and gaining a sense of connection with others. When employees realised opportunities for growth through training, learning new and more challenging skills, when they secured higher level jobs, their needs for personal fulfilment were achieved, and according to Maslow's theory, that fulfilment brings positive contribution to effective and efficient engagement at work through increased staff morale. Gawel (1997) Simons et al., (1987a)

According to Participant 'C', the reorganisation gave people opportunities for mapping careers, talent management and an opportunity for performance management to be embraced and linked to those opportunities. There were also opportunities for developmental posts that were created due to some jobs requiring better skills and qualifications, but in the end, it was up to individuals to apply for better posts. Participant 'H' believed that there were more opportunities and less challenges but because people were overcome with fear in the beginning, that was the greatest challenge, and those with less qualifications and skills would have undoubtedly experienced more challenges but in reality, jobs were advertised and people made applications where they felt qualified. Since the reorganisation and its experiences, most people took it upon themselves to study further and empower themselves for future opportunities. On the other hand, it was revealed that most people feared making life plans or long-term financial commitments such as buying a house or car because they were not sure of the future and whether further changes from the reorganisation were still anticipated.

Participant 'E' voiced a concern over the fact that even though opportunities were available in existing posts, there were disadvantages in the sense that they were for Blacks only. While participant 'G' felt that the University is very limited to progression of staff in the field of administration, something that would possibly in the future, also lead to the University being unable to retain quality staff. Other views revealed that growth opportunities were in some cases hindered by the fact that very big gaps exist in career growth for professional support, with only one level of managers e.g. School and/or College Managers.

Another obstacle to growth opportunities was believed to have been presented in the form of budget constraints which left many employees with only chances to grow skills by acquiring further and more challenging tasks. Management also got an opportunity to increase allocated duties through revised job profiles so that divisions could be sustained. Participant 'O' said "there are no opportunities really because posts are advertised and then get frozen, when staff leave they do not get replaced, the workload just keeps increasing." There were also reported feelings that even training opportunities were limited, either that or each section of the University had different experiences as other staff members were not given opportunities for further training in specialised fields i.e. lack of financial support or remission for further studies in some areas, and according to some participant's views, staff were required to set goals for their training needs but were in some instances, never really attended any training due to some challenges.

According to views expressed in this research, and on understanding of Maslow's theory, when employees are invited to form part of discussions and decision-making during change planning and implementation, when their views and concerns are appreciated and respected, their needs for self-esteem and need for love and belonging is fulfilled, and that leads further, to encouraged cooperation

and a more healthy relationship with the employer and change agents. From the organisation's point of view, it is understood that effective planning and implementation of the change management process contributes towards success through building shared vision by fostering employees' commitment in the long term, while focusing on openness needed to unearth shortcomings in people's way of seeing the world through mental models, the learning disciplines and important components that drive the system of a learning organisation. Senge (2006) Paton and McCalman (2008) From findings and participants' views expressed in this research, we learn to appreciate the definition of *theory* as explained by Corley and Gioia (2011), a statement of concepts and their interrelationships that shows how and why a phenomenon or an event occurs. A well-developed, logical explanation of an event, with its framework being used as a means to assess the validity of the theory's propositions in the study being undertaken. Vithal and Jansen (2012) And a place where management scholars gain insights as they engage in research to better understand the many aspects of management. Mayer and Sparrowe (2013)

#### **4.6.2 Findings from Observations**

An observation schedule was created and used as a guide for recording key observation information of real-life behaviour and reactions as noted during the group and individuals discussions, to provide outcomes based on reflections of how events took place during data collection sessions, events as observed by the researcher. Brynard and Hanekom (2006, p. 46)

As suggested by Pellissier (2008, p. 22), the discussion took place in the presence of the researcher with no participation in the activities that would have otherwise influenced operations, responses or outcomes.

As per observation schedule (Appendix IV), the individual interviews and focus group-related activities were *classified and observed* as follows:

*Group Dynamics:* Group participants seemed to relate very well with each other and were cooperative. They gave each other a chance to share their views. They seemed very confident in their expression of some views on certain issues, and they voiced their opinions with emphasis and sometimes with concern and anger over the manner in which for example human resources and change management issues were handled; stating that, not enough was done and that change management process should have been ongoing.

*Level of Information Sharing and Openness:* Participants supported each other's comments where necessary. They added more information, clarified and elaborated on each other's views. They seemed comfortable enough to be able to share their views and opinions freely and openly. They

were comfortable enough to further elaborate and even show their emotions and expressions where they felt strongly about the topic.

*Comfort or Ease in Discussing Questions:* During the interviews and group discussions, study participants expressed their views with passion and enthusiasm while they became emotional at times. The level of understanding in questions posed seemed fairly standard as participants were able to answer from the word go, without much hesitating and thinking before answering and dwelling on their views, though at times they would slightly go off-topic as they continued to elaborate.

*Agreeing / Disagreeing on Matters around Topics:* The level of stress that was experienced at first, was felt almost across the board, and worry due to uncertainty of events that would follow as the reality of the reorganisation process kicked in. The group participants also agreed that a severe negative impact such as losing one's job would have affected people tremendously and especially those who are single, as others would have relied on their spouses.

For some participants, the reorganisation, though it came with a lot of stress and anxiety, in most cases things worked out extremely well, as though they were meant to be. They believed that was possibly achieved through faith and team work in their division.

#### **4.6.3 Findings from Focus Group Discussion**

A group of five individuals, all females participated in the focus group discussion. The project informant sheet was provided and on understanding of the terms and conditions, participants then agreed and signed consent for participation in the discussion. The session took 35 minutes to complete and it was voice-recorded for later thorough interpretation and analysis.

*The group respondents' views were:*

The initial reaction to the reality of the reorganisation was mainly stress caused by uncertainty of what was to come. The situation was worrying and people had a lot of questions but reality served as a reminder that one could not really do much except waiting for things to unfold. According to one group participant, being a spiritual being helped a lot in the coping process as it gave hope during the events of change. In the unlucky event that one was retrenched, people feared that it would have been difficult to secure another job. Participants agreed that it would have been harder for single people vs. those who had spouses to rely on. The reorganisation worked out to the best of other participants, reportedly, things just unfolded and people were happy. Other employees had to settle for lower graded positions but the feeling was still great because they believed that money is not everything. Another participant reported that after going through the process of applying for other positions due to

previous position being redundant, the blessing came in two-folds, the best job and the best team to work with.

The common experience revealed by participants was the sadness and unhappiness that was heard and evident everywhere around the University. According to views of participants, the majority of employees had much more workload than they used to have, and whether the issue was the reorganisation itself or other issues, the fact remained that many people were very unhappy and that brought sadness. Some people had not yet embraced change as it was still difficult for them to understand Management's point of view in other areas of the reorganisation process.

It was believed that further resistance was mainly attributed to severe increased work load which had made it impossible to complete daily tasks. Multi-tasking and teamwork had become the only solution and therefore it was crucial that employees be prepared and willing to share duties. We learn from this experience that the discipline of team learning played a major role in developing groups' skills with everybody determined to work towards the success of teamwork and goals, rather than that of the individual. Another concern was the large number of academics that were leaving the University. Research literature informs us that other institutions that had gone through restructuring, also experienced a related workforce issue where some of their senior staff chose to leave while others moved back to their old research portfolios. One example is Aarhus University in Denmark. Fearn (2011)

Participants emphasised the issue of work overload in most sections of the University, with one participant's own words stating "too much work and less people". One of the main objectives for the UKZN's College Reorganisation was the streamlining of decision-making through a *flatter* and a competency-performance-based structure, and with this objective in mind, the number of workforce was deemed to be affected. The process of deployment was implemented concurrently through recruitment and selection, and all administrative positions were re-advertised. Some positions became completely redundant as tasks were moved or combined into revised or new job portfolios. Moreover, one of the main components of the UKZN reorganisation was *the reduction from the three-layer into the new two-layer structure* consisting of only 4 Colleges and 19 Schools, the creation of fewer, larger "mega" schools. UKZN Exec (2010) and according to guiding principles underpinning the implementation plan, "the perennial poor performing schools would be identified and either be merged or closed" UKZN Exec (2010).

Employees felt that their expectations were not met especially by Human Resources in terms of playing a supportive role to its staff. The main concerns that came out of the group discussion revolved around the lack of support to staff in time of need and desperation when most were affected by forced early retirement. According to group participants' views, exit interviews were not

conducted. There was no emotional support in terms of counselling sessions and intense explanations / discussions. On the part of employees, that was understood as a lack of appreciation especially for people who had spent almost their lifetime with the University, over 30 years of employment and dedication.

It is believed that the actual reorganisation process did not bring misery and desperation on its own, because people can adjust and work hard, but the way in which people were treated in general, did not seem right. People were left in the dark about events to unfold and processes were not clearly explained, for example, it was not clear how the equity policies were applied during the recruitment processes, the advertising of positions and appointments. The employees believed that there was lack of proper planning in general. According to some participants' views, there ought to be a succession planning in place, especially for key positions in the University but as it manifested during the reorganisation process, there was a lack of recognition for scarce skills and people with institutional knowledge. It was believed that most of those individuals who possessed scarce skills and institutional knowledge, were just released and that seemed as though the University was determined to do anything just to meet their target irrespective of major consequences such as losing key talent.

Research literature revealed that, a comparison between Maslow's hierarchy of individual needs and a hierarchical model of organisational commitment was carried out to determine workforce motivators that influence employee's level of commitment, and it was found that an interdependence exists between a satisfied need and motivation. Stum (2001) In terms of that finding therefore, by achieving a positive circumstance in ones' life, a positive reaction is triggered and a certain level of need is satisfied or achieved, and by achieving career growth through higher job positions, training and development, the self-esteem need is satisfied, hence Stum's comparison of Esteem need vs. Growth. According to Herholdt (2012, p. 60), in order to reduce resistance, organisations need to carefully consider the meaning and impact brought by change in the lives of employees, and the continued survival of the organisation, taking cognisance of and addressing people's issues instead of ignoring them.

Group participants stated that even though they had to reapply for positions and go through the interview process, they were lucky to get placed in positions where it just felt like it was meant to be. They believed that job demotion would have made it quite hard to have a good attitude in the job. According to Paton and McCalman (2008), organisation's success comes from customer satisfaction which on its own depends on and is generated from motivated employees, and the organisation's ability to produce and provide goods and services also depends on the organisation's ability to gain commitment and loyalty from its people. And accordingly, other important organisational decisions

should not be treated in isolation of individuals because it is people within the organisations who deliver the needed organisation's performance standards. Paton and McCalman (2008)

During the reorganisation process, certain employees experienced different challenges than others. There were accessibility issues that were believed to have resulted from lack of proper logistical plans for accommodating all employees including for example, those with special needs. Group participants all agreed that this was another area, over and above other human resources / people's management issues that still needed improvement. In general, a feeling of personal dissatisfaction and disappointment was revealed by some group participants, where they felt that some personnel issues were not handled in the manner that would cater for everyone, their different needs and expectations in order for them to participate fully in the programmes e.g. the workshops, presentations and interviews.

Research literature informs us that organisations and management should also give priority to providing employees with opportunities for growth and development, and as part of the basic principles of organisational development plans these individual development opportunities should always happen concurrently with the organisation. Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 171) In agreement to these views, Senge's theory of 'The Fifth Discipline' also emphasises that learning organisations must learn how to tap employees' commitment and capacity to learn at all levels, with the individual employees being able to see themselves as learning individuals that have to change along with the learning organisation. And according to Wang and Ahmed (2003), even though learning begins with the individuals, it is ultimately the goal of the organisation to integrate individual learning into organisational learning.

#### **4.7 Addressing Findings in Relation to Theory 1: The Fifth Discipline**

In terms of this theory, there are five disciplines that are necessary support to organisations who wish to adopt a culture of learning through constant discovery and change, in their journey to becoming a learning organisation. In addressing findings from this study, it will be identified how the disciplines emerged during the interaction of events, and how they were integrated in relation to overall experiences from the reorganisation process at UKZN. The five disciplines are systems thinking, building shared vision, mental models, team learning and personal mastery.

The emergence of teams working together for superior performance and teambuilding exercises that helped employees to cope with added tasks, spoke to views of this theory, on advantages of individual employees being committed to positive contribution into team goals, and working towards the vision of the organisation as a collective. The discipline of *building shared vision* paved way for successful team efforts while fostering commitment in the long-term. Through the discipline of *team learning*,



we learnt from findings of this research, that employees' groups' skills were developed through teams that worked together towards achieving common goals, people were able to look for the larger picture beyond individual perspectives while each individual's personal motivation to continually learn, was developed at *personal mastery level*. At this level of *personal mastery*, UKZN employees were able to shift from reactive mind-set to being part of the system.

Senge's theory has helped to identify in this research, positive characteristics of individuals as well as *team learning* experiences, the drive and motivation that helped to devise creative ways of dealing with challenging situations and turning them into positive energy that was transferred into successful projects within divisions and the rest of the College. Fortunately for some divisions, as Participant 'H' stated, teams had passed the forming and norming phase of change, and were working well together.

Process flows had been developed and that helped to guide them through and had made things easy. But still, as Participant 'H' added, "It wasn't smooth-sailing, there were challenges and resistance." Certainly, some divisions were able to find creative ways of dealing with the current situation, to document procedures and work processes that would better suite and serve their working environment, hence the belief that change forces people to think out of the box as it drives motivation and creativity. From these findings, the characteristic of *building shared vision* was easily identifiable, as we learnt that some divisions were able to reach a point where Management and employees were working well together and devised processes for achieving common goals and objectives.

Reportedly, at College level things were stable and staff were working well as teams, they had embraced change and were moving on. "Other sections of the College had followed on trend and each cluster were continuously meeting on regular basis as a team, to discuss areas of concern and better ways of managing their individual portfolios" Participant 'H' proudly stated, adding that the College Model had resulted in higher levels of accountability in terms of operations, duties and tasks, something that could only be possible with complete dedication and individual commitment. Special training workshops were also organised to help employees cope with added tasks.

The reorganisation brought about, tension among staff in the whole University as everybody felt very threatened and nervous. According to Participant 'C', union memberships grew as people rallied to join unions in the hope of getting support and protection. The actions of some employees point to the notion of Senge's theory, and as Paton and McCalman supports it, he describes the learning discipline of *mental models* as images in people's heads, assumptions and stories that impact people's behaviour in an unconscious manner. Due to hearsay about planned events of the reorganisation such as the redeployment process, people were driven into reactive mode and through fear, shock and

nervousness, at individual or group level, they went to seek protection while others fell into stress and depression. *Mental models* can also play a positive role as they focus on the openness needed to unearth shortcomings in people's way of seeing the world, and as we learnt from this study, some employees were able to turn challenges into opportunities and were able to secure better challenging jobs, teambuilding exercises gave hope and direction, the University was described as going from strength to strength.

Participant 'C' said "I feel that the institution needed change especially to get rid of the dead wood, the lazy ones, now people are more productive, jobs are more challenging, and non-performers are gone." Change is believed to have resulted in higher productivity from employees, jobs had become more challenging and non-performers were no longer at sight. It was humbling to hear that some employees still had faith on the system after reorganisation, they believed that through proper consultation processes had helped to reduce fear and challenges. Participant 'H' said "At operational level, there was fear of change by people but intensive training played an important role in overcoming fear and to build confidence, while teambuilding helped for bonding to unfold."

Senge's theory recommends that in order to be successful and truly excel in the future, learning organisations need to discover how to tap employee's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels. Individual employees must see themselves as learning individuals that have to change along with the learning organisation i.e. being part of the system. According to Wang and Ahmed (2003), when the concept of organisational learning and learning organisation emerged, its idea resulted from the creation of "action learning" process i.e. the involvement of small groups and deriving group's positive emotional energies.

In view of Senge's theory and in identifying the characteristics of a learning organisation, UKZN should proudly accept the heartfelt congratulatory note that it received from its external review panel on presenting its final report and handing-over to UKZN. The report said, "A review process of this kind is a learning experience, not only for the host institution but for the panel as well, and we take away with us many insights that we will put to good use in our own Universities" UKZN Documents (2010a) On its report the panel continued to appraise, "UKZN has come a long way since 2004 and the institution of the merger. The institution has succeeded in putting in place and operating a College Model based on sound principles". It also stated the awareness of and sensitivity to the fact that UKZN and, prior to the merger, the two component Universities, had been in utmost continuous state of restructuring. UKZN Documents (2010a)

With the aim of achieving the status of a learning organisation and to realise its potential as a *system*, UKZN had to simplify and streamline for success. We revisit some of the main objectives for its College Reorganisation, the means to achieve both structural and functional efficiency and to

streamline decision-making through a *flatter* and a competency-performance-based structure; to create academic critical mass through consolidation of Schools and to ensure the evolution of new forms and new ways of knowledge production; to deepen the transformation of the University; and to bring UKZN in line with best international practice and modern trends in high impact, efficient and competitive higher education institutions in order to realise its vision and mission. Makgoba (2011)

Cropper (2008) describes *systems thinking* as a framework for seeing inter-relationships that underlie complex situations and interactions; a system that allow teams to unravel the often hidden influences and leverage points, and a more complete awareness of interconnections that often result from changing systems. With reference to disciplines of *building shared vision* and *personal mastery*, we understand from findings of this research, that people learnt that life and jobs are unstable, and therefore they needed to multi-task and learn other functions from colleagues, from within and outside their workspaces.

By means of Senge's theory we were able to understand that UKZN, through its reorganisation, were able to discover how to tap employees' commitment and capacity to learn at all levels. UKZN employees were eventually able to see themselves as learning individuals that had to change along with the learning organisation, as being part of the *system*. People discovered the need to seek further training in order to prepare for future developments. Participant 'H' said, "The process tapped in people's skills and opportunities that they did not know they had. It created a platform for self-improvement, it brought about the self-sufficiency, team spirit and willingness to learn new skills, almost in a forced manner".

In terms of building shared vision, Human Resources Division together with Management should lead way as change leaders, in an effort to educate, reduce fear and resistance, and to get buy-in from employees. But participants in this study reported that the means of awareness and support mechanism in the form of workshops and roadshows, was provided only at the beginning of the process, they were not enough and were one-sided. People felt that there was no proper process to advise and educate staff in order to prepare, it was head-on. Lines of communication were not very clear and employees did not know who to consult for advice or even guidance.

According to Clark et al., (2010), ongoing support should be provided in terms of training and skills development, new or improved software training and adaptation, workshops and seminars, to assist employees in coping with newly acquired positions, new systems etc. Research and experience has clearly shown that organisational change initiatives generally affect the operation of systems and processes, including people in that environment. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011) It affects people's thoughts, behaviour, their perceptions, the level of engagement and their ability to adjust and perform in the changed environment, hence the importance of organisations to explore and understand

relationships between the barriers to change and work engagement of employees in order to address them in their readiness to change initiatives and to ensure success over time. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011)

Some employees acknowledged that, through the change process they had learnt a whole lot of new things, more challenging job functions etc. Employees had gained a sense of pride for the institution and its Management because change had allowed for redirection of focus into working towards the institution's vision and mission in order to achieve more in research and teaching. Change had given employees more platforms for growth; they had a sense that it had been a positive change, and were appreciative of the opportunity for learning new things. Their jobs had been enhanced and were exciting. Participant 'H' said "The institution is going from strength to strength, ratings have improved and that makes one proud to be associated with the institution".

Through the discipline of *mental models*, employees and team leaders realised that, for the purpose of achieving better results in goals and tasks, multi-skilling and teamwork was crucial. Participant 'H' said, "Proper consultation process made things easier and fear was reduced. At operational level, intensive training played an important role in overcoming fear and building confidence, while teambuilding helped for bonding to unfold". It was acknowledged that the reorganisation opened doors for nice progress pending positive approach and positive mind for people to learn and adjust to new environment and carry on with what is left.

The discipline of *team learning* was identified in the research findings as study participants revealed that multi-skilling and teamwork became the only solution and therefore it was crucial that employees be prepared and willing. Participant "H" said, "The College Model has resulted in higher levels of accountability in terms of operations, duties and tasks, something that could only be possible with complete dedication and individual commitment, and accountability is monitored through performance management and by recognition of good work through talent management." Processes had been decentralized making way for creation of posts in the Colleges, leading to more effectiveness and efficiency within the job function. Human resources, finance operations and management style had been restructured to resemble the private sector, in terms of performance and talent management, ratings had reportedly improved and the institution was seen as moving from strength to strength.

Working hand-in-hand with the discipline of *building shared vision, personal mastery* helped employees to realise the strength that lies in cooperativeness, a change in mind-set, and collectiveness that leads to improved job productivity through multi-skills and teamwork. Participant 'F' said an enthusiastic, "Yes it has been great", as she elaborates on a cherished opportunity to move on nicely in the career map and having learnt more duties while working with senior staff members, thereby

building more confidence. We learnt from findings that, all the five learning disciplines manifested in each and every role and step during the reorganisation at UKZN. They were able to play and fuse meaningfully to influence the behaviour and learning of the organisation and its people. Individuals went through the process of learning together with the changing organisation while finding ways to cope under the circumstances.

Through recommendations from Senge's theory, it was possible to identify and to see how the learning disciplines influenced the thinking and reactions of individuals and groups, and how the planning and implementation of the reorganisation process was handled by management and change agents, and especially in relation to addressing people's issues during the reorganisation process. It was also possible to link findings to behaviour patterns and outcomes especially the contribution of teamwork through teambuilding exercises, training, and other efforts by management including the development of process flows and work guidelines. As findings from this research revealed, the reorganisation gave a positive outlook of the institution overall because operations had been decentralised and streamlined leading to easy access and convenience for all, it emerged as a one stop-shop. Staff had learnt to achieve more with team spirit, they had embraced change and were moving on. According to Participant 'H', College clusters had adopted a culture of meeting regularly as teams, to discuss areas of concern and better ways of managing their individual portfolios. As a result of the reorganisation process, optimum performance; higher levels of accountability; complete dedication and individual commitment was achieved.

At mastery level, employees at UKZN had gained a sense of self-awareness, learning the benefits of team-work, valuing jobs and training opportunities, subordination and cooperativeness, commitment and changing together with the learning organisation. Through it all, the institution and its employees emerged with characteristics that embrace learning, innovation, improvement and continuous contribution and interaction of the disciplines of a learning organisation.

#### **4.8 Addressing Findings in Relation to Theory 2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

According to Maslow's theory, what motivates and drives human beings is derived from the satisfaction of different needs with the lower level basic ones to be satisfied first in the hierarchy before continuing to the higher level. From this point of view, study findings were analysed looking at views on how employees' needs and expectations were addressed or met, in relation to the theory's propositions. By applying Maslow's theory into findings of this research, the individual needs will be assessed looking from lowest to highest, to establish how these needs were affected and how they were addressed during the reorganisation process at UKZN. At primary level, physiological needs are partly achieved through having some sort of employment followed by need for love and belonging, then safety and security; self-esteem and lastly, the need for self-actualisation.

Maslow's theory addresses the human aspect of an organisation, describing the needs and expectations of people that are considered necessary to achieve personal fulfilment for employees to engage effectively and efficiently at work. In addressing findings in relation to Maslow's theory of needs, it is understood that when employees are invited to form part of discussions and decision-making, when their views and concerns are appreciated and respected, their needs for self-esteem, and need for love and belonging is fulfilled, and that in turn leads to encouraged cooperation and a more healthy relationship with the employer and change agents.

From the organisation's point of view, it is said that effective planning and implementation of the change management process could contribute towards success through building shared vision by fostering employees' commitment in the long term, while focusing on openness needed to unearth shortcomings in people's way of seeing the world through mental models, the learning disciplines and important components that drive the system of a learning organisation. Senge (2006) Paton and McCalman (2008) From findings and participants' views expressed in this research, we learn to appreciate the definition of *theory* as explained by Corley and Gioia (2011), a statement of concepts and their interrelationships that shows how and why a phenomenon or an event occurs; a well-developed, logical explanation of an event; with the theoretical framework being used as a means to assess the validity of the theory's propositions in the study being undertaken. Vithal and Jansen (2012) And a place where management scholars gain insights as they engage in research to better understand the many aspects of management. Mayer and Sparrowe (2013)

Workforce shortages were reportedly experienced in some sections of different Colleges in comparison to others with similar or less number of clients, and employees felt that this situation negatively impacts one's wellbeing, emotionally, physically and mentally. According to Pillay and Pillay (2012), in order to achieve the intended results and for efficiency and effectiveness to be achieved, it is critical that organisations provide necessary resources in terms of workforce, adequate financial budgets etc. as these might in the long run, have a negative impact and seriously weaken service delivery and thereby impacting staff motivation and morale.

The reorganisation process had, to some certain extent, led to positive outcomes for employees of the University who had occupied same positions for extended periods. They now had greater exposure and opportunities to do other duties beside what was the norm. Some got opportunities to fulfil their dreams of moving to higher levels in their careers, leading to a very positive change influence both professionally and personally. Participant 'C' said, "The reorganisation couldn't have come at any better time, people were now more productive, jobs were more challenging, and non-performers were gone". According to this view, the needs for "self-esteem" were achieved through growth and development. Following the direction of Maslow's theory, it was possible to identify and interpret the

circumstances, benefits, challenges and opportunities that employees faced through the reorganisation process at UKZN. Findings revealed that there were opportunities for growth and development through training and higher level job opportunities, expansion of some divisions which came with creation of new posts. Through experience from the reorganisation, employees had learnt the importance of improving skills by means of continuous learning and obtaining higher qualifications. When the reorganisation forced divisions to develop and necessitate teamwork, and individual employees learning to work together for superior performance, the need for belonging was encouraged.

According to study participants' views, people experienced lots of pain and sadness because they were forced to leave, they left jobs unprepared and the impact was huge. The process of redeployment meant that employees had to reapply and compete for jobs as most positions got redundant, the interview process was nerve-wrecking. Another proportion of employees ended-up in the awaiting job 'pool' where they would later be placed in other vacant positions if lucky. From the viewpoint of Maslow's theory, it is evident that employee's needs for "safety and security" and needs for "self-esteem" were severely affected. Those needs encompass issues of health, employment, property, family and social responsibility. Accordingly, through losing sense of hope, employees lost their sense of confidence. Employment comes with earning respect of others and a sense of achievement, and therefore when it is at threat, these important and critical needs are at jeopardy and can no longer be met.

Burger et al., (2008) found that proper organisational development (OD) interventions such as logotherapy 'therapy through meaning' could work in favour of the change agents during organisational change efforts. According to Burger et al., (2008), an application of logo-OD assist employees to find discovery of meaning and purpose in life irrespective of the circumstances, the fear of losing something meaningful such as loss of security and stability, status and competence or self-efficacy. It reduces resistance to, and foster readiness to change, through attitude change. OD contributes to employees viewing change as an opportunity rather than a threat. Burger et al., (2008) Participant 'N' said, "Everybody is just randomly introduced to new things, its constant changes so people cannot relax because anything can happen". People don't know where they stand, the reorganisation might still continue." People had not embraced or moved on from the experience. Due to unhappiness and uncertainty, a number of people were trying to leave the institution wherever possible. Complaints were still very common, people got sick from stress and depression. They got admitted to hospital while others resigned immediately when they could not take it. Again, the needs for safety and security; self-esteem, and a proportion of self-actualisation needs (in terms of acceptance, morality, meaning and inner potential) were partially compromised, and ultimately the most basic of physiological needs were at risk because jobs were threatened. Increased stress levels

lead to sleep deprivation and loss of concentration, and without a job people cannot afford basic needs of food and shelter.

Workforce shortages were reportedly experienced in some sections of the different Colleges in comparison to others with similar or less number of clients, and employees felt that this situation negatively impacts one's wellbeing, emotionally, physically and mentally. According to Pillay and Pillay (2012), in order to achieve the intended results and for efficiency and effectiveness to be achieved, it is critical that organisations provide necessary resources in terms of workforce, adequate financial budgets etc. as these might in the long run, have a negative impact and seriously weaken service delivery and thereby impacting staff motivation and morale.

Individual needs were at all levels, shaken at some point during the reorganisation process, as employees went through the stages of shock, stress and anxiety. The redeployment process was a devastating experience. The means for satisfying the basic needs were at stake, from physiological needs, safety and security of their jobs, employees' health and social stability was affected. At some point their confidence and self-esteem was severely affected or lost. Participant 'F' said, "Having a strong faith helps when one goes through change of such magnitude".

By looking at Stum's comparison of Maslow's theory of individual motivation vs. the hierarchical model of organisational commitment, it was possible to establish from findings that, needs satisfaction impacts on the level of motivation and organisational commitment by employees. According to Stum (2001), an interdependence was found to exist between needs satisfaction and work motivation. That finding can be supported and is easily identifiable in Stum's example of social need vs. affiliation; esteem need vs. growth and; self-actualisation need vs. work/life harmony. Gorman (2010) believed that people's social and emotional wellbeing can be derived and is dependent on many factors from both internal and external of the situation at hand.

According to views expressed in this research, the reorganisation took shape at a needed time especially to revamp and adjust for maximum performance and to move employees to places where they could contribute better. And as Stum (2001) suggests in Maslow's theory, a substantially satisfied need no longer motivates and when people reach their highest level needs, the self-actualisation (work/life harmony) and as some views from findings revealed, most people were at their comfort zone while others were just waiting to retire. Participant 'C' had said, "I feel that the institution needed change especially to get rid of the dead wood - the lazy ones, now people are more productive, jobs are more challenging, and non-performers are gone." Change is believed to have resulted in higher productivity from employees, jobs had become more challenging and non-performers were no longer at sight.



Study outcomes revealed that the College Model had resulted in higher levels of accountability in terms of operations, duties and tasks, something that could only be possible with complete dedication and individual commitment. Employees were motivated to work harder. According to Participant 'H', the achievement of optimum performance standards was also made possible by the University's Human Resources Systems of instilling work ethic and values by monitoring accountability through performance management and by recognition of good work through talent management. The University makes provision for Performance Management and Talent Management Policies through its sections of the Human Resources Division. UKZN Human Resources (2008) UKZN Human Resources (2011) The Policy on Integrated Talent Management was approved and implemented in line with the University's strategic priorities and with the purpose of facilitating and promoting the achievement of institutional objectives through a process of identifying, attracting, nurturing and retaining talent across the whole University. Mosia and Gorbada (2011)

Fortunately there were those employees who felt secured at the University with no feeling of threat about the future, they were seeing things on a more positive and better light. For some, the newly acquired positions were more interactive with University and staff from various levels and backgrounds, giving an opportunity to gain broader knowledge of the University and its activities especially in research. Participant 'F' said an enthusiastic, "Yes it has been great", as she elaborates on a cherished opportunity to move on nicely in the career map and having learnt more duties while working with senior staff members, thereby building more confidence. According to Maslow's theory which is supported by participant's views in this research, people's needs for self-esteem and the need to be a unique individual, are encouraged through achievement and gaining a sense of connection with others. When employees realised opportunities for growth through training, learning new and more challenging skills, when they secured higher level jobs, their needs for personal fulfilment were achieved, and according to Maslow's theory, that fulfilment brings positive contribution to effective and efficient engagement at work through increased staff morale. Gawel (1997) Simons et al., (1987a)

#### **4.9 Links between Theory 1 and Theory 2**

Findings from this study pointed on the severity of impact on employees' social and emotional wellbeing caused by mainly, among other concerns, increased workload. Employees were still on recovery stage from stress and they were no longer completely secured, they could not shake the feeling that the reorganisation might still continue as UKZN continue with its culture of learning, the journey to becoming a learning organisation. Both these theories i.e The Fifth Discipline and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, worked interchangeable as they influenced each side, the organisation and its people.

We learnt about the importance of individual employee commitment while also being part of a single system through building shared vision and personal mastery. According to Cropper (2008) and in relation to the theory's proposition, he adds that successful learning can be achieved through individual commitment, by people's involvement and place in the five learning disciplines, the personal mastery of putting the "ME" in leadership, and teams that work together for superior performance. While Wang and Ahmed (2003) argues that even though learning begins with the individual, it is ultimately the task of the learning organisation to integrate individual learning into organisational learning.

Maslow's theory addresses the human aspect of an organisation, describing the needs and expectations of people that are considered necessary to achieve personal fulfilment for employees to engage effectively and efficiently at work. While Senge's theory addresses the organisational point of view, describing learning organisations as those that adopt a culture of learning through continuous discovery and change efforts aimed at keeping organisations abreast of times. In addressing findings in relation to Maslow's theory of needs, it is understood that when employees are invited to form part of discussions and decision-making, when their views and concerns are appreciated and respected, their needs for self-esteem and need for love and belonging is fulfilled, and that in turn leads to encouraged cooperation and a more healthy relationship with the employer and change agents.

We also learnt that effective planning and implementation of the change management process could contribute towards success of change. The characteristic manifestation of the learning disciplines of building shared vision, mental models, personal mastery, team learning, came to light and had strongly influenced the changing process of the UKZN and its people. Burger et al., (2008) states that employees often respond with feelings of insecurity because implementation of change inherently impacts on aspects of employee's occupational roles leading to increases in role overload, role insufficiency, role ambiguity, role responsibilities etc. Study participant 'H' said, "At operational level, there was fear of change by people but intensive training played an important role in overcoming fear and to build confidence, while teambuilding helped for bonding to unfold."

Following Maslow's theory, we also learnt from these findings, about the negative impact on employees' social and emotional wellbeing caused by mainly, among other concerns, increased workload. While some study participants revealed that many of their colleagues were so severely affected that stress and depression meant that they had to go for counselling where they broke down in tears, while others were admitted to hospitals. Longer-serving employees felt that they had been treated unfairly after having served the institution for many years. Families went through tension and were overwhelmed from financial and emotional strain as staff went through the process of being redundant, being in the pool and eventually retrenched. It was all sad and people felt that they were

not treated with compassion but were forced to leave without being given a fair chance to complete their employment terms through retirement.

From the human point of view and in consideration of Maslow's theory, it could be identified from participant's responses and in addressing their views to this question that, at certain stages of the reorganisation process and in particular the redeployment stage, employee's morale and dignity came crushing down as they were hard hit by the realities of retrenchments and job demotion while certain divisions were shutdown. For those particular employees, the whole hierarchy of needs, from lowest to highest, Gavel (1997) came crushing down with them as they experienced all emotions and realities of losing all. The employees' basic (physiological) needs from food, shelter etc., to safety and security needs of health, employment and property, self-esteem, and self-actualisation which is derived from morality/values, acceptance, and inner potential, was all devastated.

While remaining employees witnessed the agony and desperation of their departing colleagues, their level of motivation, organisational commitment, dignity and morale was also negatively affected. That finding is supported by Stum (2001), who compared Maslow's hierarchy of needs to a hierarchical model of organisational commitment (the performance pyramid) in order to understand workforce motivators that influence employees' level of commitment. He had found that an interdependence exists between a satisfied need and motivation. And making reference to research literature and findings in this study, it can be concluded that at some point during the reorganisation process at UKZN, employees' motivation was negatively affected and at low levels. It is also said that emotional responses eventually subside when people get through the stages of shock, defensive retreat, acknowledgement, acceptance, adaptation and reconciliation with change, and therefore after a while, normality and motivation levels would also follow track and rise. Fugate (2008) Matyesha (2011)

Some employees were placed in the awaiting job pool for 2 years and after being moved between different jobs, were eventually retrenched, while others would eventually get permanent placements in completely different fields and environment from what they knew, and their experience had been a very lonely and sad journey. On certain occasions, employees felt compelled to accept any job offer that they could secure and as a result, some of them were still unhappy. According to Participant 'L', people had lost passion for their work, they were no longer motivated and job performance had decreased. When people get stressed and take sick leave, productivity gets affected, and according to Kalyani and Sahoo, employees are the most important resource that organisations can invest in because improving technology and cutting costs can only enhance performance up to a point, and to move beyond that point and to increase its competitive advantage in the long term, most organisations

have over the years, come to the realisation that they need to take care of its employees. Kalyani and Sahoo (2011, p. 280)

#### **4.10 Addressing Findings and Study Objectives**

Through findings from interviews, focus group discussions and observation, the study objectives were addressed as follows:

**4.10.1 Objective No.1** was to establish how the change affected employee's current occupations and the way they view and relate to the institution.

UKZN employees acknowledged that through the reorganisation, they had learnt a whole lot of new things, and jobs were more challenging. They were proud of the institution and its management because change had allowed for redirection of focus into working towards the institution's vision and mission in order to achieve more in research and teaching. They felt that more platforms for growth were opened. They had a sense that it had been a positive change, their jobs had been enhanced and were exciting. UKZN was finally well on her way to building a strong learning organisation, having put forward a concrete foundation of a system where all its internal stakeholders were working with understanding and commitment, towards building a shared vision through restructured processes and operations.

The reorganisation opened way for positive influence through the discipline of personal mastery and increased responsibility and accountability was realised. Processes had been decentralized making way for creation of posts in Colleges, resulting in better effectiveness and efficiency of the job function. Human resources, finance operations and management style had been restructured to resemble the private sector, in terms of performance and talent management.

Amazingly enough, there were employees who felt secured at the University with no feelings of threat about the future, but only seeing things on a more positive and better light. For some, the newly acquired positions were more interactive with University and staff from various backgrounds and levels, leading to opportunities for gaining broader knowledge of the University and its activities especially in research. A lot of positive things were becoming clearer giving some employees, hope for the future of the University. The reorganisation process was believed to have resulted in higher productivity from employees and that jobs became more challenging and non-performers were no longer at sight.

Some employees' jobs had little impact from the reorganisation as they remained in their old positions while awaiting internal divisional plans to merge and realign some administrative portfolios, with added tasks that required multi-skilling and teamwork, office relocations and new reporting lines.

There were shortages in some areas in terms of staff and overall projects assistance. Due to reduced workforce, the remaining personnel had to bear the blunt of work overload. There was a feeling that the required improvements and growth had not been fully catered for. According to Pillay and Pillay (2012), for the intended results and for efficiency and effectiveness to be achieved, and in order to avoid a negative impact on service delivery and staff motivation in the long run, it is critical that organisations provide necessary resources in terms of workforce, adequate financial budgets etc.

Despite the University having put in place important policies, procedures and guidelines, findings from this study revealed that changes from the reorganisation process brought more unhappiness and confusion as there were already unresolved issues pertaining to human resources and management, and especially issues arising due to different sets of ‘Conditions of Service’ being applicable to its staff. According to findings on organisational change and culture at UKZN, the performance of Human Resources and Finance Division was viewed negatively, with the performance management process regarded as a matter that required further attention and clarity as its intentions were questionable in the absence of rewards for performance. Pillay and Pillay (2012) This matter was also viewed as of particular importance as it forms part of organisational culture that impacts on employee performance, behaviour and organisational politics. Pillay and Pillay (2012)

Nonetheless, it was recognised that the new systems had turned out effective and user-friendly. It worked well for the institution, owing to the still ongoing staff issues that still needed to be resolved. Being a learning organisation and a system that fosters commitment to the long term, through building shared vision, UKZN employees recognised that they had all been given a platform to improve their education and to grow skills, which will result in better ways of handling students; to provide better service to the University’s clientele and thereby improving the overall image of the institution. By view of some positive statements from participants, it could be said that the University’s operational changes through reorganisation, were positively influential in fostering a culture of employees who are self-motivated and those who work and see themselves as part of a single system, through the disciplines of team learning, personal mastery and building shared vision, as suggested in Senge’s theory of ‘The Fifth Discipline’.

**4.10.2 Objective No.2** was to establish whether employees’ needs and expectations were addressed.

There was a view that very limited assistance was available for addressing issues, pros and cons were not given i.e. benefits and losses from the reorganisation. People were not given enough time to adjust and think about what was to come, it all happened very fast. Communication platforms and workshops were made available mainly for affected staff, and were still also not enough. It is understood from research, that when employees are invited to form part of discussions and decision-making, when their views and concerns are appreciated and respected, their needs for self-esteem, and

need for love and belonging is fulfilled, and that in turn leads to encouraged cooperation and a more healthy relationship with the employer and change agents.

Certain employees experienced different challenges than others, especially accessibility issues that were believed to have resulted from lack of proper logistical plans for accommodating all employees including for example, those with special needs. In general, a feeling of personal dissatisfaction and disappointment was revealed by some group participants, where they felt that some personnel issues were not handled in the manner that would cater for everyone, their different needs and expectations in order for them to participate fully in the programmes e.g. the workshops, presentations and interviews. According to the views of participants, it was not clear how the equity policies were applied during the recruitment processes, the advertising of positions and appointments. Human resources was criticised for seemingly not doing much to show recognition to employees that had contributed many years of commitment and dedication to the institution, in terms of playing a supportive role. Exit interviews were not conducted, and the entire change management process should have been on-going.

There were also concerns that the process of addressing employees' needs was not handled well because employees were told that their jobs were safe but to the contrary, early retirements and retrenchments and so forth. Some study participants were of the view that whatever support mechanism, though not enough, it only happened after people had gone through shock. Employees had nowhere to go for help and advice or even guidance. No one was available to address staff issues, support was close to nil and everything was just a challenge. According to some views, even Human Resources Division could not help much with answers to queries and to clear areas of uncertainty. Nelissen and van Selm (2008), believes that management should pay attention to proper dialogue and listen to employees in order to reconstruct and understand their behaviour and thinking, because employees can play a major influential role or challenge the assumptions and goals set by management. While Herholdt (2012, p. 60) states that organisations should consider with importance, the meaning and impact brought by change in the lives of employees and the continued survival of the organisation. And according to him, what contributes to reducing resistance is taking cognisance of and addressing people's issues instead of ignoring them.

From an organisational development perspective, organisations are about people, their development, enhancing their performance which in turn builds and strengthens the organisation. Emphasis on meeting customer satisfaction to the highest standard; and taking care of the organisation's people, are the two underlying themes for any successful organisation. And according to Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 166), success comes from customer satisfaction that is generated from motivated people, and the organisation's ability to produce or provide goods and services depends on its ability to gain

commitment and loyalty from its people i.e. the manager's behaviour and attitudes towards the individual.

Research also supports the fact that it is people within the organisations who deliver the needed organisation's performance standards, and therefore the importance and contribution of organisational structure, technology, and management should not be treated in isolation of individuals. People should be provided with opportunities for growth and development, and recognition of this fact is one of the drivers for basic principles of organisational development (OD). Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 171) It is also highly recommended that opportunities for individual development happen concurrently with the organisation.

It is recommended that effective and proper channels of communication between management and staff be established in order to ensure the integrity of information communicated and feedback through consultative workshops. At UKZN these were heavily conducted by various internal and external experts prior to implementation, educating staff and as a means to get the buy-in from employees. Feedback sessions continued throughout the adaptation period conducted by internal experts from UKZN functional departments such as human resources; the registrar's office, public relations and executive management. With the new structure coming into effect from 2011, the University had made it clear, the critical importance of effective and regular communication and its intention for making provision for bottom-up as well as top-down communication. UKZN Exec Committee (2010)

**4.10.3 Objective No.3** was to explore the availability of mechanisms for supporting / counselling employees to cope with change (issues of insecurities and stress)

According to Herholdt (2012, p. 20), change agents and project teams should carefully consider and have realistic expected level of major change impact, prepare themselves, and involve people in ongoing dialogue and interaction to get them ready for change. Further, giving people a chance to talk rather than listen is what will buy their commitment to change. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011) states that the moments of engagement and disengagement is influenced by employees' experiences of themselves, their work life and their work contexts, and when organisations go through change, they feel the loss of their identity, which leads to anxiety and grieving. And Herholdt (2012, p. 60) therefore stresses the need for organisations to consider with importance, the meaning and impact brought by change in the lives of employees and the continued survival of the organisation. Taking cognisance of and addressing people's issues instead of ignoring them, should definitely contribute in reducing resistance.

Change agents are also responsible for the types of relationships that evolve during the change process i.e. taking charge of the change dialogues, they organise and ensure engagement processes such as facilitation workshops and support services, promotion of individual awareness and identify training needs where necessary. They encourage participation and involvement of all affected parties, with the aim of stimulating interest and commitment, to minimise fears and reduce uncertainty, opposition or resistance, as well as encouraging positive action. Ford et al., (2008) Paton and McCalman (2008)

According to some study participant's views, a lot was done, information, communication and feedback platforms were made available but some people chose not to engage. Constant feedback was made available via University and College communiqués therefore all people were kept informed. While others felt that there was no proper consultation or communication, instead it all seemed as though management had already decided and were just sending down final actions to be taken.

It is the responsibility of human resources and change agents, to ensure proper consultation, problem solving and analysis through planned approach, influencing and coalition initiatives. Herholdt (2012, p. 169 - 173) Change agents should also make every effort to encourage employees' personal involvement and participation in the overall organisational change, strategy and transformation, with the aim of stimulating interest and commitment, to minimise fears and reduce uncertainty, opposition or resistance, and to encourage positive action. Paton and McCalman (2008) Bell and Barkhuizen (2011)

**4.10.4 Objective No.4** was to explore the kinds of challenges and opportunities presented to the institution and its employees.

A number of participants responded positively while others mentioned a number of challenges when it came to training and growth opportunities. It was believed that the reorganisation presented with lots of opportunities and that they continued to exist, and for others, personal satisfaction and growth was achieved as they nicely progressed through the career map and having opportunities to learn more duties while working with senior staff members, thereby building confidence. There were also opportunities for developmental posts that were created due to some jobs requiring better skills and qualifications. Those who had confidence in their own qualifications and work experience were better prepared than others. It was also exciting because some divisions got opportunities to venture into new heights in terms of some divisional core operations and new staff. It seemed as though employees with less qualifications and skills experienced more challenges than opportunities.

On the other hand, it was revealed that most people feared making life plans or long-term financial commitments such as buying a house or car because they were not sure of the future and whether



further changes from the reorganisation were still anticipated. There were also concerns that the University was very limited to progression of staff in the field of administration, something that would possibly in the future, also lead to the University being unable to retain quality staff. Some employees felt that career growth opportunities were impossible due to budget constraints, instead more work was being added and existing employees. The University would advertise and later freeze vacant positions and upon staff resignations, positions would cease to exist.

Since the reorganisation and its experiences, most people took it upon themselves to study further and empower themselves for future opportunities. According to Maslow's theory which is supported by participant's views in this research, people's needs for self-esteem and the need to be a unique individual are encouraged through achievement and gaining a sense of connection with others. When employees realised opportunities for growth through training, learning new and more challenging skills, when they secured higher level jobs, their needs for personal fulfilment were achieved, and according to Maslow's theory, that fulfilment brings positive contribution to effective and efficient engagement at work through increased staff morale. Gawel (1997) Simons et al., (1987a)

According to views expressed in this research, and on understanding of Maslow's theory, when employees are invited to form part of discussions and decision-making during change planning and implementation, when their views and concerns are appreciated and respected, their needs for self-esteem and need for love and belonging is fulfilled, and that leads further, to encouraged cooperation and a more healthy relationship with the employer and change agents. From the organisation's point of view, it is understood that effective planning and implementation of the change management process contributes towards success through building shared vision by fostering employees' commitment in the long term, while focusing on openness needed to unearth shortcomings in people's way of seeing the world through mental models, the learning disciplines and important components that drive the system of a learning organisation. Senge (2006) Paton and McCalman (2008)

**4.10.5 Objective No.5** was to examine the overall employee's perceptions and experiences of the UKZN's College reorganisation process.

The beginning stages were confusing because information was not clear and everything was hearsay, in terms of the planned processes for job selection and placements. The whole experience was challenging and stressful, it was not a comfortable sort of a move or change. It was a completely new experience for most people and they had to prepare for the unknown. Newly appointed staff feared losing their jobs as they felt less advantaged than their long serving peers. Jobs were re-advertised, all employees except for the Executive staff, had to reapply and people were not sure of getting back their jobs. According to study participants' views, going through the process was all emotional and

stressful. Redundancy, early retirements and retrenchments were on the cards, each individual feared losing their jobs and nobody felt secure. From the viewpoint of Maslow's theory, it is evident that employee's needs for "safety and security" and needs for "self-esteem" were severely affected. Individual needs were shaken, the self-esteem were at the lowest.

According to Paton and McCalman (2008, p. 73), change is all embracing, dynamic, challenging and brings a sense of excitement when it is designed to drive the solution methodology, within the constraints of cultural and systems environments affected. Shock, anger, anxiety and/or excitement are common emotional responses that occur during a change process. They comprise of psychological, emotional and social factors and will always happen irrespective of whether the anticipated change is positive or not, it is a response to stimulus and is therefore more of an immediate response than resistance. These emotional responses eventually subside when people get through the stages of shock, defensive retreat, acknowledgement, acceptance, adaptation and reconciliation with change. Matyesha (2011) Fugate (2008).

Experiences from UKZN reorganisation also pointed to the existence of barriers or resistance to change, and according to Bell and Barkhuizen, it is critical for organisations to identify and work on a plan to reduce or remove them. These barriers could be caused by a number of reasons, such as inadequate leadership, uncertainty, resistance, change fatigue, personality conflicts etc., these fall on the category of people related barriers. Other reported concerns could have emerged due to challenges related to culture and climate, structure, systems and procedures; inadequate resources etc., and these are identified as organisational barriers. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011)

While everyone was stressed and worried about losing their jobs, the individuals from single-headed families and those that were the only breadwinners in their homes, were more concerned than those who had something to fall on, either their spouses or possibilities for new ventures. For other employees, though the reorganisation came with a lot of stress and anxiety, it worked well in the end. According to Dachapalli and Parumasur (2012), the overall job insecurity is significantly influenced by dimensions of biographical variables such as age; race; gender; region; tenure (the period or term of employment); and service record. Older people (age 30's and 40's) were found to be more susceptible to experience job insecurities because of family responsibilities and other long-term financial commitments. Dachapalli and Parumasur (2012) therefore suggest that change managers take notice of these influences and develop suitable strategies for these different groups of employees in order to help reduce the prevalence of job insecurity and retain talent.

At certain stages of the reorganisation process and in particular the redeployment stage, employee's morale and dignity came crushing down as they were hard hit by the realities of retrenchments and job demotion while certain divisions were shutdown. For those particular employees, the whole hierarchy

of needs, from lowest to highest, Gawel (1997) came crushing down with them as they experienced all emotions and realities of losing all. The employees' basic (physiological) needs from food, shelter etc., to safety and security needs of health, employment and property, self-esteem, and self-actualisation which is derived from morality/values, acceptance, and inner potential, was all devastated.

While the above might be true in terms of perceptions, negative experiences and impact on individual needs as supported by Maslow's theory, the positive impact was also recognised and acknowledged by employees. The reorganisation helped to promote teamwork and selflessness; people had learnt to take responsibility for their own work; they had been forced out of their comfort zone; to wake up and generate more knowledge; to study further and grow professionally. Employees were able to be involved and partake in other jobs within their sections and although it had not given real fruits financially, employees were able to grow their skills and learn to multi-task. Some employees' jobs had little impact from the reorganisation, they remained in their old jobs with due plans to merge and realign some administrative tasks in their respective divisions.

The institution was seen as having gained a positive outlook overall through centralising of operations leading to easy access and convenience for students and visitors, it had become a one stop-shop; it came out effective and user-friendly; but the staff issues still needed some work. Due to reduction in employee numbers, the remaining staff ended up with work overload. There was lots of uncertainty, things had changed so much that some employees felt as though they were leaving in a different planet. Jobs were no longer stable and they could not help thinking about looking outside the University. There were also reported concerns over the large number of academics that were leaving the University. Reportedly, there was still a great deal of unhappiness among employees in the wider University community.

The reorganisation had opened room for putting processes and guidelines in place to make sure that errors are reduced or completely eliminated. Processes had been decentralized making way for creation of posts in the Colleges, leading to greater effectiveness and efficiency of the job function. Human resources, finance operations and management style had been restructured to resemble the private sector, in terms of performance and talent management. The institution was viewed as going from strength to strength, with improved ratings in teaching and research. Platforms were opened for employees to improve their education; to grow their skills; to provide better service to the institution's clientele; and thereby improving the overall image of the institution. Experiences from the University of Edinburgh revealed that among other positive outcomes, due to decision-making and financial resources being devolved to Schools, administrative processes had improved; increased flexibility and

responsiveness; a higher level of support for academics in Schools and the University's strategic goal became clear and understandable. Mavaneni (2011).

By means of Senge's theory we were able to understand that UKZN was able to discover how to tap employees' commitment and capacity to learn at all levels. UKZN employees were eventually able to see themselves as learning individuals that had to change along with the learning organisation, as being part of the *system*. People discovered the need to seek further training in order to prepare for future developments. With reference to disciplines of *building shared vision* and *personal mastery*, we understand from findings of this research, that people learnt that life and jobs are unstable, and therefore they needed to multi-task and learn other functions from colleagues, from within and outside their workspaces.

#### **4.11 Comments on Findings in Relation to Other Studies**

In a study conducted by Ndlovu (2012), participant's responses to the question of communication about placement were similar to the views expressed in this study regarding the lack or insufficient information distribution and communication during the reorganisation process and in particular the guidance, support and clarity that could have been offered by human resources division and University management, in their capacity as change agents.

The presence or lack of proper communication can indicate the type of influence on the overall change process as well as the level of resistance from employees. According to Erwin and Garman (2010) Self and Schraeder (2009), the nature of influences that trigger individual's positive or negative reaction to change can include threats and benefits of change; communication; understanding; trust in management; management styles; participation; and the type and nature of relationships between change agents and participants. Literature reveals that resistance can either be reduced or managed more effectively through matching primary sources of resistance to some specific readiness strategies that could involve information sharing workshops; management's ability to convince employees about the legitimacy of change; benefits; and other preparation techniques aimed at stimulating and getting everyone on the tune.

Findings from this study pointed on the severity of impact on employees' social and emotional wellbeing caused by mainly, among other concerns, increased workload where some study participants were of the view that the situation might be overcome by individuals' willingness and preparedness to work in teams. In sharing this view, Cropper (2008) refers to people's involvement and place in the five learning disciplines, the personal mastery of putting the "ME" in leadership, and teams that work together for superior performance. Burger et al., (2008) states that employees often respond with feelings of insecurity because implementation of change inherently impacts on aspects

of employee's occupational roles leading to increases in role overload, role insufficiency, role ambiguity, role responsibilities etc.

We also learnt from this study, that some participants believed that the reorganisation came as a wake-up call from complacency, it taught people to start working harder, to seek further training, to be productive in their jobs and thereby contributing to the overall institution's productivity and growth. The reorganisation process tapped in people's skills and opportunities that they did not know they had. As reflected in the theory of the five learning disciplines by Senge (2006) and in Cropper (2008), building shared vision fosters a commitment to the long term, and as we learnt from this study, employees had developed groups' skills, focusing on the larger picture beyond individuals' perspectives, through team-building and multi-skilling. Individuals were also able to shift from reactive mind-set to being part of the system that is committed to change and success of the organisation.

Burger et al., (2008) investigated the relationship between "resistance to or readiness for change" and found supporting evidence that logotherapy as an organisational development intervention (logo-OD), and among other interventions, could be used as a positive trigger event for organisational change implementation and it could greatly contribute to reducing employee's resistance to change. This positive trigger event would be achieved through raising self-awareness and self-regulation behaviours leading to a shift in employee attitudes to ensure readiness for change. Burger et al., (2008) OD contributes to employees viewing change as an opportunity rather than a threat. Burger et al., (2008) Logotherapy as a model of psychology, refers to 'therapy through meaning' and its application could be used to help employees find meaning and purpose irrespective of the circumstances. Burger et al., (2008)

Responses from individual interviews showed a lot of concern and compassion for fellow colleagues and other staff members that were negatively affected, for example, staff who got retrenched or forced to take early retirement, and those whose positions got redundant and had to move from job to job until securing a permanent job or being finally released. Some participants expressed their views very strongly on this matter to a point where they became emotional when remembering their friends and colleagues of whom, through severe impact, were reportedly admitted to hospitals for severe stress and depression. Most of those employees had served the institution for such a long time that it had become their home, the thought of getting retrenched had never crossed their minds.

The findings of a quantitative study of impact of restructuring on College Support Staff by Mbongwe (2012) showed a different view as it revealed that employee's health and wellbeing was not negatively affected by the restructuring process. However, Mbongwe's findings on the adversely negative impact on factors such as the job security, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and employee

emotions, closely relate to the views expressed in this study, where participants stated that they no longer felt secured in their jobs as they feared that the reorganisation might continue, as well as the unhappiness in the larger University community largely accounted to work overload and the overall impact from change itself. According to Pillay and Pillay, the impact of resources or the lack thereof, was perceived as a force influencing the culture of UKZN, while financial, human, and other necessary resources were ranked among the most important criteria for creating an enabling environment for service delivery. Pillay and Pillay (2012)

Study participants' views in relation to information distribution, communication and feedback during the reorganisation were negative, with some stating that it was non-existent while others said it was insufficient. Pillay and Pillay (2012) ranks communication as the key tool for achieving the objective of understanding, and while the UKZN general communication system in the form of email, newsletter and communiqués from the leadership was perceived positively, employees appeared to want greater consultation on important issues. Pillay and Pillay (2012) According to Edmonds (2011), both management and staff can benefit or suffer equally when important contributory factors of communication, change management experience and support mechanisms and resources are insufficient or lacking. And accordingly, other factors such as communication and understanding; trust in management; management styles; participation; the type and nature of relationships between change agents and participants, can also influence the level of resistance from employees. Erwin and Garman (2010) Self and Schraeder (2009) These factors can be managed through preparedness, readiness to change and proper planning.

We learnt from this study that some employees, when they could not take the strain from challenges and uncertainties born from the reorganisation process, chose to leave the institution and this was continuing to happen even after the storm had started to settle. Even though the severity of impact was felt more in the support sector across all levels of the institution due to changes in job structures, findings revealed that more and more employees from senior positions were also choosing to leave the institution. Denmark's Aarhus University's experience of their organisational reform revealed that some of their senior staff chose to leave while others moved back to their old research portfolios, a career move that is viewed a norm in Denmark. Fearn (2011) Outcomes from restructuring processes could either be appealing or discomfoting depending on individual's expectations and as with Aarhus University, management were of the view that even though the idea did not appeal to some of their academics, it would be a complete opposite and an attraction to others. Fearn (2011)

Different organisations undergo restructuring for various reasons and with certain purpose in mind, on how to achieve certain plans and goals. The achievement and success levels also differ either in profit, self-sustenance, operating efficiency or in terms of reaching its purpose and time frames for

determining the next restructuring or other change efforts. From the private sector restructuring front, on completion of its organisational restructuring in 2009, Dubai World reported significant cost savings and increases in efficiency; an anticipated three-year forecast benefit of more than US\$800 million dollars in operating savings as a result of the overall restructuring. Arabia 2000 (2009) Their organisational restructuring led to more appropriately sized divisions necessary to cater for their current market conditions at the time, and putting them at an advantage for eventual economic recovery. Arabia 2000 (2009)

Among other positive outcomes, due to decision-making and financial resources devolved to Schools, the experience from University of Edinburgh was an improvement in administrative processes, increased flexibility and responsiveness, a higher level of support for academics in Schools, and their University's strategic goal became clearer and understandable. Mavaneni (2011) According to study participants' views, the reorganisation at UKZN had resulted in higher levels of productivity; jobs had become more challenging, non-performers were no longer at sight. The institution was seen as having gained a positive outlook overall, because operations had been centralised leading to easy access and convenience for students and visitors. It had become a one stop-shop; it came out effective and user-friendly; though there were areas of concern pertaining to staff issues. Due to reduced workforce, the remaining personnel had to bear the blunt of work overload. The reorganisation had allowed for putting processes and guidelines in place; people had been made aware of the importance of auditing so that errors are reduced or completely eliminated.

Processes had been decentralized making way for creation of posts in the Colleges, resulting to effectiveness and efficiency of the job function. Human Resources, finance operations and management style had been restructured to resemble the private sector, in terms of performance and talent management. Participant 'H' said "The institution is going from strength to strength, ratings have improved and that makes one proud to be associated with the institution. All employees have been given a platform to improve their education and to grow skills which will result in better ways of handling students; to provide better service to the University's clientele and thereby improving the overall image of the institution." According to participant 'I', the impact was positive and so the institution just had to change and adapt. Participant 'H' and 'I' spoke for those employees who had gained a sense of pride in the institution and its top management, for driving and following its vision and especially when compared to other institutions that have gone through the changes of merger and reorganisation, the UKZN had seemingly done well.

UKZN employees were no longer fully secured at their respective positions due to threat of future anticipated changes. As with most learning organisations, UKZN might in future undergo further changes as it pushes forward with its vision, mission and goals. One common aspect that forces

higher institutions of learning to undertake restructuring initiatives, according to Rich (2006, p. 37-40), its environment is constantly in a process of dramatic transformation and has become more turbulent and more threatening, forcing institutions to devise ways to compete more aggressively.

Literature revealed that various other institutions such as University of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Manchester and Nairobi, had in a similar manner as UKZN, adopted the College Model with the purpose of achieving both structural and functional efficiency through effective devolution and consolidation of schools or faculties for leaner structures, greater collaboration, academic improvements, innovation, devolution of decision-making and financial resources etc. Makgoba (2011) UKZN Executive Committee (2010) Fearn (2011) Mavaneni (2011) Rich (2006) In European countries, the growth in higher education and growing demand for European and American economies to produce graduates above secondary school education, started after World War II due to greater social and political changes. That led to transitions in higher education systems through development and further changes in all aspects of its structures and functions, including the size of the system, the curriculum, medium of instruction and academic standards. Forest and Altbach (2006)

For their organisational change initiative at Aarhus University – Denmark, they undertook an organisational reform with the aim of consolidating their University on one site in preparation to being in a better position to meet requirements for research funding as public funding was becoming less. Fearn (2011) The number of faculties, departments and departmental administration was greatly reduced, from 55 to only 26. Fearn (2011) While UKZN's main objective for implementation of the College Model was to achieve both structural and functional efficiency and to streamline decision-making through a flatter and a competency performance-based structure, and to ensure that academics focus better on research, academic and scholarly rather than administrative matters; to bring UKZN in line with best international practice and modern trends in high impact, efficient and competitive higher education for the realisation of its vision and mission. Makgoba (2011)

One of the main components of UKZN's College Reorganisation was the reduction of the three-layer into a two-layer structure consisting of only 4 Colleges and 19 Schools, the creation of fewer, larger 'mega' schools. UKZN Exec (2010) Upon its implementation, the initial focus was based on those recommendations that firmly establish the academic sector as the focus of the University, with all other structures and processes to be measured by the extent to which they could support an advance the academic endeavour. UKZN Exec (2010) For their restructuring process at the Global Holding company Dubai World, each division reviewed their own business plans, developing a clear strategy in line with its specific area of expertise. Ownership of their key assets remained unaffected. Arabia 2000 (2009) Similarly to UKZN and Aarhus University's experience in reduction of Faculties and Schools, the global workforce of Dubai World was reduced by approximately 15% to less than 70 000



leading to each of the company's divisions being more appropriately sized. Arabia 2000 (2009) Owing to the successful restructuring process, its businesses came out well prepared to thrive in the current market conditions at the time, as well as in the still uncertain future conditions. Arabia 2000 (2009)

Restructuring efforts by China's Shandong Airlines through expansion, saw the carrier's fleet moving to operate as many as 100 aircraft by 2015. Dennis (2011) Air Transport World (2014) From humble beginnings, the carrier company was established by ten shareholders, including Air China and Shandong Development Investment (SDIC) in 1994. Starting its operations with domestic routes only in 1997, by 2011 its domestic network covered 54 destinations and about 5 international destinations. Dennis (2011) By June 2014, Air China subsidiary Shandong Airlines had placed a firm order for 50 Boeing 737 aircraft, that were scheduled for delivery between 2016 and 2020. Air Transport World (2014)

Singapore Airlines restructured their organisation with the aim of aligning more closely-linked activities within their commercial, operational and corporate planning areas of their commercial aviation industry. Jeziorski (2011) The company decided to tackle first, the restructuring of executive management portfolio, with the major activities of commercial areas; human resources and operations; and a newly formed separate corporate planning division, all to be consolidated under 3 different Vice-Presidents, with the airline's Senior Vice-President Finance, all reporting directly to the company CEO. Jeziorski (2011) Their overall purpose for restructuring activities was to pave way to a better position to quickly respond to and take on new challenges and to place themselves in an excellent position to pursue fresh opportunities for growth. Jeziorski (2011)

The views of the professional support staff at the College of Law and Management Studies revealed that UKZN was going from strength to strength, employees were more empowered and motivated to reach for new heights through knowledge building, productivity levels had increased. Employees were proud to be associated with the institution and its top management, for driving and following its vision and especially when compared to other institutions that had gone through the changes of merger and reorganisation. It was acknowledged that challenges still continued to exist with regards to mainly, human resources issues and general allocation of resources.

#### **4.12 Results Summary**

The chapter presented data and findings, by firstly looking at demographics of study participants, to discussing findings from interviews, focus group discussions and observation, where the views and experiences of study participants was thoroughly analysed and discussed. The observation method helped to identify areas such as the group dynamics; the information sharing and openness; the

comfort and ease in answering questions; the common views among participants and the overall expression of views in relation to other data collection methods used. The study revealed several stages that the employees together with the institution had to go through in the organisational learning process of change, from fear, shock, anger, to the experience of the redeployment process, the nature of support systems, to challenges and opportunities, to the final stages where things settled when the change was finally accepted, with still some concerns about the future. At the end of the chapter, a quick glance at what other studies found in relation to the current research, was presented.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Conclusions were drawn from analysed data to answer the research questions and, through content analysis from interviews, observation and focus group discussions. This chapter provides the overview of findings and recommendations for moving forward of UKZN, as an institution that drives its goals and vision into a brighter future, taking into consideration people management issues and the workforce that is behind the driving force of the institution. The implications of the study and suggestion for future studies are briefly stated together with the overall conclusion and final remarks.

#### **5.2 Study Summary**

In this last chapter, we take another look at the purpose of study and its objectives; we provide the overview of findings and recommendations, the study implications and suggestions for future studies, the overall conclusion and final remarks.

##### **5.2.1 Research Objectives**

- To establish how the reorganisation affected employee's current occupations and the way they view and relate to the institution
- To establish whether employees' needs and expectations were addressed
- To explore the availability of mechanisms for supporting / counselling employees to cope with the reorganization (issues of insecurities and stress)
- To explore the kinds of challenges and opportunities presented to the institution and its employees
- To examine the overall employee's perceptions and experiences of the UKZN's College reorganisation process

### 5.2.2 Research Questions

- How did the reorganisation affect employee's current occupations and the way they view and relate to the institution?
- How were employees' needs and expectations addressed?
- What mechanisms were available / put in place to support/counsel employees to cope with the reorganization (issues of insecurities and stress)?
- What challenges and opportunities did the reorganisation present for the institution and its employees?
- What are the overall employee's perceptions and experiences of the UKZN's College reorganisation process?

### 5.3 Overview of Findings and Recommendations

Interestingly enough, both positive and negative strong and passionate views were equally heard and expressed throughout, and as indicated in the analysis and findings of this research project. It seemed as if it were a matter of win-win or win-lose situation for employees as they tried to use or ignore the opportunities and challenges presented by the reorganisation process. And as we catch another glimpse, one of the main components of UKZN's College Reorganisation was the reduction from the three-layer into the new two-layer structure consisting of only 4 Colleges and 19 Schools, the creation of fewer, larger "*mega*" schools. UKZN Exec (2010) And according to guiding principles underpinning the implementation plan, "the perennial poor performing schools would be identified and either be merged or closed" UKZN Exec (2010).

Some departments were somewhat completely shut down or moved and merged leading to severe impact on the size of the workforce. The impact was felt throughout as the process led to redeployment of staff, jobs were advertised and staff had to compete to secure employment, some positions got redundant, employees were put in the pool (waiting list) until securing employment or eventual retrenchment while others were forced to leave through early retirement. People went through difficulty, feelings of worthlessness, emotional strain, sadness, disappointment and a lot of negativity happened ranging from fear, shock, anger, anxiety and severe depression. The reorganisation process called for possibilities and unwelcome need for drastic adjustments in one's own personal and professional lives, life had suddenly become blink, economic and health conditions were at stake.

A number of challenges were reported on the views about opportunities for training and growth, whilst other views pointed to lots of opportunities that were still in existence. For others, personal satisfaction and growth was achieved. Lots of opportunities were presented but it was up to individuals to apply for better posts; the reorganisation gave people opportunities for mapping careers, talent management and an opportunity for performance management to be embraced and linked to those opportunities. Opportunities for higher level posts were available if people had the necessary qualifications, and so were opportunities for moving up nicely in the career map while learning more duties and building one's confidence. There were also opportunities for developmental posts that were created due to some jobs requiring better skills and qualifications.

Findings revealed some concerns that the University might be very limited to progression of staff in the field of administration and that will in the future, also lead to the University being unable to retain quality staff. Reportedly, there are very big gaps in administrative and professional support positions; which then limits growth opportunities. Some employees were of the view that there were no real opportunities for moving to higher level jobs due to limited financial resources but only chances to grow skills through taking more and new tasks. In most instances, when staff left employment, replacements were not recruited. Tremendous amount of increase in workloads was reported throughout, but equally, jobs became more focused.

There were patches of grey areas between the beginning and end in terms of communication. According to some participants' views, there was no proper consultation or communication, and seemingly, management had already decided and were just sending down final actions to be taken. There were also views that human resources was not supportive enough and information distribution was not very effective, workshops were close to the change process and were not enough. We learnt from the study findings of Pillay and Pillay that employees at UKZN in general, perceived the existing and normal communication channels in a positive light while they appeared to desire greater consultation on important issues.

There was no real support compared to private sector organisations who would normally appoint professional people to help with the process of transition. There were views that assistance for addressing issues was very limited; pros and cons were not given i.e. benefits and losses from the reorganisation. People were not given enough time to adjust and think about what was to come, it all happened very fast. Provision of support and counselling should not only happen at the beginning of the process, and as part of the change management process, it should have been on-going process; and *on further recommendations:*

- Employees should be given ample time; vigorous awareness and support systems should be developed and implemented well in advance in order to advise and educate staff.

- Pros and cons must be clearly explained i.e. benefits and losses.
- Motives, plans and events that happen during the implementation and consultative periods should not be one-sided, but should take consideration from all angles and from all parties.
- Everyone especially the employees, should be made to feel as an important part and drivers of the change process.
- Employees' needs and concerns should be addressed with caution. Proper lines of communication should be made available for those in need of addressing concerns, challenges, seeking advice and guidance.
- Duties and responsibilities of all role players, the change agents and teams should be clearly established so that people know who to consult during the intense period of change. Human resources as a leader in the process, should play a significant role in making sure that people's issues are addressed.
- Management of key talent and/or scarce skills, succession planning, conducting exit interviews, and an award system is viewed as important in taking cognisance and recognition of long-term commitment while also making sure that the organisation attracts and retains key talent and important partnerships.
- In order to achieve the intended results and for efficiency and effectiveness to be achieved, it is critical that organisations provide necessary resources in terms of workforce, adequate financial budgets etc. as these might in the long run, have a negative impact and seriously weaken service delivery and thereby impacting staff motivation and morale.
- Agreeable enough, information, communication and feedback platforms could be made available but some people might choose not to engage, and it is also true that some individuals generally do not cope well with change.
- Accordingly, should there be plenty of information distribution and communication, and supposedly, everybody having been aware and kept informed of what was happening, with a lot having been done, hence one of the areas that need improvement is how to motivate and get everybody to engage in the process in order to increase chances of success, to reduce stress, fear and uncertainty.
- It is important that the whole process is carried out in a fair and transparent manner.
- There will always be enough room for improvement; the effectiveness of systems and processes is what organisations should strive for in any change situation.

There was still a feeling that one could not really plan or make financial commitments such as buying a house or car because there was no assurance about the future and whether further changes born of the reorganisation process could still continue.

It was also noted from findings that, responses from female study participants of younger to middle-aged group (25 – 35 and 35 – 45), both single and married, were more concerned for their wellbeing and those of their loved ones, in terms of employment and financial security. They also showed greater compassion towards the whole situation and for colleagues and friends that were hardly hit by the impact of the reorganisation, either due to job losses or ill-health. On the other hand, study participants of the upper middle-aged group (45 – 55), single but especially the married group, were less stressed, more confident and secured, and were willing to accept their fate so that they could forge a way forward from life ahead.

#### **5.4 Implications of the Study**

The study participants were selected from a single College/division identified by the researcher. Due to time constraints and the study being of a small scale, findings cannot be generalised to the whole population i.e. professional support staff of the five campuses of UKZN.

Most of the time employees are generally uncomfortable with participating in research that involves their current employment due to fear of prejudice, making it difficult to meet target numbers.

#### **5.5 Suggestions for Future Studies**

A project of a bigger scale that would consist of participants from various sections, from each of the campuses or the whole University, or a combination of several studies, would help to substantiate findings. There have been quite a few studies of this nature, investigating the outcomes, views and experiences from the support staff's point of view. It would be useful to conduct studies that would also get the views from the academic staff because the findings revealed that not only support staff were affected, but all employees of the University and as a result some respondents stated that a lot of academic staff were leaving the institution.

#### **5.6 Overall Conclusion**

The implementation process of the UKZN's College Reorganisation started at the beginning of the year 2011 and the new structure came into effect in January 2012. Makgoba (2011) The administrative staff and in particular professional support were the most affected in terms of redeployment. This study looked at understanding the whole experiences and viewpoints relating to the change impact, the transition period and aftermath of the College Reorganisation.

It also aimed at giving an opportunity for hearing and understanding the views of professional support staff, on how they experienced the journey of transition, how it affected them personally and

professionally, concerns, issues and challenges, losses and benefits, the lessons learnt, growth and maturity brought by the experiences.

Through triangulation, it was possible to check for consistency or the lack thereof, on the information obtained, and though it is also true that triangulation can be time-consuming, its benefits outweigh the challenges. As supported by Guion et al., (2011), data collection outcomes from this research provided an opportunity for clearer understanding of the views and concerns of participants. The researcher had confidence in the accuracy levels of this research because data analysis from each of the three data collection methods revealed very closely related and similar responses from participants.

Study participants were very passionate and confident in their responses. Very emotional responses were heard at some point in the discussion of some topics especially those involving friends or colleagues who were affected negatively by the reorganisation process, those who lost their jobs. Participants were very excited and happy for the opportunity to share and state their views and experiences; in some instances it sounded as though a cry for help; for a real need for the views to be heard by people in positions to implement and make changes, such as the executive management and human resources management.

To some certain extent, the institution's overall outcomes of the reorganisation were commended, it had worked for the better. Most activities such as those of human resources and finance had been restructured to resemble the private sector, in terms of performance and talent management. There were views that the institution was going from strength to strength. Change was seen as having resulted in more productiveness from employees and jobs had become more challenging.

Views of complete dissatisfaction were also expressed, on behalf of those who felt that the reorganisation was not necessary or had not worked well. Though, literature also informs us that some individuals do not like change and would rather continue in old ways of doing things. Human resources was criticised for seemingly not doing much to show recognition to employees that had contributed many years of commitment and dedication to the institution, in the form of support, awards and exit interviews.

Change brings about both negative and positive feelings to different individuals and in the same way it is handled differently because organisations differ in size and shape, in core business mandate, culture etc., and therefore its success can only emerge naturally when strategies are put in place. Edmonds (2011) The importance of effective change management through proper planning and implementation of initiatives for readiness to change, to help reduce barriers to change that manifest through resistance in changing environments, cannot be stressed enough. Bell and Barkhuizen (2011)



## 5.7 Final Remarks

The positives and negatives were equally expressed by participants, in various areas of their experience with the reorganisation process. The level of stress and worry caused by uncertainty of events that would follow at the reality of the reorganisation process, was reportedly experienced almost across the board. A great deal of unhappiness and sadness reportedly still existed among employees in the wider University community. Despite the presence and reports of negativity that resulted from the ongoing changes, there were also positive reports as some employees still kept the hope and strongly believed in the possibility of a brighter future in the institution. With much pride and confidence in the University's management and agents, the manner in which they strategized and handled the process for the better of the institution, was commended.

Views from various study participants revealed that the reorganisation process helped to get rid of the deadwood; to promote teamwork and selflessness; people had learnt to take responsibility for their own work; the reorganisation forced individuals out of their comfort zone; to learn faster and multi-task; to generate more knowledge; to study further and to grow professionally. The institution was fondly described as having gained a positive outlook overall. Operations were centralised leading to easy access and convenience for students and visitors; it had turned into a one stop-shop; it came out effective and user-friendly; it worked well for the institution, though the staff issues were still a concern.

Constant change initiatives are necessary to ensure improved service delivery and for organisations to remain competitive in the global competitive business world. All other aspects of life require change in order to achieve sustainability. Change is inevitable, it is good, it needs to be embraced and along with it, people need to change and adapt. When presenting the report of the external review of the 'College Model' to the UKZN and its Vice-Chancellor, on their closing remarks, the panel wished UKZN well on her journey of becoming the 'Premier University of African Scholarship'. UKZN Documents (2010a) The report continued to appraise, "UKZN has come a long way since 2004 and the institution of the merger. The institution has succeeded in putting in place and operating a College Model based on sound principles". On the same report, the panel also expressed its awareness of and sensitivity to the fact that UKZN and, prior to the merger, the two component Universities had been in utmost continuous state of restructuring. UKZN Documents (2010a) On that note, the readers of this project, other researchers, scholars and academics, are encouraged to take valuable lessons from the contribution and insights expressed hereinto, and to use on their own research developments as the state of UKZN restructuring and learning process continues.

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## APPENDIX I

### GATEKEEPERS PERMISSION



2 September 2014

Miss Ntombilungile Ntola  
School of Management, IT & Governance  
College of Law and Management Studies  
Westville Campus  
UKZN  
Email: [ntolan@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ntolan@ukzn.ac.za)

Dear Miss Ntola

#### RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

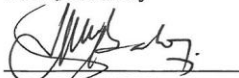
Gatekeeper's permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) towards your postgraduate studies, provided Ethical clearance has been obtained. We note the title of your research project is:

*"An exploration of perceptions and experiences of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)'s college reorganization process: The views of professional support staff in the College of Law and Management Studies".*

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample by interviewing, conducting focus group discussions and observing professional support staff in the College of Law and Management Studies.

Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely

  
**MR MC BALOYI**  
**REGISTRAR**

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#### Office of the Registrar

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, South Africa

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Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

## APPENDIX II

### CONSENT FORM

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**  
**School of Management, Information Technology and Governance**

Dear Respondent,

**MCom (Management) Research Project**  
**Ms P Ximba**

Humanities and Social Science Ethics (HSSREC) Research Office,  
Govan Mbeki Building, Westville Campus, Private Bag X54001, DURBAN 4000  
Tel: 031 260 3587 Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

**Researcher:** Miss Ntombilungile Ntola (office: 031-260 2152 or cell: 073 4819781)

**Supervisor:** Mr Adarsh Maharaj (Office: 031-260 2010/7279)

My name is **Ntombilungile Ntola**, I am a registered **MCom (Management)** student at the **School of Management, Information Technology and Governance** of the University of Kwazulu Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled “An Exploration of Perceptions and Experiences of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)’s College Reorganisation Process: The Views of Professional Support Staff in the College of Law and Management Studies”. The aim of this study is to understand the whole experiences and viewpoints relating to the transition period and aftermath of the College Reorganisation. Instead of having one or two focus areas, this study will be open to views from all angles. Professional Support Staff will be given the opportunity to touch on all aspects as they feel necessary, the impact on their current jobs, performance and commitment to the institution.

Through your participation I hope to understand how the employees of this University feel about the changes and the new institution, their perceptions and experiences from the College Reorganisation Process. The results of the interview are intended to contribute into creating a positive and healthy working environment for the remaining staff; to rebuild trust and confidence, to strengthen relationships and collectively work towards the vision and goals of the institution. The information will serve as a record that provides feedback to the employer and the community at large.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this survey. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the **School of Management, Information Technology and Governance**, UKZN.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, you may contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above.

The **focus group discussion** (FGD) should take approximately **45 minutes** and with your consent, each interview might be voice-recorded. I hope you will take the time to complete this survey.

Sincerely

Investigator’s signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSENT**

I..... (Full names of participant)  
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project,  
and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I **agree** ☐ / **disagree** ☐ to the recording of the interview session.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

## **APPENDIX III**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

1. Briefly inform us about yourself, your work experience within the UKZN, and how you were affected by the reorganization process, either professionally or personally
2. What were your first thoughts and reaction when the reality of impact from the reorganization kicked in?
3. From your experience, what has been the atmosphere and feelings around the University since the reorganization process?
4. How has the impact from the reorganization influenced your job and the way you view the institution?
5. Should you have lost your job or got demoted, how would it have affected your current family status and your standard of living?
6. Please tell us about your friends or colleagues whose posts got redundant and had to settle for lower scale positions; or who lost their jobs through retrenchment or early retirement. How has it affected their work and/or personal lives?
7. Overall, what did people learn from this whole experience, general thoughts and views?

General comments on:

- Availability of support systems for addressing employee's needs and expectations
- Information distribution, provision for communication and feedback during the reorganisation
- Challenges or opportunities for growth / training

## APPENDIX IV

### OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

#### A. OBSERVATION SHEET: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time from: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

##### BIOGRAPHICAL INFO

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Race: \_\_\_\_\_

Age group: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest level of education: \_\_\_\_\_

Job level: \_\_\_\_\_

Service record (No. of years): \_\_\_\_\_

##### ANSWERS TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Ques.1

Briefly inform us about yourself, your work experience within the UKZN, and how you were affected by the reorganization process, either professionally or personally

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Ques.2

What were your first thoughts and reaction when the reality of impact from the reorganization kicked in?

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Ques.3

From your experience, what has been the atmosphere and feelings around the University since the reorganization process?

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Ques.4

How has the impact from the reorganization influenced your job and the way you view the institution?

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Ques.5

Should you have lost your job or demoted, how would it have affected your current family status and your standard of living?

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Ques.6

Please tell us about your friends or colleagues whose posts got redundant and had to settle for lower scale positions; or who lost their jobs through retrenchment or early retirement. How has it affected their work and/or personal lives?

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Ques.7

Overall, what did people learn from this whole experience, general thoughts and views?

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General comments on:

- Availability of support systems for addressing employee's needs and expectations

- Information distribution, provision for communication and feedback during the reorganisation
- Challenges or opportunities for growth / training

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## B. OBSERVATION SHEET: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of participants: \_\_\_\_\_

Group dynamics:

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Emerging new information / comments from questions

Ques.1 \_\_\_\_\_

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Ques.2 \_\_\_\_\_

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Ques.3 \_\_\_\_\_

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Ques.4 \_\_\_\_\_

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Ques.5 \_\_\_\_\_

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Ques.6 \_\_\_\_\_

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Ques.7 \_\_\_\_\_

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General comments

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Comfort or ease in discussing the questions / topics

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Level of information-sharing and openness within group members

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Agreeing / disagreeing on matters around topics

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## APPENDIX V

### ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



16 October 2014

Ms Ntombikungile Ntolo 211560681  
School of Management, Information Technology and Governance  
Westville Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/1345/D14M

Project title: An exploration of perceptions and experiences of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)'s College Reorganisation Process: The views of Professional Support Staff in the College of Law and Management Studies

Dear Ms Ntolo

#### Expedited Approval

In response to your application dated 14 October 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the above mentioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/pk

cc: Supervisor: Mr Adarsh Rajesh Mahara  
cc: Academic Leader Research: Professor B McArthur  
cc: School Administrator: Ms HMG Muzeswa

#### Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville