



Exploring Strategic Management Paradoxes related to Intended and Emergent Strategies: A case study at Human Sciences Research Council (South Africa)

By

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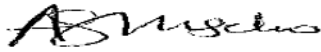
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DECLARATION

I, Angeline Sibongile Ngcobo declare that all the work that I have submitted is of my own effort and has not been submitted for any degree in any other university. I certify that all the work which is not mine has be identified and properly acknowledged, a full list of references has been included.



Signature:

Date: 16 August 2019

Abstract

As organisational environments become more global, they have changed drastically due to environmental needs and demands resulting to strategic paradoxes. This ultimately encouraged researchers to respond by using different models, asking particular questions like what a strategic paradox is and under what conditions they occur. While this research focused on the intended and emergent strategies, it is diffused across different areas of strategic management including; strategy, paradoxes, strategic paradoxes, as well as intended and emergent strategies.

A continuum of different approaches in strategic making is crystallised from the literature. The study suggests that the fast pace of environmental change provide managers unpredictable results for their strategic commitment. The collision of strategic commitment and strategic uncertainty is causing what Raynor (2007) calls the strategy paradox. This study thus endeavoured to unite various views regarding strategic paradoxes, while also sharpening its focus on intended and emergent strategies. This research utilised a qualitative research method by exploring the research questions. The insights from the in-depth interviews formed the basis of the data that was analysed to produce research findings. Results suggested that strategic paradoxes are difficult to avoid even though they can be reduced if the strategy is aligned with the environmental change.

The study aimed to make a positive contribution to the body of knowledge on strategy paradoxes by qualitatively exploring strategic paradoxes and hoping to provide answers, to what context do intended and emergent strategies impact the decision making and effectiveness of the Human Sciences Research Council (SA).

Key words

Decision making, emergent strategy, effectiveness, intended and strategic paradoxes

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James 1:17 *“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows”*

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my **loving husband Mr. G. Khayelihle Ngcobo and my children** for all the sacrifices and their unwavering support throughout my academic years.

To my husband, you are the pillar of my strength, thank you for taking care of our home and kids without complaining while I was busy with my studies. To all my children, thank you for your understanding and support. I pray that all Mighty God blesses you.

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ABBREVIATIONS

DGSD	Governance and service delivery
EPD	Economic performance and development
ESD	Education and skills development
HAST	HIV/AIDS, STI'S and TB
HSD	Human and social development
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
PHHSI	Population health, health systems and innovation

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This chapter bring forward an overview of the study. The chapter start by explaining the background of the study, follow by the problem statement. The objectives of the study and the questions guiding the study are provided on this chapter.

1.2. Background

In globalised societies organisations and business environments have become more competitive, complex and dynamic resulting in contradictory and interrelated demands known as paradoxes (Nickols, 2016). These paradoxes are forcing organisations to deal with an increasing number of factors that challenging their strategic choices. The purpose of this study is to explore strategic paradoxes, focusing on intended and emergent strategies and its impact on effective decision making in organisations. Generally, strategic management relates to a set of decisions and actions, which result from the formulation, implementation and control of strategies, wherein decisions are formulated in order to achieve organisation goals (Nickols, 2016). Andersen, Denrell and Bettis (2007) offered a view of strategies within the strategic management facet averring that strategies in organisations includes implicit assumptions of what market forces might look like in the future maintaining that in the event that the future turns out to be different from what was forecasted, the planned strategy which could have been successful can become a failure. This failure can be related to the intrinsic nature of the strategic paradox in the organisation (Reynor, 2007).

For the purpose of this research study, the researcher adopts Mintzberg's (2005) definition of strategic making which makes a distinction between emerging versus intended planned strategy. Conversely, Hilse and Nicolai (2004) agree that sometimes strategies are not formally planned but they emerge though informal intent. Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel (2005:88) add that "learning, in the forms of fits and starts, discoveries based on serendipitous events, and the recognition of unexpected patterns, inevitably plays a key role, if not the key role, in the development of strategies that are novel". Smith and Lewis (2011) affirm that the strategic nature of paradoxes in organisations usually emerge from the collision of organisation commitment and uncertainty. In this regard, Louw and Venter (2014) indicate that a strategic paradox relates to coinciding contradictory situations in the organisation, which are interrelated. The author's further state that strategic paradox is one of the difficult challenges which leaders or management need to maintain within the organisation by

ensuring that there is a balance and flexibility in achieving the intended strategy while allowing for emergent strategy to surface. In line with the preceding statements, Smith and Lewis (2011) assert that organisations are still confronted with the paradoxical circumstances on a daily basis. Thus, there is a clear gap in understanding paradoxes in organisations, irrespective of the contribution from prior research. In this regard, this study will apply methodological insights in exploring the complexity of paradoxes focusing on intended and emergent strategy and their impact on the organisation effectiveness and the decision making at Human Sciences Research Council.

According to Louw and Venter (2014), strategic planning is unquestionably the main core function of any organisation, as it relates to the important processes, which contribute to the success and competitiveness of any organisation. However, business environment has become more global and competitive resulting in complexity and contradictory demands (Lewis, 2000).

Based on the views of turbulent business environment Mintzberg and Waters (1985), (cited in Ehn and Zheng, 2006) suggest that scholars adopted the intended and emergent strategy approach in order to understand how organisations deal with competing demands emerging from their environment. An organisational plan that is carefully outlined and controlled relates to intended strategy. Furthermore, the intended strategy emerges from the idea, and then developed and articulated to promote the effectiveness of the organisation (Louw and Venter, 2014).

Conversely, Johnson and Scholes (2002) assert that when an organisation achieves a plan which was not intended, but consistent overtime, this relates to emergent strategy. The two opposing poles of intended and emergent strategy have become critical factors in most organisations especially emergent strategy because they cannot predict what the market forces might hold in the future. In the same token, the success of an organisation can be compromised if there is a limited understanding of the significance of effectively addressing the challenges associated with strategic paradoxes (De Wit and Meyer, 2010).

1.3. Research Problem

According to Louw and Venter (2014), businesses are faced with rapid and discontinuous changes, which develop from the environment they operate in. This leads to unpredictability and uncertainty in the business. Arveson (2012) also articulates that research organisations are gradually confronted by strategic challenges because of the environmental change which requires improved strategic thinking. Raisch and Birkinshaw (2008) assert that when organisations are confronted with two or more desirable or undesirable alternative choices, it becomes a dilemma because organisational success depends on the choices made. Human Sciences Research Council is a research led

organisation responsible for informing the effective formulation and monitoring of government policy; to evaluate policy implementation; to stimulate public debate through the effective dissemination of research-based data and fact-based research results; to foster research collaboration; and to help build research capacity and infrastructure for the human sciences” (Human Sciences Research Council, 1968).

The structure of the business includes six research departments which report to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO). Research departments are led by Executive Directors who come from different academic backgrounds. The responsibility of each of these leaders is to formulate an intended strategic plan for their respective departments. However, in planning these strategies, conflicts often emerge resulting in employees struggling, stressed and burnt-out, while trying to meet the intended strategies. The researcher chose HSRC as a study site because a study like this has not been conducted within a research organisation. Most studies have focused on the corporate environment, and not considered that the strategic paradoxes are also rife in the research led organisation. Furthermore, the HSRC is unique, firstly because it is a research led organisation, secondly, the background of the Executive directors and Directors are from the social sciences discourse, while managers who report to the executive directors are from the management discipline. The researcher therefore explores how leaders from different disciplines deal with the issues related to intended and emergent strategy while maintaining the flexibility within the organisation.

Louw and Venter (2014) highlighted that most organisations use strategic management in order to achieve organisational goals. However, an intended strategy does not eliminate the internal and external challenges in the environment. These conflicts lead to devastating effects such as confusion, frustration and uncertainty within the organisation.

Based on this view, the researcher aims to identify and explore the intended strategies together with the emergent strategies that might arise within the organisation under study. The study also aims to explore how these strategies impact on effectiveness and decision making within the organisation. Understanding strategic paradoxes, both intended and emergent strategies, is important as it allows organisations to make strategic choices which will allow them to better deal with the changing business environment.

1.4. Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

1. To gain an understanding of strategic paradox in the context of Human Research Sciences Council.
2. To explore the intended and emergent strategy in the organisation.
3. To determine the relationship between intended strategy and emergent strategy.
4. To understand the impact of intended and emergent strategies on decision making in research organisations.
5. To explore how managers ensure flexibility while dealing with intended and emergent strategies in the organisation.

1.5. Research Questions

The research questions underpinning this particular study are:

- Q1. What is a strategic paradox in the context of Human Research Sciences Council?
- Q2. Under what conditions does intended strategy and emergent strategies emerge in organisations?
- Q3. What is the relationship between intended and emergent strategies?
- Q4. What is the impact of intended and emergent strategies on decision-making in research organisations?
- Q5. How do managers achieve balance and flexibility in achieving the intended strategy while allowing for the emergent strategy to surface?

In this chapter introduction of the study was presented. The chapter outlined the background of the study and the problem statement which motivated this particular study was discussed. Lastly, this chapter outlined the objectives and the key research questions which guided the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents critical review and serves as a background to the domain of this research. The chapter begins by discussing in detail what strategy is and presents an overview of strategic management and its importance, strategy as a practice, praxis and strategy practitioners and strategic leadership. The latter part of the chapter outlines the conceptual framework adopted in this study. The literature presented in this chapter serves to orient and sensitise the researcher with previous knowledge in the field while locating the gaps in the existing literature (Graham and Thomas, 2008:118).

2.2. Definition of a Strategy

A strategy is a technique used by the organisation in order to create value to customers while ensuring competitiveness and achieving a long term goal (Khalifa, 2008). This is supported by McGee, Thomas and Wilson (2010) who stated that strategy relates to different activities which include formulation, implementation and control in order for the organisation to achieve competitive advantage and ensure long term sustainability.

2.3. An Overview of Strategy

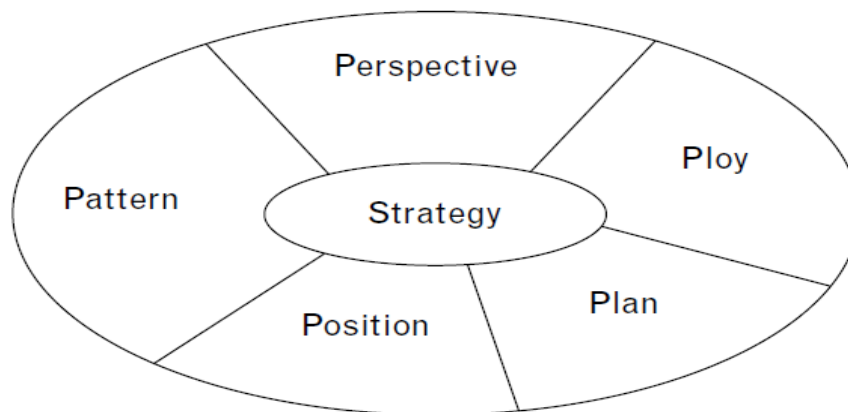
The strategy concept originates from the Greek word “strategos, meaning art or work of general” and can be defined as the deliberate plan which predefines the performance and target to be implemented in order to achieve the desired future goal (Louw and Venter, 2013). In addition, Rasche (2010) suggest that strategy is concerned with the ancient Anteanian concept of “strategos which is a compound of *stratos* (and encamped army) and *agein* (to lead)”.

Strategy emerged due to the increased complexity experienced in the military. It was first evolved in academic writing, in the realm of strategic management, when it was written by (Clausewitz’s, 1983) in a book related to war. Clausewitz’s book notes the difference between the strategy and the tactics as related to the manner in which soldiers and other military staff members should be assigned

to different locations. Strategy has been investigated for over 40 years. However, it is still not clear what is really a strategy and how does one know if they have a strategy (Yip, 2004).

Louw and Venter (2013) claim that there are different views and meanings in relation to the word “strategy”, although it originated from the military, overtime it has evolved and has been adopted in the field of management. Organisations use the strategy as a tool or a technique that guides management when dealing with day to day operations. Furthermore it is used when dealing with complexity as a result of the environmental changes (Rasche, 2010). There is no universally accepted definition of strategy (Ehn and Zheng, 2016), but a widely known definition of strategy suggested by Mintzberg (1987); Quinn (1991); Ongonge (2013); Louw and Venter (2014) is premised over five dimensions (also referred to as 5 Ps), these dimensions view strategy as a plan, a ploy, a pattern, a position and a perspective. This study adopts this definition.

Figure 2¹: Five perspectives of strategy.



Premised on the five perspectives of strategy, the plan aspect of the strategy is related to the organisational plan which outlines different steps guiding the organisation in order to be successful. Louw and Venter (2014) suggest that this approach is used by organisation to develop a plan and ensure implementation is rolled out within the organisation. Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel (1998); Louw and Venter (2014) maintain that a plan is by default a leadership process, set up in order to ensure the organisation success. Furthermore strategy as a plan, seeks to make a connection between the external opportunities and organisation internal competences. Hill and Jones (2010) note that strategy as a ploy is used by the organisation in order to gain competitiveness while

¹Source: Louw & Venter (2014:15)

achieving organisation goal. Organisation use the strategic ploy to trick competitors while widening the business by ensuring creativity is applied (Nickols, 2016).

Accordingly, Louw and Venter (2014) explain that when organisation use strategic ploy it is very important to understand the strategic intention, as the strategic ploy approach relate to a specific tactic to outwit competitors. Allio and Randall (2010) points out that strategy is a pattern which helps the organisation leadership to analyse the current business environment with utmost attentiveness to ensure the pattern is developed and allow consistency in the organisation. Allio and Randall (2011) further note that consistency can be intended organisational plan that emerge as the result of the business environment. Hahn and Powers (2010) state that strategy as a position relates to where the organisation is positioned in the business environment compared to its competitors. Strategy as a position is equally important wherein the organisation finds the niche to differentiate themselves against their competitors, and equally relates to a strategic concept that perceived that all members of the organisation are of collective mind (Marren, 2010). Furthermore

Allio and Randall (2010) relate to the idea of strategic perspective as the most important part of the organisation as it allows all members in the organisation to jointly share the same goal which promote the organisation success. Marren (2010) suggests that an organisation with highly formalised processes and procedures can demotivate staff. This results in the loss of passion and innovation in the organisation. This suggests that an organisation without strategy is associated with failure (Hahn and Powers, 2010).

2.4. Strategy as a practice, praxis and strategy practitioners

Strategy as a practice is concerned with the shared routines of behavior, which includes traditions, norms and procedures (Marren, 2010). Practice as a strategy is more direct and interrelated, especially wherein organisational activities can be repetitive or routine while focusing on policies and procedures, with the aim of achieving intended strategy (Wittington, 2006). Conversely, Feldman and Pentland (2003:95) point out that strategy as practice is related to repetitive, interdependent and routines, forming a pattern of activities by different employees or people in order to achieve organisation objectives. Reckwitz (2002: 249) describes practices as:

“Routinised types of behavior which consist of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, things and their use, background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge”.

Figure 2²: Strategy-as-Practice



According to Schwarz (2009) strategy as a practice was introduced by Whittington (1996) in order to address the shortcomings identified from the traditional strategic concept. Whittington (2006) suggests that the traditional strategic concept focuses more on senior management and organisation leaders and is inclined to collectivism. According to Spender (2014) practice relates to the organisation’s process of planning, strategic communication and implementation. The further mentions the importance of distinguishing between “praxis” and “practice”. In this regard, Johnson, Langley, Melin and Whittington (2007) claim that strategy as a practice focuses on how employees deal with the processes and procedures and how this is affected and influence the organisation.

²Source: Jarzabkowski *et al.*, (2007:11)

Conversely, Yukl (2006) state that strategy as a praxis is concerned with what individual or employees do in practice, the two terms praxis and practice are widely used interchangeably.

Parayitam and Gharana (2010) suggest that strategic praxis signifies human or employee's action in relations to strategy in the organisation, on the other hand strategic practices relates to different activities within the praxis. Vaara and Whittington (2012:288) assert that employee's behavior is always reflected in the cluster of social practices while "praxis relies on practices".

According to Jarzabkowski *et al;* (2016:254) "the assumed tension between intended planning practices and emergent strategies represents a false dichotomy" managers need to be constant and adapt in response to strategies taking place from the different department in the organisation. However, Whittington (2007) suggests that there is no clear distinctions on how intended strategy link with the practice field.

Practitioners are actors who link practice and praxis within the organisation and their role includes strategic planning (Whittington, 2006; Jarzabkowski and Spee, 2009). Strategy practitioners are strategic leaders or top management which interfaces the organisation and external environment while ensuring the organisation success. Furthermore organisations' top managers play an important role in the formation of intended strategy (Whittington, 2006). A practitioner's responsibility includes communicating with the aim of convincing the employees to embrace the new strategic direction (Spender, 2014). A practitioner can be an external actor with influence in the organisation strategy even though they might not be hierarchy allocated within the organisation (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009). In this light, it is important for a researcher to explore how intended does and emergent strategy impact the organisation performance while understanding why practitioners adopt a certain strategic activities over the other or create new strategies (Jarzabkowski, 2003; Whittington, 2003).

2.5. Strategic leadership

Premised on the notion of strategic management Campos, Parellada, Valenzuela and Rubio (2015) state that strategic leaders are significant aspects in the decision making process within the organisation. The same authors assert that strategic decision process determines the path of the organisation and its ability, in the light of the known and unknown, changes that may be seen in the business. In an era marked by globalised markets, Jooste and Fourie (2009) suggests that it is the responsibility of the strategic leaders to clearly communicate the organisation's vision and strategy to all the staff members, with the aim of smooth implementation and ensuring creativity amongst employees as well as promoting strategic direction in the organisation. Smith, Lewis, Jarzabkowski, and Langley (2017) highlight the importance of leadership in the organisation and its capability to

enforce and communicate change while eliminating the anxiety resulting from the organisational paradoxes.

Thompson, Scott and Martin (2014) suggest that it is the responsibility of strategic decision makers to direct the organisation in achieving long term intended strategy. In addition, Louw and Venter (2014:38) identified the importance of the strategic leadership by affirming that strategic leadership is attuned to the development and unpredictability in the organisation and in its application strategic decision should be open to emerging strategies, especially those which might have been overlooked due to an organisation only emphasizing on the achievement of intended strategies.

In line with the discussion on strategic leadership and the decisions, Wheelen and Hunger (2008:22-23) developed an eight-step process in strategic decision-making state which is:

- “Evaluation of the existing performance results in terms of (a) return on investment, productivity, and so forth, and (b) the current mission, objectives, strategies, and policies;
- An assessment corporate governance, i.e., the performance of the firm’s board of directors and top management;
- Scanning and evaluation of the organizations external environment to determine the strategic factors that pose opportunities and threats;
- Scanning and evaluation of the organizations internal corporate environment to determine the strategic factors such as strengths, literally core competencies and weaknesses;
- Examine strategic factors through situational analysis processes to identify problem areas, review, and revise the corporate mission and objectives, as necessary;
- Produce, estimate, and select a suitable alternative approach in light of the analysis conducted in step 5;
- Implement designated approaches through programs, budgets, and procedures and
- Evaluate the executed strategies through a feedback system, and control the activities to ensure their minimum deviation from plans”.

This rational method to strategic leadership and decision making has been widely used successfully by organisations globally. According to Morsing and Oswald (2009) leadership responsibility include influencing employees to work together in a coordinated way towards achieving organisation objectives and goal. Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2001) articulate that, the role of the organisation leaders is very critical and important in relation to how they deal with strategic paradoxes as this can have enormous impact on the success or failure within the organisation. However, Jarzabkowski and Spee, (2009); Cunningham and Harney (2012) believe that more

research is required in order to understand the extent to which organisational leaders influence the intended and emergent strategy and the impact thereof (Jarzabkowski and Spee, 2009; Cunningham and Harney, 2012).

2. 6. Strategic Management

At the center of any strategy, there is a tension which needs resolution and resolving this tension is important as it results to strategic management (Whittington, 2012). Strategic management relates to art and science used by the organisation to formulate a plan, implement and where cross functional decisions are evaluated in order for the organisation to realise its objectives. In addition, strategic management goes far beyond strategic development where pre-planning processes take place and also relates to strategic deployment and implementation of the organisation plan and control (David, 2011). Wheelen and Hunger (2008) averred that strategic management is the art and science where strategy is formulated, implemented and cross functional decisions are evaluated to ensure they are in line with the organisation's objectives while at the same time being consistent with the management organisation processes.

David (2011) suggests that the process of deployment of strategic plan includes communicating the plan in a clear manner with all employees while the implementation involves putting the plan into action in order to ensure that an organisation's objectives are achieved. There are different factors which guide the success of strategic management, these include, how well the strategy is attuned to the environmental dynamics and how these dynamics affect the organisation performance and knowledge of the business industry by the leadership (Nienaber and Svensson, 2013).

According to Thompson and Martin (2015) strategic management involves balancing organisational values, resources and capabilities with the external environment and ensure that there are clear set of direction allowing the organisation to increase its performance. David (2011) asserts that organisation use strategic management to integrate different departments like finance, production, research and development to ensure the success in the organisation. In line with the preceding assertion on strategic management Mintzberg and Waters (1985) cited in Ehn and Zheng (2006) add that several strategies are available for leaders to manage strategically. This study adopted intended and emergent strategies as its main area of focus.

2.6.1. The importance of strategic management in organisations

Rasche (2010) claim that organisations use strategy in order to eliminate complexity within an organisation and to understand the uncertainty around strategic decisions. The authors further articulate the importance of strategic management as the useful tool applied by organizational to guide managers to easily cope with ambiguity within organisation. This is supported by Hill and Jones (2010) who assert that strategy is an important tool in an organisation in guiding the planning and implementation and can eliminate ambiguity identified with the aim to contribute to future success of the organisation. Louw and Venter (2013) highlight the necessity of a strategic management by stating that it provides the direction for success in the whole organisation. At the same time they suggest that strategy is needed because it reduces ambiguity by emphasising important areas that convey what the organisation can do in order to create potentials for future success.

2.7. Paradoxes

Paradox refers to contradictory interrelated components which persist over time, but essential for the long term success of the organisation. Furthermore the concept of paradox suggests that tension is part of the complex situation which requires attention in order to deal with contradictory related demand concurrently in the order to ensure sustainability (Smith *et al*; 2017).

“Most strategies are built on specific beliefs about the future. Unfortunately, the future is deeply unpredictable. Worse the requirement of the breakthrough success demand implementing strategy in ways that make it impossible to adapt should the future not turn out as expected. The result is the Strategic paradox: strategies with the greatest possibility of success also have the greatest possibility of failure. Resolving this paradox requires a new way of thinking about strategy and uncertainty” (Raynor, 2007:1).

Rasche (2010) states that etymologically, paradox as a term reflects what is contrary to (*para*) received opinion of belief (*doxa*) meaning contradictory of assertion. Smith *et al*; (2017) argues that paradoxes are increasingly seen in the world of management as a process of responding to competitors while dealing with complex and changing environments. Lewis and Smith (2014) pointed that several authors have offered insight on paradoxes. Smith *et al*; (2017)) observes that the paradoxes are identified where they are investigated by scholars of philosophy and psychology. Smith further suggests that although paradoxes were first discovered in ancient philosophy, it is only recent that organisational and strategic management scholars began to explore paradoxes.

Andriopoulos and Lewis (2009) argue that, the key site of paradoxes is the organisation, while it is the responsibility of the organisation leadership to control and manage conflict and complexity emerging as a result of the paradoxes. However, leaders are still struggling to control unmanageable paradoxical demands (Rasche, 2010).

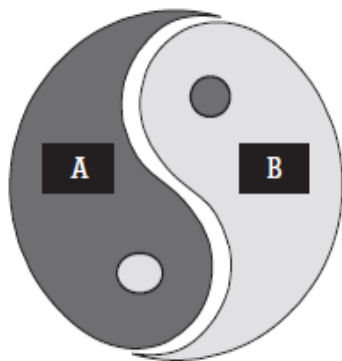
Raynor (2007) highlights the importance of aligning the organisation strategy with the environmental changes in order to avoid being a victim of paradox. Furthermore he pointed out that the way to resolve paradoxes is to ensure flexibility in the implemented strategy (proactive actions). Putnam, Fairhurst and Banghart (2016) argue that paradoxes relate to conflicting features which simultaneously exist and possibly synergistically over time within the organisation. Paradoxes have been recognised by organisational scholars who argue that organisations are filled with paradoxical tension and dilemmas (Smith *et al*; 2017).

Smith *et al*; (2017) maintains that organisations deal with multiple continuous and interrelated tensions resulting to paradoxes which pervade within the organisation strategy. According to Raynor (2007) organisations are faced with tension emerging from the continuous conflicting demand, different perspectives and interests. Ehnert (2009) argues that dualities and paradoxes are different, as a result the paradox concept is broad and it allows for more than one conflicting situation which may result in tension. While Smith and Lewis (2011) refer to dualities and paradoxes as the same context and suggest that dualities refer to paradoxes and dilemma. According to Ehnert, (2009) dilemma relates to a position where a choice has to be made between desirable or undesirable alternatives, which are equally important resulting to paradox.

Smith *et al*; (2017) suggests that dialectic tends to exhibit ongoing procedures or processes which aim to resolve a tension through integration aiming to achieve intended strategy. Rasche (2010) highlights that the nature of the environment in which organisation operates on; creates pressure, conflict and dilemma which need to be dealt with quickly. Hence management is expected to pull in different directions dealing with the perceived tension within the organisation. According to Farjoun (2010) duality relates to two necessary elements which are interdependent. While dilemma refers to competing choices which have disadvantage and advantage which need to be considered. Reynor (2007) agrees with Farjoun by adding that different researchers have identified the tension between the need to commit and the fact that it is highly impossible to predict the future in order promote competitiveness within the organisation. According to Smith and Lewis (2011) different studies have contributed in understanding paradoxes. However, Lewis (2000) emphasises that the gap still exist which needs further exploration to the subject. In this regard, understanding paradoxes is very

complex and demand a researcher to question and interrogate other approaches while trying to come up with a technique which can unpack and simplify the complex phenomena.

Figure 2³: Distinguishing Among Organizational Tensions

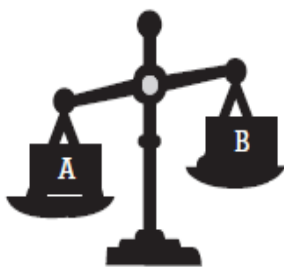


Paradox

Contradictory yet interrelated elements (dualities) that exist simultaneously and persist over time; such elements seem logical when considered in isolation, but irrational, inconsistent, and absurd when juxtaposed

Dualities (A and B) — Opposites that exist within a unified whole

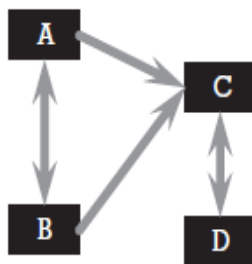
- internal boundary creates distinction and highlights opposition
- external boundary encourages synergies by constructing the unified whole



Dilemma

Competing choices, each with advantages and disadvantages

Paradoxical when options are contradictory and interrelated such that any choice between them is temporary and tension will resurface



Dialectic

Contradictory elements (thesis and antithesis) resolved through integration (synthesis), which, over time, will confront new opposition

Paradoxical when elements are both contradictory and interrelated. Because synthesis stresses their similarities, neglecting valued differences, integration is temporary. Need for disparate qualities persists such that synthesis gradually favors one over the other (i.e., C and D retain core characteristics of A and B, respectively)

2. 8. Strategic paradoxes

Raynor (2007) notes that most strategies are constructed as a result of specific beliefs about the future, unfortunately, the future is extremely unpredictable. Strategies with the greatest possibility of success similarly have the greatest possibility of failure. Resolving these paradoxes requires a new way of thinking about strategy and uncertainty (Maree, 2010). Raynor (2007) state that strategic paradox emerges as result of the needs and strategic commitment regardless of the uncertainty associated with the unavoidable environmental change. Agraş and Deliorman (2014) state that one of the foremost questions regularly asked in the strategic management literature is concerned with the notion of how effective strategy can be formulated. Moreover, Raynor (2007) believes that

³Source: Smith and Lewis (2011:387)

strategic paradoxes arise from the need to make strategic commitments in the face of strategic uncertainty.

Smith *et al*; (2017) equally states that paradoxes can be well defined as opposing factors or statements which are at the same time equally important. She further argues that the opinions, views and meanings of strategy formation are premised on two paradoxes namely intended and emergent paradoxes, thereby making a strong need of interrelation of these paradoxes. Maree (2010) claims that the paradox of intended strategy is the first and widely known approach on strategic formation as planned perspective. He adds that the strategic formation approach is lucid, systematic, designable, certain and measurable. It can be analysed depending on the distinctive nature of thinking and doing (Raynor, 2007).

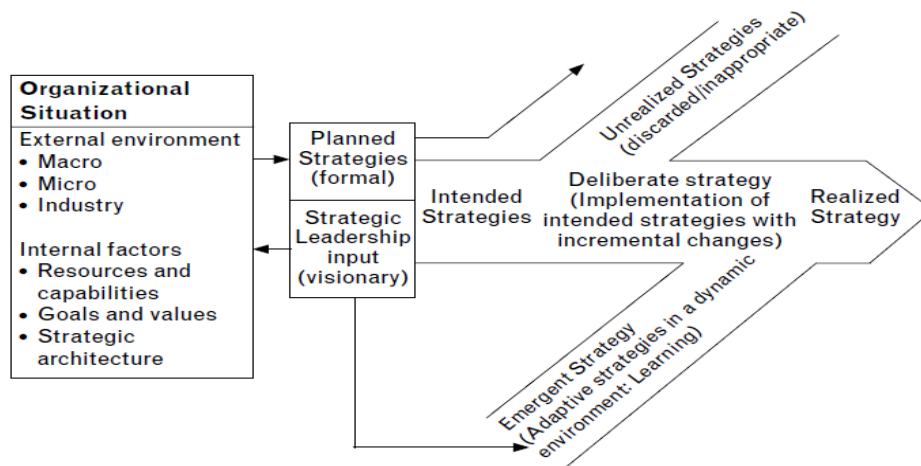
In contrast, within the paradox of emergent strategy, the formulation of strategy is concurrent in action, as maintained by Smith *et al*; (2017); the process allows for a situation wherein an organisation follow their strategies without being deprived of previously targeted and determined strategy. Raynor (2007) argues that conflict between the organisation commitment and strategic uncertainty in this regard relates to strategic paradox and suggests that the organisations are faced with challenges where there are expected to commit on organisational activities which cause a huge tension as a result of future unpredictability. Smith and Lewis (2011) argue that strategic paradoxes emerge from environmental uncertainty which leads to collision of the organisation commitment resulting in a future unpredictability. According to Smith and Lewis (2011) organisations are constantly in chaos and face dilemmas which emerge from the internal and external environment thus resulting into paradoxes. Smith and Lewis (2011); Jarzabkowski *et al*: (2013) point out that there is a lack of conceptual clarity which needs more exploration at the same time brings provocative discussion through the topic of strategic paradoxes, so that more clarity and understanding is achieved. Furthermore understanding how intended and emergent strategy is cascaded in the organisation will have a huge contribution to this particular study.

2.9. Intended Strategy and emergent strategy

There are different explanations of strategies which can be considered as patterns of decision, while others view them as patterns of actions. To differentiate and understand two widely known strategies, Agras and Deliorman (2014) describe intended strategy as the deliberate organisation goal and emergent strategy as the strategy which is realised despite intention but at the same time aid in achieving organisation intentions. The authors add that emergent strategies are an offshoot of the intended strategies and deliberate strategy in the organisation. Hence, emergent strategies and intended strategies seem to be inconsistent and appear to be true.

Louw and Venter (2014) state that the main aim of organisations is to achieve the intended strategies, but this is not usually the case due to unforeseen circumstances or environmental change leading to unrealised strategy or emergent strategy. They further suggest that organisation follows and relies on umbrella strategy which broadly outlines the deliberate plan in order to archive its objectives. According to Whittington (2016) strategy refers to deliberate or intended action. However emergent strategies may or can be referred to as a management flexibility and capability to respond to circumstances.

Figure 2⁴: Deliberate and emergent strategies



2.9.1. Intended strategy

Havenvid, Holmen, Linné, and Pedersen (2017) claim that intended strategy relate to the methodology used by the organisation to form a detailed plan which will direct the organisation to achieve its objectives. Hence it is important to clearly communicate the intended strategy with all employees to promote smooth implementation. Intended strategy is a strategy, which is highly considered by the top management as a responsive strategic management tool (Louw and Venter, 2014). The organisation plan as defined in detail within an organisation’s strategic plan relates to intended strategy. Smith *et al*; (2017) argues that when a strategic plan is created for a new venture it is called a business plan and intended strategy plays a significant role in the implementation. Equally important, rationality is restricted and because of negotiation, bargaining, and compromise which involves several individuals and groups within the organization, intended strategy can be a successful advantage in the execution of business processes (Ehn and Zheng, 2006). Louw and Venter (2014) assert that intended strategy relates to a pattern of major objective or plan formulated to achieve a long term goal. Furthermore intended strategy is a decision making process where organisation strategic position is understood and strategic choice is determined in order to achieve

⁴Source: Louw and Venter (2014:18)

the organisation effectiveness. According to Johnson *et al*; (2016) intended strategy is an organisational direction and scope used to achieve competitive advantage in business and able to satisfy stakeholders' expectations. Its importance is highlighted by Davies (2002) who states that intended strategy is a process allowing the organisation senior management to put together a detailed plan, using their knowledge and expertise, to deal with the turbulent environment. However, if the internal or external forces turned out to be the opposite of what was expected, these conditions generally result in complexity and tension within the organization (Raynor, 2007).

According to Smith *et al*; (2017) intended strategy relates to the organisation plan which is clearly communicated and accepted among different employees in order to succeed. Equally, Raynor (2007) highlights that intended strategy is an organisation course of action, where plans are articulated in detail to achieve the long-term goal. His views further suggest that plans are road map that guides the organisation to accomplish their goal and also provides the framework of activities that guide management to succeed. Johnson, *et al*; (2008) argues that intended strategy includes a plan used to direct people and promote coordination and facilitate organisation resource allocation. Nevertheless, intended strategy does not eliminate the internal and external challenges in the environment which lead to devastating effects such as confusion, frustration and uncertainty within the organisation (Louw and Venter, 2014).

2.9.2. Emergent Strategy

The concept of emergent strategy was developed by authors like Mintzberg and Waters (1985), Mintzberg (1987); Balogun and Johnson (2005); Bodwell and Chermack (2010); Nonaka and Zhu (2012), and Spender (2014). Mintzberg *et al*;(1998:210) state “the emergent strategy approach goes hand in hand with the notion of the organizational learning, and he further highlights that such is grouped under the learning school approach”. Emergent strategy can be sudden and different than what the organisation was originally intended (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand & Lampel, 2005). According to Maree (2010) emergent strategy is considered as a response to unanticipated changes and problems, which usually evolve from the positions at which business-level strategies are regularly executed, within business units and not at corporate headquarters. Furthermore, it is considered as an unintended plan that arises in response to unforeseen opportunities and challenges.

This is evident in scenarios where emergent strategies result in disasters, which some organisation experience in the absence of intentions (Johnson, *et al*; 2008). Emergent strategy mostly evolves at the operational stage in the organisation where managers deal with new technological development and changes in the environment (Jarzabkowski, 2004). The consistency pattern of action over time

within the organisation in the absence of the intended plan relates to emergent strategy (Maree, 2010). “Emergent strategy view is not about having a contingency strategy or scenario planning just in case; instead, it is about letting strategic patterns emerge on their own to craft a deliberate strategy over time” (Watson and Harris 1999; Bodwell and Chermack 2010).

Conversely, Fuller-Love and Cooper (2000) state that emergent strategy requires management team which are flexible and have the ability to quickly adapt to a pattern of unplanned action, which are consistent over time as a result of changing environment. Furthermore, the authors suggest that emergent strategy allows managers to quickly act before analysing and fully understanding the environment. Andersen (2004) further argues that an organisational strategy consists of a pattern of decisions which include both emergent elements and planned elements maintaining, that emergent strategy is most likely to materialise at the management level. Bodwell and Chermack (2009) add that emergent strategy is an important element of an organisational environment that cannot be ignored especially in the achievement of competitiveness.

Davis (2003) argues that emergent strategy is related to the process of learning from the job, because it emerges when the organisation is facing environmental change and dealing with the process of learning or trial and error. Lowe and Jones (2004) concur with Davis (2003) by maintaining that emergent strategy can also be referred to, as an ongoing active learning or experimenting process which organisations have to go through at some point in order to achieve desired result. Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright (2003) state that emergent strategy depends on the organisation capacity to use the employee’s skills and experience with the aim to learn from them. Raynor (2007) defined the emergent strategy as a pattern or action which is consistent over time within the organisation. However, most organisations are not devoid of the intention. Hence sometimes the intended plan can be vague and not properly communicated resulting to emergent strategy.

Additionally, Raynor (2007) highlights the fact that no one can predict the future and circumstances thereof. Louw and Venter (2014) point out that it is the responsibility of management to evaluate and ensure the emergent or unplanned strategy is appropriate and in line with the organisation goal. Hence actors from different levels in the organisation are involved in emergent strategy. Johnson *et al*; (2008) state that emergent normally arise in the operations where it requires middle managers to take action within the organisation, it may arise without knowledge of senior manager’s knowledge.

The following advantages for the emergent strategy were identified and should be considered by organisations:

- Opportunism – the capability to ‘play the field’ is an imperative factor in effective strategy formation (Quinn 2002);
- Flexibility within the organisation;
- Learning;
- Organisational wide support (Wit and Meyer, 2004:112).

HSRC is a research organisation which is led by executive directors who are from different academic backgrounds in conjunction with the management from the management science background. These leaders are responsible for the formulation of intended strategic plan for their respective departments. However in planning these strategies conflict and often emerge leading to staff or employees struggling and burn out while trying to meet the intended strategies. Most studies have focused on the corporate environment, and not considered that the strategic paradoxes which are also rife in a research led organisation. A research study like this has never been conducted within this particular organisation and this motivated the researcher to choose HSRC. Moreover, the relationship between different levels in the organisation and how they approach intended and emergent strategy is linked with the organisation success or failure. This study aims to assist managers, and academic leaders to better approach the changing business context and other processes of different strategies especially intended and emergent strategy and simplify complex strategic issues at all levels.

2.10. Managers and strategies in organisations

Hill and Jones (2010) state that managers are the most important part of the organisation thus it is imperative that they think strategically in order to achieve an organisation’s goal and competitiveness. In the same token, Louw and Venter (2014) suggest that it is important that managers understand where the organisation fits in within the local and international organisational environment, and have a positive contribution towards strategic improvement and changes. Johnson *et al*; (2005) argues that employees are the most important factors in any organisation, especially the knowledge and experience they possess in contributing to the strategic success. In this regard, organisational strategic goal is a critical factor for the managers, to unleash creativity and innovative opportunities for employees, to discover diverse prospects that were not well-thought-out, and which are important for the survival of the organisation (Rasche, 2010).

Luscher and Lewis (2008) highlight three responses identified in the paradox studies which managers should have in relation to paradoxes, these include acceptance, accommodation and integration. This involves acceptance which includes accepting the conflict arising in the

organisation without looking for the solution. Integration is a management process which requires managers to iterate amongst alternative pattern. Finally they refer to accommodation as a technique of joining together both components of opposition in “novel, creative synergy”. Managers in the organisation deal with day to day operations, and are directly responsible for communicating with the organisation leadership from top to bottom and bottom up as a result their role became a crucial factor in emergent strategies (Donate and Canales, 2012). Accordingly, Balogun and Johnson (2004) assert that managers’ duties include grasping the emergent change in organisations even though they are not involved in any initial planning stage. White (2005) argues that managers are expected to properly communicate with employees and ensure the success of the organisation. White further affirms that when organisations are facing changes, it is a proven fact that employees normally show resistance to change. Thus, as maintained in the preceding discussion it is imperative for managers to be abreast of their organisational environment both internally and externally. Smith and Tushman (2015) further highlight that globalisation results in extreme competitiveness, uncertain and complex in the organisational environment. In this regard, managers are expected to constantly adapt to the changing work environment, while ensuring that employees understand the emergent strategy in order to ensure organisation success.

The relationship between managers and emergent strategies as highlighted by Grove (2006) is that, managers within the organisation need to understand the steps or technique to use as a learning tool when they face paradoxes to improve organisation strength. Bloodgood and Chae (2010) argue that it is important that before any strategic or operational decision is concluded, managers need to be familiar with the direction concerning the poles of organisational paradoxes. In addition, they argue that it is the manager’s responsibility to be cognisant of the different range of paradoxes which are present in the organisation in order to allow integrative measure of multiple paradoxes to promote success.

2.11. Effectiveness of Intended and Emergent Strategies

Intended strategy is strategy as conceived of by top management team as rational and limited results of a process of negotiation, bargaining, and compromise, involving many individuals and groups within the organization (Wheelen and Hunger, (2014). According to Smith *et al;* (2017) intended strategy is nothing but a plan or an intended course of action thought to be most suitable for achieving predetermined corporate goals. Furthermore intended strategy relate to a ploy or a trick, to surmount an immediate obstacle or to browbeat a serious competitor. McGee, Thomas and Wilson (2010) points out to the effectiveness of strategy by arguing that the basic concept of intended strategy is that it is pre-planned in nature and can be given a proper shape after a lot of

brainstorming. Thus, in this regard intended strategy determines the basic consistency in behavior and approach of a firm towards the economy in general, and the market in which it operates in. Louw and Venter (2014) argue that intended strategy also formalises the positioning of the firm in the market. By positioning it shows how a firm would relate with the external environment and what would be its reaction in case of a change in the parameters of such environment.

Raynor (2007) suggests that emergent strategies relate to response to unexpected opportunities and problems and are usually developed from the locations at which business-level strategies are usually implemented. Mcgee *et al*; (2010) articulate that the effectiveness of emergent strategy is premised on the idea that it is not a brainwave of one person or a group of persons at the helm of affairs of a company. It is not a flash of individual brilliance or motivation but a learning process where the entire corporate entity absorbs facts and figures from external environment and evaluates the changes in external and internal environment. Hence procedures to formulate a proper and relevant answer in the form of a revised strategy. Yee (2012) concludes that for intended and emergent strategies to be effective there should be a positive linkage between strategic planning activity, opportunities and challenges faced by the organisation.

2.12. Organisation culture

Matsumoto and Juang (2008) state that organisation has a structure which is developed by the organisation leaders to achieve the mission and the vision of the organisation. Each organisation has a different structure and culture and all the employees work collectively to address the objective and the goal of the organisation. Matsumoto and Juang (2008) further argued that organisation culture relate to information system used across the organisation in order to ensure survival of the organization. Schein (2004:17) defines the culture of groups as “a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems”. According to Serpa (2016) organisation culture relate to the way employees conduct themselves, thinking and collectively working together in pursuit to intended and emergent strategy in order for the organisation to succeed.

2.13. Intended strategy and organisation culture

According to Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2008) organisation culture relates to the organisation norms, routines, values, rules and regulations that guide internal organisation activities.

Furthermore they suggest that all the organisation employees at all levels are consciously or unconsciously influenced by the organisation culture. This was supported by Chatman and Eunyong (2003) who state that organisation culture relates to the system of shared assumptions, beliefs and value which are guiding employees in understanding what is acceptable; and unacceptable behaviour within the organisation. Organisation strategy or intended plan relates to the effort which creates the connection between the organisation and the environment which can be formal and informal and can be used at different levels within the organisation. Jonhson *et.al*; (2008) point out that it is important to understand how the culture and the organisation strategy work together to respond to the environment.

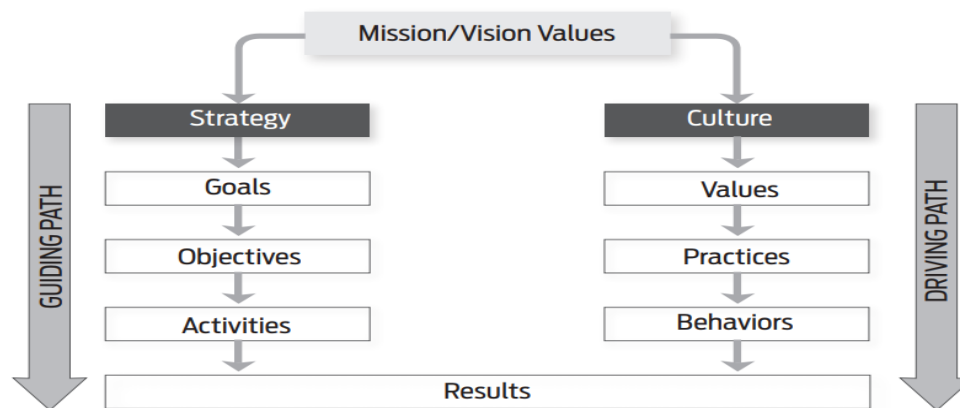
2.14. The role of organizational culture

The organisation culture can positively or negatively influence the way in which the employees behave in the organisation. Furthermore a strong organisation culture helps by reducing the tension and conflict in the organisation which in turn motivates employees (Dawson, 2010, Schein, 2010, McKenna, 2012). According to Dawson (2010) organisation culture helps staff members to gain a clear view of the organisation activities and target and ensure a better understanding amongst employees while at the same time improve the working environment. Fey and Denison (2003) suggest that organisation leaders can develop positive organisation culture to improve performance and effectiveness in the organisation. Furthermore, the strategic implementation thus requires collaboration, organisational culture-building while leaders creating fit between strategy and day to day business activities.

2.15. Relationship between culture and strategy

Baird, Harrison and Reeve (2007) point out to the relationship between the organisation intended plan and the organisation culture and that it is important that both are aligned in order to ensure the organisation's success. Gupta (2011) also confirmed the importance of aligning the organisation culture with the intended strategy in order for the organisation to be competitive and increase productivity. Schein (2010) believes that the link between the organisation culture and the intended organisation affect the performance of the organisation. Furthermore, the organisation culture has a significant influence to the organisation leaders who are responsible for the organisation strategy while the strategy affects the performance of the organisation.

Figure: 2.⁵ The relationship between culture and strategy



Accordingly, Gupta (2011) states that organisation culture affects how the employees perform in the organisation as a result increase the organisation performance. Rick (2013) suggests that, it is important to identify the linkage between strategy and organisation culture in order to achieve desired strategic plan.

2. 16. Conceptual Framework

The study adopted Mintzberg and Waters' (1985) framework to test and explore the element of the strategic paradoxes, focusing on intended and emergent strategies at Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa. It further investigates the implications faced by the senior academic leaders and senior managers in the particular research organisation being studied. The concept of strategy is regarded as an important process in management studies and it includes the identification of opportunities in order to achieve the organisation goal (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985). There are numerous contradictory thoughts which are regarded as the best way to formulate strategy for instance, where strategy is considered as a plan, a ploy, and a pattern of decisions, a position and a perspective (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985). Louw and Venter (2014) assert that the organisational environment is complex and unpredictable which makes it difficult to adapt due to constant changes caused by external forces. In this light, a well thought out intended strategy can fail due to environmental change. Conversely, Ehn and Zheng (2006) point out at several strategies in management which can be used by the organisations. As a result, this study employed Mintzberg's

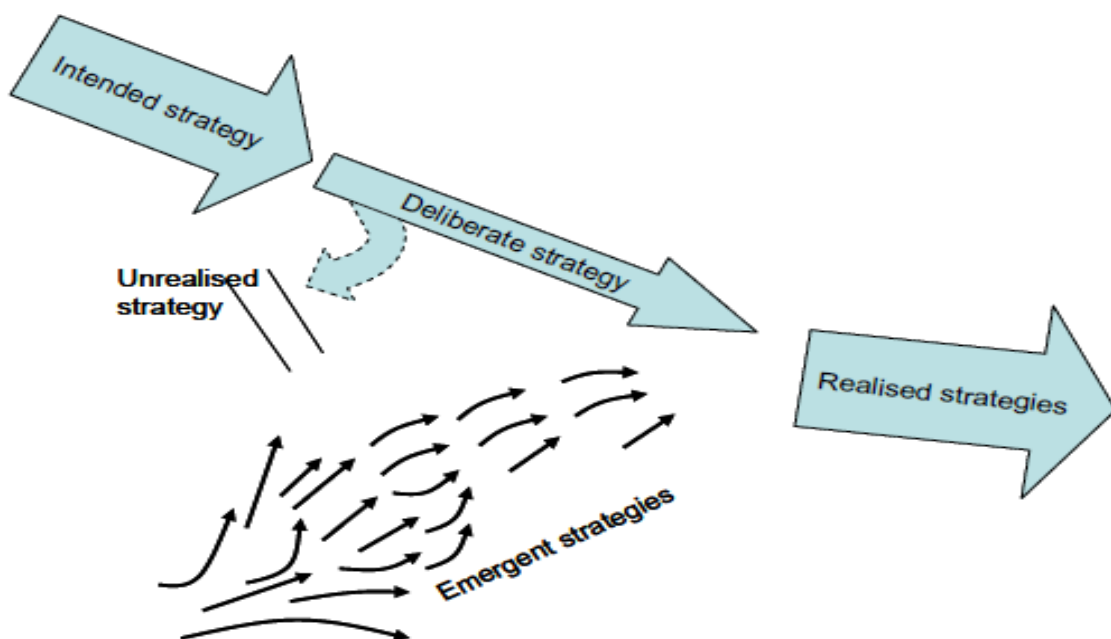
⁵ Source : Rick (2013)

analogy on strategic management where he explains by differentiating intended and emergent strategies in order to inform the organisational decision.

In line with these preceding discussions Raynor (2007) argues that strategic paradox relates to a strategic intended plan which has a chance to succeed and yield positive result in the organisation. Rasche (2010) argues that strategic implementation that is not well thought out can have a high chance of failure. In addition Rasche mentions that the collision of commitment and unpredictability of the environment change results into strategic paradox. According to Hill, Jones and Schilling (2015) it is important to evaluate the emergent strategy in order to ensure that it fits with the organisation's objective and goal. A changing environment usually causes vulnerability to decision makers in the organisation; this is because of future unpredictability. Thus understanding both intended and emergent strategy is important and can contribute to the success of strategic decision making (McGee, Thomas and Wilson, 2005).

Ehn and Zheng (2006) state that intended strategy relates to organisation plan or position, which is clearly communicated but not necessarily realised. Furthermore, emergent strategy relates to the pattern of realised unplanned strategy, and both strategies are influenced and directed by the decision makers or leadership in the organization.

Figure 2⁶ : Strategies deliberate and emergent strategy continuum framework.



⁶ Source: Mintzberg, et.al;(1998:12)

2.16.1. Significance of the conceptual framework

Glatthorn and Joyner (2005:19) argue that “a significant framework can make a huge contribution by testing a theory, contributes to the development of theory; extends existing knowledge; changes prevailing beliefs; suggests relationships between phenomena; extends a research methodology or instrument or providing an greater depth of knowledge”. This study thus aims to assist senior academic leaders and senior managers in approaching the changing context of the business while providing more understanding of intended and emergent strategies. Furthermore it provides alternative methods within strategic paradoxes.

2.17. Conclusion

The literature review presented discourse on strategy within the organisation. It also offered an insight into the overview of a strategy as a concept and equally strategy as a practice, praxis and practitioner. The chapter also dwelt on pertinent information such as strategic leadership and management and the importance of strategic management in organisations. Views on paradoxes and the strategic aspect of it were equally articulated. Perspectives on strategies such as intended and emergent strategies were stated. The role of managers regard strategies was also affirmed, and the effectiveness of intended and emergent strategies in the strategic management process was equally highlighted. In summary, this chapter presented the conceptual framework adopted for this particular study, with the aim of interrogating strategic paradoxes in order to provide answers and contribute to the research as a whole.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. 1. Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology adopted to create practical theory on strategic management paradoxes related to intended and emergent strategies at Human Sciences Research Council. In pursuit of this research methodology uncovered and justified the “research assumptions as far and as practicably as possible, and in doing so to locate the claims which the research makes within the traditions of enquiry which use it” (Clough and Nutbrown, 2002: 31). The research methodology is a pillar that guided this study and it gave the direction and identified the suitable technique to explain phenomena being studied (Creswell, 2014).

This chapter starts by discussing the research design and present qualitative method which is employed on this study, it further outline the philosophical underpinnings of research in general. The chapter also present the interpretive paradigm and briefly discuss the research philosophy guided this particular study. Furthermore this chapter highlight the purpose of conducting the research in a qualitative manner. In addition, the chapter discusses the techniques and instrument used for collection of data, analysis method, ethical consideration, and concluded by highlighting limitation of this particular study. Schwardt (2007) suggests that research methodology relate to theory guiding how the research inquiry should be conducted and analysis of the assumptions as well as the research principles. Kothari (2004) argue that research methodology examine the way in which the research will be embraced and it consider the rationale behind the research technique used by researcher, and it further clarify the reason why the particular method was chosen against the other research techniques. Conversely, Sekaran and Bougie (2013) state that research methodology includes distinguishing problematic issues, and procedure to be undertaken in relations to the problem and it further gather data, dissect information and solving it by taking the essential corrective measures.

3.2. Research design

The research design presented a study structure which accomplishes the aim of the research and further addresses the research questions (Kalaian, 2008). The aim of this study is to understand the context in which strategic paradoxes, affect the organisation effectiveness. The research design includes different steps taken on this particular study. According to Creswell (2013:5) research design relates to the different steps taken by the scientist or researcher guiding how the research

study should be conducted. For this study, the researcher employed qualitative method. In addition to that, the research design includes research philosophy, how participants were selected, data collection, and process that will be taken when analysing data.

3.3. Qualitative Research Methods

Qualitative research approach was employed because of the researcher's interest to explore and understand the contexts in which the intended and emergent strategies impact the organisation effectiveness. A qualitative approach is in agreement with the phenomenological enquiry and allows the researcher to engage with the participants to explore strategic paradoxes. According to Creswell (2013) qualitative research method was developed in order to enable the researchers to study cultural and social phenomena. He further states that qualitative is based on a specific set of assumptions using a specific theoretical framework in order to comprehend and present participant or individual experiences. Shank (2002) asserts that qualitative research enquiry relates to an orderly planned manner, guided by rules agreed upon by the qualitative research community. Furthermore, he argues that the inquiry is experimental, and is grounded in the realm of experience. Creswell (2007) highlighted the effectiveness of using qualitative research as a subjective and contextual approach.

Mack and Woodsong (2005) advise us that qualitative research should include the following:

- Looking for solutions by asking questions
- Employ a systematic and predefined set of techniques to respond to the question
- Gather evidence
- Process that ensures that findings were not known in advance

The authors further note that qualitative research strength is its capability to provide complex textual explanations regarding individual's knowledge and experience in relation to a particular research issue. Qualitative research is concerned with the collection and examining of data in several forms, mainly non-numerical. According to Anderson (2010) qualitative research is inclined towards the detailed exploration of smaller subjects that are considered and believed to be informative and it aims to achieve profound, rather than breadth, understanding of the subject under study.

Weinreich (2009) argues that the purpose of qualitative research is to give the scientist, the participant's point of view through drenching in a culture or circumstance and direct connection with the general population under study. This suggests that the qualitative paradigm is a technique used by the scientist as an instrument of collecting data which might cause the study result to be different based on who is conducting the research. This argument is supported by Starks and

Trinidad (2007) who refer to a scientist as the instrument of investigation or a tool for analysis across different phases of qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest that principles guiding qualitative research includes understanding everything regarding what is the researcher focusing on, the relationship within the era of focus, it also demand time to prepare data analysis and finally it requires the researcher or scientist to be the research instrument. The authors further argue that qualitative research allows a researcher to have a deeper and richer understanding of the participant's experience.

This research utilised a qualitative method with the aim of understanding senior management knowledge and experience while exploring deeper understandings from different perspectives. The basis of using a qualitative research methodology is that it reflects the nature of the problem and provides information about different perspectives held by different participants with equal validity of truth (Creswell, 2014:186). According to Wiid and Diggins (2009) qualitative research provides an understanding of a problem as well as the cause of the particular behaviour or problem. Qualitative research has been used in management and business where it is offered a deeper level of meaning and also provides understanding of each and every individual participant (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Research methodology refers to a technique or systematic way which is used to solve a research problem.

3.3.1. Rational for qualitative study

Given the theory provided, qualitative research was chosen for this study. Qualitative method provided a deeper understanding of the subject being studied, it further provided more detailed data because of its nature which allows freedom to participants where, they can freely express themselves, share their experience, thought and knowledge on the subject under study. According to Creswell (2007:39) the important characteristics of using qualitative research is that it if gives the researcher the opportunity to fully capture richer and deeper understanding of the phenomena.

There are many methods that can be applied in a research process.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) outline the following methods:

- Descriptive: research designed to get a precise picture of people, events or situation.
- Exploratory: research that takes into consideration the process getting insights, getting information by asking new questions and considering new understandings on the topics.
- Explanatory: research that aims at studying a research problem that explains variables between relationships.

Saunders and Lewis (2012) state that exploratory research is appropriate when the researcher does not clearly have an understanding of the topic or research problem. Conversely the concept of qualitative exploratory research is relevant when the researcher wants to determine the general and pertinent information about a research problem (Dawson, 2010).

Based on these assertions this study is exploratory in nature. The rationale for this is that this study is concerned with understanding a complex phenomenon and there is very little information available on the topic of interest which requires further exploration. Hence, exploratory research design allows for the in-depth analysis and insight to be gained on the ambiguities involving strategic paradoxes and the complexities involving intended and emergent strategies (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

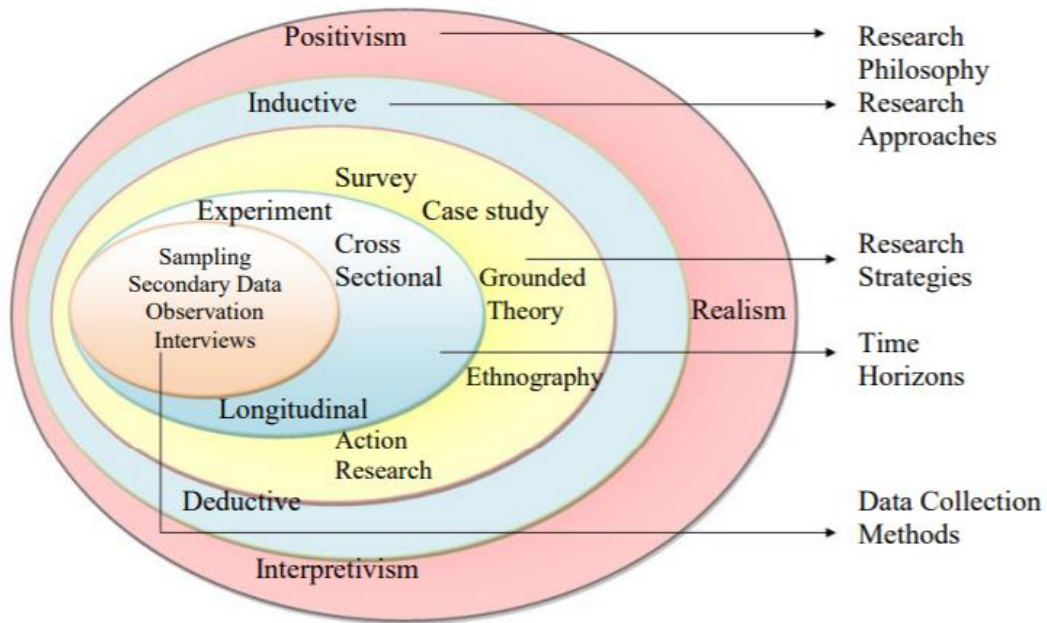
3.4. Research Philosophy

This section outlines research philosophy where the important assumptions underpinning the research strategy chosen for the study are presented. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) state that paradigm is a repeatedly used term in the social sciences, but can lead to misunderstanding because it tends to have several connotations. The authors add that paradigm is concerned with the approach of socially investigating phenomena from which a specific understanding of these phenomena can be expanded upon.

This section also presents the discussion regarding ontology, epistemology and axiology as there are importantly different and can influence how the researcher think in relation to research process. According to Saunders *et al*; (2012) a paradigm relates to assumption and different beliefs from different disciplines guiding the manner in which studies and methodology are treated and the way findings will be interpreted. The authors further point out the different range of choices, paradigms and strategies that guide the researcher during the process of research. In order to provide guidance this study will adopt onion of Saunders *et al*; (2012).

This onion represents the scope of decisions, ideal models, techniques and steps throughout the research process. The examination procedure onion gives a synopsis of the essential issues that should be thought about and assessed before embraced any exploration.

Figure 3⁷: The research process onion



According to Sanders *et al;* (2003) the research procedure onion outlines the critical research issues. Research process allows the researcher to review philosophical background and reflect the paradigm of enquiry which direct and shape her beliefs (McCallin, 2003).

Table 3:1: Comparisons of four research philosophies in management research are presented below.

	<u>Positivism</u>	<u>Realism</u>	<u>Interpretivism</u>	<u>Pragmatism</u>
	Researcher follows the view which only relates to “facts” information gained through observation (the senses), including measurement, is trustworthy.	Researcher will depend on the idea of individuality and reality from the human mind.	It is subjective nature and a possibility of bias on behalf of researcher.	Researcher reflects practical consequences or real effects to be vital components of both meaning and truth.

⁷ Source: Saunders *et al;* (2003:83)

Ontology: “The view of the researcher on the nature of reality or being;	External, objective and independent of social actors;	Is objective. Exist independent of human thoughts and beliefs or their existence (realist),but is interpreted through social conditioning (critical realist);	Socially constructed, may change, multiple and	External, multiple, view chosen to best enable answering of research question”.
Epistemology: “the researcher’s view regarding what constitutes acceptable knowledge;	Only observable phenomena can provide credible data, facts. Focus on causality and law like generalisations, reducing phenomena to simplest elements;	An observable phenomenon offers credible data, facts. Insufficient data means accuracies in sensation (Direct realism).Alternati vely, phenomena create sensations which are open to misinterpretation (critical realism).Focus on explaining within a context of contexts;	Subjective meanings and social phenomena. Focus upon the details of situation, a reality behind these details, subjective meanings motivating actions and	Either or both observable phenomena and subjective meanings can provide acceptable knowledge dependent upon the research question. Focus on practical applied research, integrating different perspective to help interpret the data”.
Axiology: “ the researcher’s view of role of values in research;	Research undertaken in a value-free way, the researcher is self-regulating of the data and upholds an objective stance;	Research is laden with value; the researcher is biased by world views, cultural experiences and upbringing. These will impact on the research;	Research is value bound, the researcher is part of what is being researched, cannot be separated and so will be subjective and	Values play a large role in interpreting results, the researcher adopting both objective and subjective points of view”.
“Data collection mostly used;	Highly structured, large samples, measurement, quantitative, but can be use qualitative;	Chosen methods must fit the subject matter, quantitative or qualitative;	Samples are small, in-depth investigations, qualitative and	Mixed or multiple methods design, quantitative and qualitative”.

3.4.1. Interpretivism

This study is interpretive and explanatory in nature. Interpretive phenomenology is concerned with more than just descriptions of experiences but involves the in-depth exploration of “how subjects

make sense of their significant life experiences” (Houston and Mullan-Jensen, 2011:268). This particular study is concerned with participants’ experiences and therefore requires a focus on the subjective reflection and personal perspectives (Reid, Flowers, Larkin, 2005). According to Houston and Mullan-Jensen (2011) interpretive phenomenology is underpinned by two theoretical traditions, namely hermeneutics and phenomenology where hermeneutics concerned action and interpretation while understanding the intention of meaning. Moreover, Houston and Mullan-Jensen (2007:269) note that hermeneutic tries to understand the connections between “the context of action and its interpretation”. Smith and Osborn (2008:53) state that “phenomenology is the descriptive study of human experience which emphasises an in-depth exploration of phenomena “from the point of view of the participants”.

In this study, the researcher adopted the ontology of the participants, experiences and their perspectives in order to understand strategic paradoxes, this is important because the researcher’s interest was to understand intended and emergent strategies and how they are viewed and interpreted within the organisation.

3.5. Study site

The study site is the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in all four offices, namely Durban, Pretoria, Pietermaritzburg and Cape Town.

3.6. Target population

According to Saunders *et al*; (2012) a population is concerned with a full set of cases from which a sample is taken. Sekeran and Bougie (2013) assert that a population relates to different things, which interest the researcher and it can be individuals or group of people. The population of this study consisted of senior academic leaders working at Human Sciences Research Council in different research departments (Human Sciences Research Council, 2017).

The breakdown of the sample organisational/departmental is:

1. “Governance and service delivery (DGSD);
2. Research use & impact assessment (RIA);
3. Africa institute of South Africa (AISA);
4. Economic performance and development (EPD);
5. Education and skills development (ESD);
6. HIV/AIDS, STI’S and TB (HAST);
7. Human and social development (HSD)and
8. Population health, health systems and innovation (PHHSI)”.

This particular group of participants was targeted because they are responsible for strategic planning and have a better understanding of what strategic paradoxes entails.

3.7. Sampling strategies

There are different types of sampling in qualitative research which include, convenience sampling and purposive sampling. Elmusharaf (2016:24) states that convenience sampling can be used in both quantitative and qualitative method studies although is it mostly used in quantitative method. Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) argue that “convenience sampling methods place primary emphasis on generalisability i.e. ensuring that the knowledge gained is representative of the population from which the sample was drawn”.

The study relied on purposive sampling technique to recruit senior academic leaders who are responsible for strategic planning in their respective departments. Purposive sampling is a widely used qualitative technique, it involves the identification and selection of individuals or groups who are knowledgeable or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan and Hoagwood, 2015). The study deliberately used purposive sampling in order to look for participants who were knowledgeable on the type of information needed. Additionally, purposive sampling also entails the availability and the willingness of research participants to participate, communicate their experiences in an expressive and reflective manner (Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim, 2016).

3.7.1. Sample size

Qualitative analysis requires a smaller sample size but large enough to obtain feedback for all perceptions. Furthermore qualitative research focuses on the meaning and not creating generalised hypothesis statements (Creswell, 2014). According to Mason (2010) the guiding principle for sample size in qualitative research is the concept of saturation where researcher will obtain all the perceptions which will lead to the attainment of saturation. The researcher sought to capture different views and experiences to ensure that adequate and quality data is collected to support the study.

Table: 3.2. Research department structure for the senior management

RESEARCH DEPARMENTS	EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS	DIRECTORS	MANAGERS
RESEARCH USE AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT (RIA)	1	2	0
AFRICA INSTITUTE OF SOUTH AFRICA (AISA)	1	0	1
DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY (DGSD)	1	1	1
ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT (EPD)	1	2	1
EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (ESD)	1	1	1
HIV/AIDS, SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS AND TB (HAST)	1	3	1
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (HSD)	1	3	3
POPULATION HEALTH, HEALTH SYSTEMS AND INNOVATION (PHHSI)	0	1	0
TOTAL	7	13	8
TOTAL	28		

The researcher recruited 28 senior leaders from the different research departments at HSRC, using emails and also followed up through the telephone. However the sample was reduced to 18 participants who accepted to participate as the other 10 could not participate due to their work schedule and travelling out of the country attending different research conferences. Thus the sample size for this study consisted of 18 participants across research departments. The researcher collected data from the 18 participants and this yielded sufficient information which addressed the research questions. Malterud, Siersma and Guassora (2016) argue that when the researcher uses qualitative research method a small sample size is acceptable.

3.8. Data Collection

Sekeran and Bougie (2013) argue that data collection methods are integral part of the research project. The authors further mention that several methods are available to the researcher in collecting data, including individual interviews. Purposive sampling was used for the identification and selection of individuals who are knowledgeable or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. The researcher used the following criteria developed by (Creswell, 2014).

- Participants must be the Executive Directors of the department involved in strategic planning.
- Directors involved in strategic planning
- Executive Directors and Directors who are part of the strategic decision
- Managers who are part of strategic implementation
- Managers who are in charge of management of staff and work allocation.

The researcher compiled an alphabetical list of all relevant stakeholders according to the criteria listed above and selected every second person on the list and requested their participation in the study via email. This methodology was followed until the maximum of 18 participants were recruited. In this regard, data collection in this study consisted of interviews, which were semi-structured. The interviews were appropriate for this study as, it is a “technique or a tool to approximate the participants’ understanding, their beliefs and meaning of the events.

The interviews provided a rich description of a particular phenomenon and individual reality” (Kvale, 2007: 8). The questions asked in this study were related to the aim and objective of the study. Bryman and Bell (2007) assert that data can be collected by researchers using interview method in order to get in-depth knowledge, and better understanding of the participant’s perspectives on the issues under study. Interviewees had the freedom to elaborate when responding to research questions and supported their statements. The other benefit of the interviews is that it provides a more relaxed environment to the participants which allow them to be open and honest when responding to questions. The average time for the interviews was 40 minutes to an hour which gave the participants enough time to answer questions. Walliman (2005) suggests that when the researcher is conducting an interview, the interviewer is in a better position to make a decision regarding the quality of the response received from the interviewee’s, and can evaluate if the participant understood the question while allowing him or her to answer fully. The researcher was cognisant of the fact that the study participants had busy schedules. Therefore, proper arrangement was made to meet up with participants.

Participants were contacted by telephone and emails to set up the appointments. At the initial meeting the aim and objectives of the research were clearly communicated, this was be done by issuing information sheets to all the participants. The researcher provided participants with informed consent letters which they signed prior to being interviewed. The HSRC offices were pre-booked and used to conduct interviews in order to avoid interruptions. The researcher conducted a pilot study in order to ensure that possible flows are detected. Watson, Atkinson and Rose (2007) highlight the importance of conducting a pilot study as a basis to any research.

3. 8.1. Pilot study

Ethical approval was granted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal Ethics Committee. In preparation to start collection of data, the researcher conducted a pilot study in order to validate the interview questions. The pilot study utilised qualitative method in order to understand participants experience on the subject being investigated. The researcher conducted pre-testing using two randomly selected

participants in order to explore the appropriateness of the questions, time needed to complete the interview and also if the participants were comfortable to respond to all questions (Schostak, 2006). This also allowed the researcher to judge participants' understanding of the questions. According to Van Wijk and Harrison (2013) a pilot study is important to help and ascertain if the research instrument will work, and also can ensure early identification of the potential problems that might need adjustments. The researcher was certain about how the questions were structured and the questions remained unchanged.

3.8.2. Data collection procedures

The researcher conducted face to face interviews with the senior academic leaders and managers across different department at Human Sciences Research Council. This study used semi-structured in-depth interviews as a method of collecting data. According to Creswell (2007) a semi structured interview is a technique of corroborating data arises from different data sources. Before the start of the interview the researcher explained the purpose of the interview and each participant was assured of anonymity in order to give them a chance to make informed decision regarding their consent to participate in the study. The researcher further requested the participants to sign a consent form which gave the indication that the permission to conduct the interview and using the digital voice recorder in order to record the conversation was granted. The participants were advised that there was no right and wrong answer as the questions were about their experiences. Additionally, the participants were told to express themselves freely without any inhibition. Notes or memo was compiled by the researcher on the interview in order to ensure that important emerging issues are recorded.

3.9. Data Quality Control

According to Gibbs (2007) cited in (Creswell 2014: 201) "qualitative credibility relates to accuracy of the findings. This study established the result in a credible manner where individual transcripts were viewed and observing similarities from the perspective of the research participants. Smith and Osborn (2008) suggest that credibility, authenticity and research integrity could be assured by employing idiographic Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach. Furthermore, they suggested that the IPA's primary goal is to ensure that the researcher examines how different participants make sense of their experience. The researcher reflected and maintained a sense of consciousness and honesty to the study and the unfolding results while allowing transferability and dependability was established. Creswell and Miller (2000) refer to validity or credibility as one of the qualitative research strengths where accuracy on findings from the researcher standpoint and

participants are determined. Spencer *et al*; (2003) cited Lincoln and Guba (1985) who suggested five criteria which can be used by the researcher to evaluate the soundness of qualitative research. This includes credibility, transferability, dependability, conformability and authenticity.

3.10. Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis was supported by Nvivo a computer-aided software programme which was used for the purposes of data coding. The researcher analysed the data using thematic analysis which is the qualitative method to analyse and also report to the themes within data. Thematic analysis was appropriate to this study because of its nature in identifying and understanding the knowledge and experience of the participant through examining the patterns presents within the data.

This following clarify the steps that were used by the researcher to identify the themes which are used to deliberate findings namely:

A) Familiarisation with the data set through repeated readings

Familiarisation is the first step requires that the researcher must be fully immersed and also be actively engaged in the data. This was supported by Terre Blanche, Durheim and Painter (2006) when they indicated that familiarization is the critical state that the researcher immerses and pay attention to interview transcripts and notes. The researcher firstly transcribed the interactions and then reading, she also re-read the transcripts. She further listened to the recoding in order to ensure that the data reflect exactly what the participants revealed. The researcher ensured that the initial ideas were noted down. Braun and Clarke (2012) argue that it is very important that the researcher have a comprehensive understanding of the content of the interaction and ensure that he or she has familiarised him-/herself with all aspects of the data. This step provides the foundation for the subsequent analysis.

B) Initial code generation;

This is the second step undertaken by the researcher following familiarisation with the data, the researcher further identified preliminary codes which are the features of the data that appear interesting and meaningful (Braun and Clarke (2012)).

C) Construction of preliminary themes;

Construction of preliminary themes is the third step which the researcher carried out as the process for interpretive analysis of the collated codes. The researcher ensured that the appropriate and relevant data extracts are sorted according to overarching themes. Thereafter the researcher's thought process alluded to the connection between codes, subthemes, and themes (Braun and Clarke (2012)).

D) Refinement of themes through comparison with coded extracts and the entire dataset;

According to Braun and Clarke (2012:5) refinement of themes requires that a researcher to deeper review the identified themes and also he or she needs to question whether to combine, refine, separate, or discard initial themes. "Data within themes should cohere together meaningfully, while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes. This is usually done over two phases where the themes need to be checked in relation to the coded extracts (phase 1), and then for the overall data set (phase 2)" This step is where the researcher can generate a thematic map.

E) Naming and defining themes and

This step is where the researchers refines and define the themes and possible subthemes within the data. The researcher should continue with the analysis in order to further enhance the identified themes. "The researcher is required to provide theme names and clear working definitions that capture the essence of each theme in a concise and punchy manner". At this particular point, a unified story of the data emerges from the themes (Braun and Clarke (2012)).

F) Generate the narrative report of the findings".

Finally, the researcher is required to "transform her analysis into an interpretable piece of writing by using vivid and compelling extract examples that relate to the themes, research question, and literature". It is important that the report communicate clearly the results of the analysis in a way that is understandable by the reader of the merit and validity of the analysis. Furthermore, the researcher must ensure that the report goes beyond a mere description of the themes and shows an analysis that is supported with empirical evidence which answers the research question (Braun and Clarke (2012)).

Thematic analysis is useful and allows for new themes to emerge and expand the knowledge on the topic. Babbie (2014) highlighted the necessity of using popular software when coding data collected so that it can be easily retrievable in future and be used by other researchers. The importance of

using thematic analysis is that prioritises the subjective reality of the participants while reporting to their experiences. According to Braun and Clarke, (2006: 81) “thematic analysis looks at how people’s experiences meanings and realities to an extent influence and regulate the societal structures and how these structures in turn influence, control and limit peoples’ experiences, meanings and reality”. The researcher referred to Braun and Clarke (2006) in the process of analysing data. The researcher started by reading the interview transcript one by one, line by line and re-reading all the transcripts of the interviews, she further listened to audio recorded data and prominent and profound note were taken as part of this process. This allowed the researcher to highlight matters of interest. Reading the data transcript allowed the researcher to absorb the surface meaning of the words which helped as a trigger for coding and analysis. The relevant information which was relevant to this particular research study was labeled and different highlighter color codes to specify different themes and categories.

The researcher organised the material and ensured that the data is fully coded and ended this phase by collating codes and relevant data. This process was done in order to help the researcher to fully understand the meaning of data and also to find possible relationship within the data. The researcher further organised, arranged and classified data into different categories and subcategories. The researcher proceeded by searching the themes, that might be hidden within the data. The researcher ended this step by collating all the coded data which was appropriate to each theme. The researcher continued with the following step which is reviewing themes, whereby all the developed themes were reviewed in relation to all coded data. This step was important and allowed the researcher to conduct quality check. During this particular step, the researcher started by examining the themes against the collated extract of data to ensure that themes are convincing and provided a compelling story about the data.

3.11. Ethical Considerations

According to Kaiser (2009) ensuring confidentiality and anonymity by qualitative researchers, while offering a rich and complete explanation of social life offers distinctive challenges. These challenges should be effectively looked at in the ethical consideration phase of a research project. The current study employed Ethical codes of conducting research prescribed by the University of Kwazulu-Natal’s High Degree Committee. Section one of UKZN Research Ethics Policy, articulates the importance of high standard of honesty and integrity which researcher is expected to demonstrate. Participants were fully informed about what is the research study is about and its benefits (Cooper and Schindler, 2010). Each participant was given a letter with information about the study and they were asked to provide written consent to participate. Additionally, participants were asked to provide consent to be voice recorded.

3.12. Confidentiality and Anonymity

The researcher ensured that information collected was treated in a strict confidential and anonymity manner. In essence participants in this study were assured of anonymity and confidentiality at all times and they were advised about their rights to pull out from participating in the study at any time should they feel uncomfortable to continue. Pseudonyms were used in this study to allow participants to articulate their view freely and effectively as their names were not revealed.

3.13. Limitations of the Study

Rowley (2014) states that all research studies have limitations. Hence, researchers are expected to make reasonable decision when conducting a study taking into consideration limited resources and time. With regards to limitations, this study only focused on one research organisation with a small sample size and cannot generalise the results. The researcher recruited 28 participants but only 18 agreed to participate due to their busy work schedules and travelling out of the country. However given the qualitative nature of the study, the aim was not to generalise but to provide description of the research question which was facilitated by a semi structured interview guide (Creswell, 2014).

3.14. Conclusion

This chapter presented the research design, data collection method and how the data was analysed and provided information regarding ethical considerations which were employed on this particular study as well as the study limitations.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

The study aimed to explore strategic paradoxes, both intended and emergent strategies at Human Sciences Research Council. This is important, as it will allow organisation to make strategic choices and better deal with the changing business environment. Using thematic analysis and Nvivo software, the findings were analysed and key themes were identified and presented in this chapter, in a quest to address the study aim.

This chapter reflects on how strategic paradoxes emerged, shaped and manifested in various level of the organisation. To this effect, the chapter presents an array of the assumptions underlying the process taken by strategic leaders when they deal with the intended and emergent strategies. The chapter begins by providing demographical data of the participants illustrated by a table and brief profile of the participants. This was followed by the discussion of each theme and sub-themes which was guided by the conceptual framework and literature. This study was guided by qualitative paradigm, in order to gain in-depth understanding of the strategic paradoxes. The researcher recruited 28 organisation leaders working at HSRC in different departments. All the recruited participants are responsible by strategic planning and control in their respective departments, however only 18 participants accepted to participate in this particular study. The researcher conducted face to face interview and other interviews were conducted telephonically due to distance of location.

4.2. Participants' profiles

Note: The following are the correct titles but all names are pseudonyms for the purposes of anonymity.

Table: 4.1 Participants profile

Participants

No	Name	Race	Gender	Year of experience in leadership role
1	Professor A	White	Female	14
2	Professor B	Coloured	Female	10
3	Professor C	Black	Male	8
4	Professor D	Black	Male	15
5	Professor E	White	Female	2
6	Ms. A	White	Female	20
7	Professor F	White	Male	8
8	Ms. B	Black	Female	12
9	Mr. A	White	Male	10
10	Doctor A	Black	Male	3
11	Mr. B	Indian	Male	10
12	Ms. C	Black	Female	10
13	Ms. D	White	Female	5
14	Ms. E	White	Female	10
15	Ms. F	Black	Female	7
16	Mr. C	Indian	Male	12
17	Mr. E	Black	Male	3
18	Mr. F	Black	Male	10

Professor A: White female, holds an executive position. Her role includes strategic planning, leading and controlling the department. She is also responsible for the day to day and approval of operations within her department. She is a senior academic leader and leads her own research projects and collaborates with the international academics in different areas of the word. She has worked at Human Sciences for more than 14 years in a leadership role and as a senior researcher. She has +-30 people reporting under her who include the research and administration team.

Professor B: Colored female, in executive level. Her role includes strategic planning, leading and controlling the department. She is also responsible for the day to day and approval of operations within her department. She works as academic leader and lead multiple projects. She is passionate about helping non marginalized communities. She works in collaboration with international academics as well as universities across the continent. She has more than 10 year's leadership experience at Human Sciences. She is leads a department with +- 70 personnel.

Professor C: Black male, holds an executive position. His responsibilities include strategic planning, leading and controlling the department. He is also responsible for the day to day and approval of operations within his units. He has been with Human Sciences Research Council for more than 8 years in a leadership role. He also works as a senior academic and leads multiple projects. He is a statistician and offers training to other researchers from time to time. His role includes collaborating with other researcher locally and internationally and also works with researchers from the different universities. His is in charge of the department with +-40 people including the research and administration team.

Professor D: Black male, holds a senior management position. His role includes working in conjunction with the executive director in strategic planning for the department. He is also responsible for managing the research and administration team based in his office. He has 15 years' experience in leadership role. He has made a name for himself internationally through his research. He also collaborates with international researchers and other researchers from different universities.

Professor E: White female, holds a senior management position. Her role includes working in conjunction with the executive director in strategic planning for the department, and other issues related to leading and directing the department. She is responsible for managing the research team based in her office. She has 2 years' experience in leadership role.

Ms. A: White female, senior management working in conjunction with the executive director. Her role includes setting up organisation performance target and organisation strategic plan. Her office is also responsible for monthly monitoring of the department performance and control. She has more than 20 year in a leadership role.

Professor F: White male, in a senior management position. His role includes strategic planning for the department. He is works at the head of the office; other duties include approval of the day to day activities in his office and also manage projects and project staff in his office. He has 8 years' experience in leadership role.

Ms. B: Female black, holds a senior management position. Her role includes strategic planning for her department. She is responsible for managing all employees in her department including approval of the day to day activities in her department. She has 12 years' experience in leadership role.

Mr. A: White male, in a senior management level, who works in conjunction with the director in his department in strategic planning and allocation of work for the team based in his office. He is also responsible for approval of the day to day activities for his department. He has more than 10 years' experience in leadership role.

Doctor A: Black male, head of the office who works in conjunction with the director. He is part of the department strategic team. He is responsible for the development and work allocations for Masters and PhD interns based in his office. He has 3 years' experience in a leadership role in his department.

Mr. B: Indian male, holds a senior management position, who works in conjunction with the director of his department in strategic planning. He is also responsible for the management of all the operations activities in his office. He has cleaners, receptionist and securities reporting directly to him. He has more than 10 years' experience in a leadership role.

Ms. C: Black female who holds a management position. She has more than 10 years of experience in a leadership role. Her responsibilities include working in conjunction with the directors in her department in strategic planning. She also manages the day to day activities in her office. She is also responsible for supervising and managing security staff and cleaners in her office.

Ms. D: White, female who works at a senior management position. Her role includes working hand in hand with the executive director and other department leaders in strategic management. She is responsible for supervising and managing the administration team in her department. She has 5 years' experience in a leadership role.

Ms. E: White female, holds a senior management in her department. She works hand in hand with the executive director and other leaders in her department in strategic planning. She is also responsible for supervising and managing the administration team in her department. She has more than 10 years' experience in leadership role.

Ms. F: Black female, holds a senior management position in her department. She deals with strategic planning in conjunction with the executive director and other leaders in her department. Her role includes supervising and managing administration team in her department. She has 7 years' experience working in leadership role in her department.

Mr. C: Indian male, in management level. His role includes strategic planning for the office, managing more than 30 project staff. He is also responsible for the performance of the office, including project financials. He has 12 years' experience in a leadership role.

Mr. D: Black male. He occupies a management position. He is part of the strategic team for the office. His role includes managing project staff and project deliverables in his office. He has 3 years' experience in a leadership role.

Mr. E: Black male who holds a senior management position. He is responsible for strategic planning for the office as well as managing project staff. He has 10 years' experience in leadership role.

4.3. Presentation and discussion of interview result

Data for this study was collected through semi-structured interviews. All the interviews were audio recorded. Data was transcribed from the tape recorded interviews and converted from raw data into meaningful information in order to understand organisational leaders' knowledge and experience related to intended and emergent strategies. When the interviews were conducted the researcher also took notes as the interviews were recorded to avoid missing information where the recorder might have been interrupted.

According to Pope, Mays and Popay (2006:69) "the researcher groups the data into themes, and examines all the cases in the study to make sure that all the manifestations of each theme have been accounted for and compared". In essence, thematic analysis involves the process of identifying, analyzing, organising, describing, and reporting themes found within the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Data collected from interviews was analysed using a thematic analysis, as data was broken down into different themes and categories that emerged from the responses and from themes relevant to the context of this study. Braun and Clarke (2012) suggested that thematic analysis is the important processes used the researcher where patterns or themes are identified within qualitative data.

This study adopted Braun and Clarke (2012) six steps framework to analyse data. The researcher started by reading the interview transcript one by one, line by line and re-reading all the transcripts of the interviews, she further listened to audio recorded data and prominent and profound note were taken as part of this process. This allowed the researcher to highlight matters of interest. Reading the data transcript allowed the researcher to absorb the surface meaning of the words which helped as a trigger for coding and analysis. This stage is referred to as *data familiarisation*, where the transcripts are read and themes are studied in order to allow the researcher the ability to list key ideas and recurrent themes (Pope, Ziebland and Mays, 2000). The relevant information which was relevant to this research study was labeled with different highlighter color codes to specify different themes and categories. This step is called coding. *Coding* relates to the process where codes are labeled and allocated to the units and later grouped to categories (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Terre Blanche and Painter (2006: 324) add that coding entailed marking different sections of the data as being instances of, or relevant to, one or more of your themes. The researcher organised the material

and ensured that the data was fully coded and ended this phase by collating codes and relevant data. This process was done in order to help the researcher to fully understand the meaning of data and also to find possible relationship within the data. The researcher further organised, arranged and classified data into different categories and subcategories.

The researcher proceeded by *Searching the themes*, that might be hidden within the data. The researcher ended this step by collating all the coded data which was appropriate to each theme. The researcher continued with the following step; *Reviewing themes*, whereby all the developed themes were reviewed in relation to all coded data. This step was important and allowed the researcher to conduct quality check. During this particular step, the researcher started by examining the themes against the collated extract of data to ensure that themes were convincing and provided a compelling story about the data.

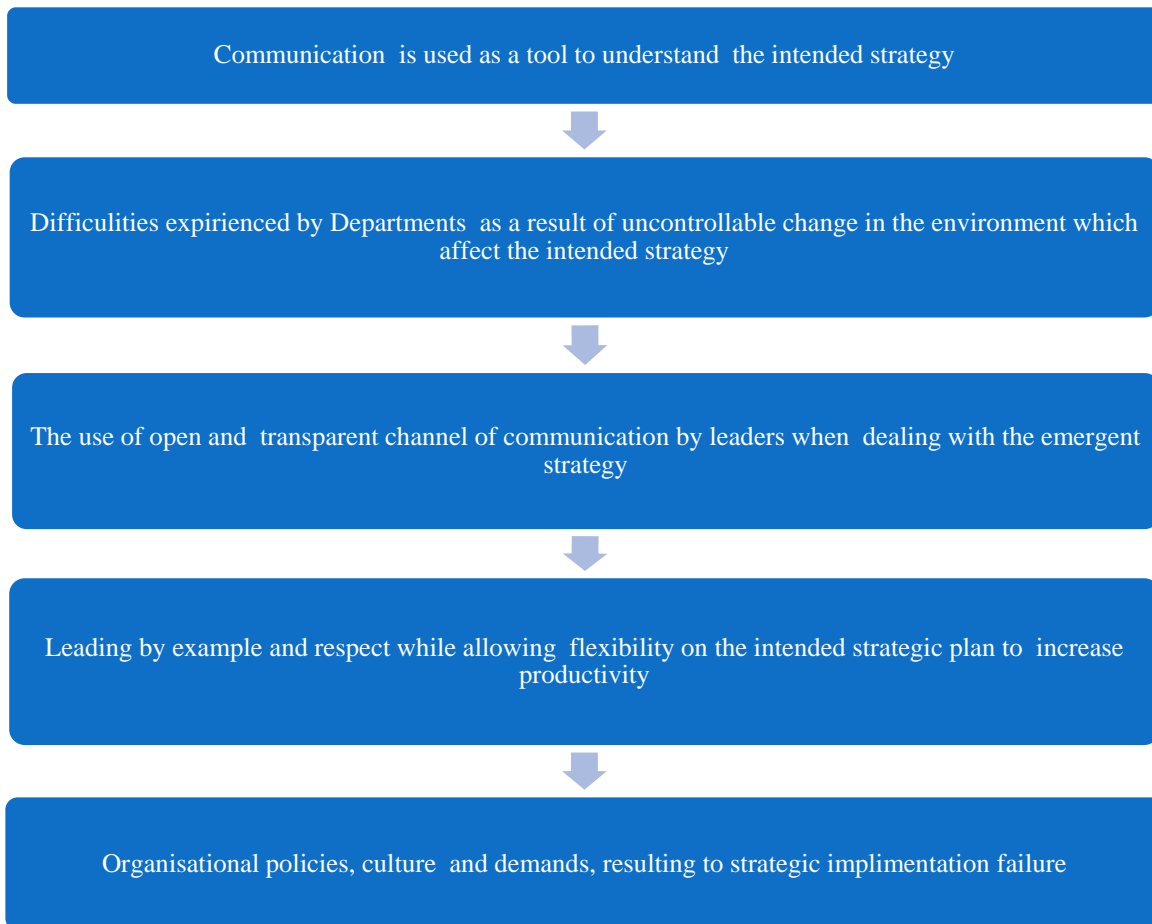
The following were taken in to consideration when the researcher was reviewing themes:

- Do themes make enough sense?
- Checked if the data supported the themes
- She was conscious of trying not to fit too much into themes.
- Investigated if themes overlapped and if they were really separate themes.
- Investigated if there were themes within the themes?
- And finally whether there were other themes within the data?

Step five that was taken by the researcher was *Defining and naming themes*, this was done by looking at what does the themes saying, by writing a detailed analysis of each theme. In this process the researcher investigated what is really themes telling and how does the identified themes fit in this particular study.

Following is the thematic map that illustrates the relationship between identified themes and sub-themes.

Figure 4: Emanating themes



The final step taken by the researcher was *Writing up*, by providing a compelling story about the data analysis. This was done by connecting themes, building on the previous themes in order to provide coherent story regarding the data.

4.3.1. Communication is used as a tool to understand the intended strategy

The Executive directors interviewed reported that communication is the key to avoiding strategic paradoxes, and encouraging strategic commitment amongst employees. They also believed that when the employee understands the organisation’s mission and vision, this could eliminate the problem that might arise in relation to the intended organisational plan. These participants also mentioned that they communicate these plans and resolve issues, during strategic meetings known as Lekgotla which are inclusive of everyone in the department.

“We use the Lekgotla as an opportunity to work face to face, to communicate with each other, and to deal with trickier issues which are related to the strategic plans and the programme or department as a whole” (Interviewee 7- Executive Director, Female).

One of the Executive directors highlighted the importance of communication. She commented that in order for the department to succeed in the event of change it was important to discuss the intended plan or vision with the employees.

“When change happens, you really need to have a vision, you need to have a vision that people can buy into, right. You need people to support the vision that you have, in the department, in order for it to be successful” (Interviewee 14)

Commenting on the need to develop a departmental plan, one of the Executive directors made the following analogy:

“An example is of somebody who was walking passed a building site and asks a brick layer what he was doing, and he said he was just laying bricks. And he asks the next person beside him and he said he was building a cuspidor and who is the more motivated person?” (Interviewee 6).

In order to make sense of this analogy, the director considered the person building the cuspidor as the one who was motivated than the individual laying the bricks. She felt that if employees knew and understood why they execute a particular task and how that will contribute to the organisation, they would perform better than those who just carry out a task delegated to them without understanding the importance of that task. Other participants at a managerial level reported the lack of communication from the top-down brought about tensions and anxieties due to a lack of understanding of the intended organisational plan. This tension and anxiety is highlighted in the interviewee below:

“We are not always kept on the loop because we are not Head office as such, and sometimes decisions are made in Head office or Cape Town office without informing us in the Durban office, and all of a sudden we will be told that we need to do this now, then we will have to do it on the run” (Interviewee 11).

The participant further mentioned that they felt that the lack of communication posed a problem as they were expected to lead employees. The found that the leaders also at times did not fully understand the department’s intended plans. Participants reported that communicating the department plan was important as it provides a better understanding of the intended plan amongst employees. The study also found that communication also helps when there is sudden change in plans. According to one interviewee communication was about:

“I think everybody needs to know about department plan and what going on in the origination but sometimes we will have no idea of what is going on, no clue what going to happen” (Interviewee 11).

4.3.2. Difficulties experienced by Department as a result of uncontrollable changes in the environment which affect the intended strategy

A number of the participants gave insight into the effects of environmental demands and change which result to changes in the department intended plan. A number of the participants revealed that at times, they struggled to move forward with project work due to organisational processes that delay or hinder the successful implementation of projects. This hindrance is captured in the extract below:

“The strategic plan changes all the time as we are working in the research organization. We deal with changes, due to the changes in the environment which sometimes affects our project time lines and deliverables. Eh as I have said, there are so many changes in the organization. In order for us to work or conduct a project, we need to request clearance which sometimes can be delayed for more than 5 months while staff have already been employed and we end up with contracted staff and no work for those staff members.” (Interviewee 15).

A number of the participants reported that there were external and/or internal factors that affect intended plans, whether project related or unit related which often put pressure on staff. The study found that projects were often understaffed and this thus puts pressure on existing staff to take on more workload:

“...our lives revolve around the changes, the project environment changes all the time. Sometimes funders request new things which were not planned originally. And the other thing is that we write so many proposals and when most of them are awarded at the same time, this puts a lot of pressure on the staff because we have the same personnel; and maybe for example we had 10 projects and then we receive an addition of 6 projects, the same staff members are expected to put in more effort. We have a good team which are willing to put up extra hours even if there are not paid the overtime we always give time off whenever necessary.”(Interviewee 15).

Participants mentioned that certain demands expected of them by their organisation were often not met due to internal policies that hinder these demands, a fact that led to unmet external deadlines with funders not being met. Delays in project approvals often left participants putting their projects on hold and affecting the staff employed in projects.

“On the research level, in terms of the implementing projects, often things go wrong, so the project runs over. The project running longer than your original time line, one example was one ‘Do Art’ study, and we had to get permission from the department of health to implement the study, and they had difficulties with what we were proposing which was the community base model of delivering treatment to the community. They [the department] were not there yet in terms of their policy. So, we had like 8 months delay in term of trying to get their permission in various meetings and various levels, at the same time we had staff who were employed. So, it’s very hard when those unexpected things happen. But, we had conversation with the funder about the change in the time line because we should be on the field but we are not. We had to work very hard with staff because, how do we keep the staff, for 8 months, motivated, optimistic about training, getting them involved, communicating and constantly engaging, so that we can keep them at motivated level?” (Interviewee 7).

One of the participants mentioned that changes to an intended plans were affected by the lack of external control they had when it comes to projects, particularly in relation to funding:

“So it’s the money issue, I think I spoke a little about that. If we planned to get the grant and we don’t get it or, we plan to submit a proposal and we were not successful. So the external and the internal environment make a difference. The external environment is hard to anticipate so if we put the best effort and we don’t get the funding then we must change the plan...” (Interviewee 6).

Some of the participants felt that the uncontrollable conditions enforced by external circumstances caused constant anxieties, and demotivated employees. These conditions also led to changes in the intended plan because internal organisational demands expected from them were met.

Political mandate also emerged amongst issues that change the organisation plan as this requires the compliance within the organisation. Therefore, the organisation plan change result into unexpected or sudden rapid shifts within the department plans causing the onset of anxieties among staff:

“...at the HSRC we are funded by the Government, if a new political system come to play they might decide that this is not the key on our Agenda, so they might say, ok, the mandate of the HSRC is not focusing on this anymore but now it’s focusing on 1, 2, 3, that actually influences a change of plan... because [when] that mandate is changed, you know what, there is a lot of anxiety when changes are happening in every kind of situation.” (Interviewee 8).

The study revealed that changes in leadership structures such as resignations or relocation of heads of staff involved in the implementation of proposed plans and who are “dependent on... to move the plan ahead”, are seen as a negative and also contributed to changes in plans:

“Staffing is huge thing for us in the execution of our plan, depending on who is at the leadership, who is the Executive Director. The Executive Directors in our department have changed three times, with that change of the leadership, comes change of the plan, change in how the plan is implemented, the structure, who is responsible for what. So I think it all start with that leadership structure” (Interviewee 2- Senior Manager, Female).

In addition, the short term contracts offered by the organisation were also identified as problematic in that the intended strategic plans failed due to constant resignations (due to job insecurity) of these short term staff.

Nevertheless, one participant reported that change was not always negative, because often times it produced better results in terms of achieving the intended organisation plan. One participant said that:

“...But also, the other thing is, beside speaking about staff leaving, we’ve got staff coming in who also influence the plan, they come in with new ideas, new strengths that can also shift the plan. Usually, that happens in a positive way” (Interviewee 8).

4.3.3. The usage of open and transparent channels of communication by leaders when dealing with the emergent strategy

One of the participants mentioned earlier that when the organisation deals with change in the intended plan, they try to motivate staff in order to cope with the emergent plan. Others suggested that keeping communication channels open at all times was important when dealing with any kind of change. It was suggested that if employees are informed as to why a change is taking place, this helps them makes sense of the change. In addition, they respond better and embrace change, and it will give them a sense of importance and belonging to the organisation, and not to be merely paper pushers:

“...communication is the key. People need to know what is the objective, why is change necessary, and then they can respond to that. But if people don’t know why change is necessary and they may attribute the change either try to make them work harder take advantage of them or take disadvantage of them or the other. And those kinds of perceptions can have a negative impact around the project team.” (Interviewee 10).

The data revealed that when departments within the organisation are deal with constant and continuous change, it is important to try and alleviate the tension experienced as a result of the change. This can be done by strengthening communication, making communication open,

transparent, letting everyone know what the proposed intentions are, and keeping the plan open so that everyone clearly understands and work towards a common goal:

“...organisational culture influences many things. And if you have a culture of openness, transparency, clear communication, thoughtfulness, understanding for each other, diplomacy, all of those things feed into how you can reach the common goal. If you’re culture is that you achieve the common goal, it makes it easy to attain that goal. If everybody is speaking in different ways, and all have different ideas, competing intensions, no one speaking to each other, you can’t execute that goal.” (Interviewee 2).

Transparency also came up where, some of the participants mentioned that transparency regarding any change is important, as it allows staff members to embrace emergent change. One of the female interviewees reported that project demands and the shortage of staff, resulted in staff working overtime. In these instances, they compensate staff members’ overtime by giving them time off. Other participants mentioned that when dealing with the continuous changes in the department, they would suggest trying to relax certain demands so as to accommodate new demands in order to maintain a good relationship with the staff:

“If for instance, you can relax certain demands because of new demands, you must try to do that. When you cannot do that, you must be able to ensure that a good explanation is given to people so that they don’t get discouraged and also what they have done is dully acknowledged” (Interviewee 5).

A number of the participants felt that constant conversations with teams, looking for positive aspects, related to the emergent change, while learning about the positive aspects within the change is important and can improve productivity:

“The more you discuss and talk about the positive things even in that situation, more positive things will be identified, and in a short space of time you will see more positives out of the difficult situation, so that is how I deal with the tension. So when there are those challenges that is the time when one need to talk more with the team, have a constant conversation with the team, look for positive aspects, in those challenges, look at what can be leant and can be don’t differently under those challenges.” (Interviewee 4).

Some participants reported that they invest in having a good structure or team members who are equipped with more knowledge, particularly when it comes to intended and emergent strategies, in order to prevent disasters within the department. One of the participants mentioned that change is constant. Therefore, it is important to manage the tensions that arise from this change. Furthermore, there needs to be an understanding of the root cause of the problem or reason for the change before starting the process of implementing an emergent strategy.

“As long as tension is managed, it is a necessary event in the running and function of a department. Importantly everyone need to look at the origin of tension and give them self-time to assess the situation and how important the issue causing tension is, as it is central to project success and the achievement of the objectives”(Interviewee 12).

4.3.4. Leading by example and respect while allowing flexibility on the intended strategic plan to increase productivity

One of the participants felt that when there is a constant change in the organisation, as a result of the internal or external factors, leading by example is the answer which can motivate employees and promote effectiveness. Communication was also mentioned as a tool used in order to ensure that all staff member understand why change is important and the reason behind the change in order to reduce frustration within the employees and get to the source of their frustration:

“So I think leading by example is the right way of doing it and also talk it through will one on one individuals. I like to have one on one meeting with the people I work with once every three weeks, in order to keep communication going and if we talk it through why the person is feeling frustration, or feeling emotional about something, and that is unpacked and the root cause. So I think strengthen the communication, one on one is important, being accessible and leading by example.” (Interviewee 2).

One of the executive directors believed that respect is important when you are a leader, and also to allowing flexibility amongst your team:

“I also made a rule that we don’t have drama in the work place that we treat each other respectfully, and that we are colleagues and that even if there are hierarchies and bureaucracy in the system here at the HSRC... the most important principle is respectful relationships and engagements. And that helps us when thing go wrong, because whatever happen we treat each other respectfully.” (Interviewee 6).

4.3.5. Organisational policies, culture and demands resulting to strategic implementation failure

Participants at a managerial level mentioned that they often experienced negative feelings when confronted with the demands of their internal organisational environment. A number of the participants reported that they felt unsupported and experienced a lack of empathy from the organisation when pressure is placed upon project work and meeting targets. One interviewee said:

“Our organisation culture is very different, the important things for them is target, they are not interested in how you get there or if you have enough manpower to achieve those set targets. To go back to your question I don’t think they support our intended plan. For example you can put forward that you need 10 staff members in a department which will allow you to deliver your department work, but they will simply tell you that there is no money to pay salaries for those people yet the target remains the same. This means working longer hours and sometimes staff members will work during their lunch break in order to ensure that the work is done on time. There is really no support from the organisations side” (Interviewee 16).

Within the unsupportive culture, participants mentioned that they strive to create an environment that is accommodating and supportive:

“I think within our office we are trying to have a culture of supporting each other, we are trying to have a culture of doing our best in whatever we do so that we don’t have to redo something, when we do something for the first time I must be done correct.” (Interviewee 17).

Beyond being supportive, they aim to make the environment conducive for work:

“Yah! I think we try to develop a culture where people will feel like there is consultation, where there is communication, where it is a good place to be, although this sometimes will be in vain because of the organisations high targets and demands” (Interviewee, Female).

Some of the participants even alluded to the fact that these set targets do not only put pressure on them but also cause divisions between departments due to the fact that, senior staff will also have to impose these targets onto their subordinates, even if they know it is not often easy. Participants reported that often times they have plans for their departments; however these have to be modified to fit those imposed by the organisation:

“We have our own plan; our plan has to fit into the plan of the institution because we are part of the bigger institution...” (Interviewee 4).

Participants also mentioned that they sometimes struggle with the demands and targets set by the organisation and even in their attempts to do good and meet targets their efforts are not always acknowledged:

“HSRC is not like other organisation, the important thing is the target which they set out for our programme and this is very difficult because it puts a lot of pressure on staff. For example, a research team needs to raise external income which is part of the target set for them, but this is not always easy because we cannot control the external environment. All we can do is our best, but in most cases our best is not enough for the HSRC.” (Interviewee 15).

Participants also revealed that the organisation has certain systems in place that undermine underperforming departments while praising well performing departments:

“Organisation culture eh, I think it is a system of targetism. At the beginning of the year they give targets to all the departments and they use the system of ‘name and shame’, so that every time you are reminded of what you have achieved and not achieved” (Interviewee 5).

Most participants felt that the organisation does not support their department intended strategy or plan as they felt that the organisation pushes demands on them, and leave them without any support or space in which to meet those demands:

“I have a little bit of the view that the organisation, they have their own plan and things. But in terms of the programmes / department they set their own demands on us, and they tend to push out our own plan and our plans get left out the programme themselves...I don’t really feel like there’s a lot of support from the broad organisation for the department strategic plan. We are kind of being left out on our own devices, where we have to push ourselves and be demanding of other units. That influences our plan...” (Interviewee 3).

Another participant pointed to the lack of support by the organization by stating that:

“Our organisations culture is very different. The important thing for them is targets. They are not interested in how you get there or if you have enough manpower to achieve those set targets. To go back to your question, I don’t think they support our intended plan” (Interviewee 16).

The lack of support in the organisation forces the department leaders to push employees in doubling their workload in order to meet the organisations’ demands. Requests to get additional staff to assist in reducing the work load and ensuring targets are met efficiently are often rejected:

“For example you can put forward that you need 10 staff members in your department, which will allow you to deliver your department work. But they will simply tell you that there is no money to pay salaries for those people, yet the target remains the same. This means working longer hours, and sometimes staff members will work during their lunch breaks in order to ensure that the work is done on time. There is really no support from the organisations side” (Interviewee 16).

The participants also felt that most of the time, at the executive level they have to fight and push back while trying to ensure the organisation support their department intended plan:

“Most often I feel like there is no support, I feel like I am swimming upstream all the time, against HSRC bureaucracy and so on” (Interviewee 7).

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter presented the major themes that presented themselves across the interviews. The study found that there were different factors that influenced how strategic paradoxes were shaped within the HSRC. Communication as a tool or technique was viewed as one of the key factors that influenced the manner in which HSRC management and staff handles intended strategy and changes within the intended plans. Another key point was how the demands and changes of either the external or internal environment such as organizational policies, government rules and regulations, funding deadlines, etc. affected the operation of the staff, as well as created tensions and anxieties which affect the intended strategic plan of the department. Various strategies were mentioned as a means to deal with the changes in intended plans. The traits of leaders during challenging moments were described, and a more focused discussion on the operations and effects of the organisation’s culture were highlighted. In conclusion, the lack of department strategic support experienced by participants and staff within the HSRC was discussed. All the above factors gave an insight into how staff within the HSRC experienced and dealt with strategic paradoxes.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter reflects on the findings and interpret the results in the context of existing theory. The chapter connect the research topic which sought to explore intended and emergent strategies which is appropriate in the context of strategic paradoxes. The data was collected using qualitative methodology and was presented and analysed in Chapter 4. This study was conducted at HSRC using face to face interviews which took 45 minute to 1 hour. The participants of this study are organisational leaders responsible for strategic planning in their respective departments.

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To gain an understanding of strategic paradox in the context of a research led organisation.
2. To explore the intended and emergent strategy in the organisation.
3. To determine the relationship between intended strategy and emergent strategy.
4. To understand the impact of intended and emergent strategies on decision making in research organisations.
5. To explore how managers ensure flexibility while dealing with intended and emergent strategies in the organisation.

This study begins by discussing the findings under each theme and compared them with other studies or work which was done by other researchers in the field of management in order to be meaningful. The results of this study are categorised and linked to each of the objectives of this study.

The following themes were identified in chapter four includes:

1. Communication used as a tool to understand the intended strategy
2. Difficulties experienced by Department as a result of uncontrollable changes in the environment which affect the intended strategy
3. The usage of open and transparent channels of communication by leaders when dealing with the emergent strategy
4. Leading by example and respect while allowing flexibility on the intended strategic plan to increase productivity.
5. Organisation policies, culture and demands resulting to strategic implementation failure.

5.2. Communication is used as a tool to understand the intended strategy.

First objective: To gain an understanding of strategic paradox in the context of Human Research Sciences Council.

This study revealed that the organisation is dealing with the strategic paradoxes almost on a daily basis because of the nature of the business. However, the organisation leader finds communications as the best tool to understand the strategic paradoxes related to intended strategy. This allows them to be in a better position to make strategic decisions and increase performance amongst employees. The findings revealed that communication is the key to avoid strategic paradoxes. This study found that when the intended and the emergent strategic plan of the department is communicated with all the employees, it has a positive contribution because everyone will have an understanding of where the department is going. The study findings further revealed that if the staff or employees understood the mission and vision of the organisation, this eliminates challenges that emerge from the intended organisation plan. This study also discovered that, allowing the employees to contribute in the department intended plan is important as it allows the employees to feel that, there are part of the organisation bigger picture which result to the achieving the department objectives.

The findings of this study are in line with the literature which suggested that intended strategy relate to the methodology used by the organisation to form a detailed plan which will direct the organisation to achieve its objectives. Hence it is important to clearly communicate the intended strategy with all employees to promote smooth implementation (Havensvid, Holmen, Linné & Pedersen, 2017). This is similar to David's (2011) work which found that the process of strategic planning includes clear communication of the intended plan to all employees in a manner which allows smooth implementation and achieving organisation's objectives. According to Smith *et al*; (2017) intended strategy relates to the organisation plan which is clearly communicated and accepted among different employees in order to succeed. Communication is very important as it offers direction and focus in the organisation. Furthermore, it is a process of strategic management which provides the link between key strategic issues and the organisation as a whole (Steyn, 2000). Communication function is the part of the strategic process used by the organisation from the top management down to other levels of the business environment. From the discussion regarding intended strategy and communication, the findings suggest that it is important that the organisation communicate well with all the different levels of the business in order to ensure competitiveness.

The findings revealed that development of the intended strategy and leading is a function of the organisation leaders. However, it will be difficult to do this without effective communication. Therefore intended strategy cannot be separated with effective communication in order to achieve the organisation's objectives. Doorley and Garica (2007:10) define corporate communication as being "the centralised management of communication on behalf of the organization; the function is a critical contributor to an organisation's reputation – and thereby its competitiveness, productivity

and financial success". Thus, according to Dooley and Garcia (2007) the impact of the communication in the organisation intended strategy reaches beyond external and internal stakeholder, it importantly affect the bottom line of the organisation. Organisation leaders use communication in order to benefit the organisation an example communicating intended strategic plan for the organisation include communicating vision, mission and strategic objectives. Communication relates to packages of decision which the organisation uses to attract targeted audiences while ensuring that the intended strategy is understood within the organisation (Angelopulo and Barker,2013).

The current study also found that there is lack of communication from top to bottom in the organisation. Managers revealed that the executive management does not clearly communicate with them, which proved to be a problem because their role included giving direction to employees. This caused the problems and tension between the managers and the employees because when managers are not clear of what is expected of them, and when it is expected, it become very difficult to lead others.

To respond to this problem, Donate and Canales (2012) suggested that it is the responsibility of the organisation managers to deal with daily operation, and this requires managers to communicate with the organisational leadership from top to bottom and bottom up, and their role is crucial factor on intended and emergent strategies. Grant and Parker (2009) argue that the role of the management in the organisation is important and their duty includes clearly communicating the intended department plan with all the employees in order to succeed. This is in line with White's (2004) argument which states that managers are expected to properly communicate with the employees in order to ensure the success of organisation. According to Bruning and Ledingham (2000) there is a great benefit if the organisation has a relationship and clear good communication will all the employees, it provides strategic benefit while allowing support from the internal and external stakeholders and enhance organisation image. The position of the middle managers or manager in the organisation is important regarding the intended strategic implementation. Due to the nature of manager's work which includes among other things knowledge of day to day activities, organisational processes, this automatically puts them in the position to advice higher level leadership regarding strategic decisions and direction as well as well as the potential problems in strategic implementation (Salih and Doll, 2013). Therefore, managers are critical in strategic implementation which requires executive management and middle management to communicate better in order to achieve organisation objectives.

It is important to note that the empirical data suggests that the manager can influence the intended strategic formulation process and their involvement is critical in order to ensure successful strategic implementation. This is also in line with Brenes, Mena and Molina's (2008) writings which indicate that the component of organisation intended strategy include commitment and communication amongst executive and middle management in order to succeed. The study revealed that communication is important and a beneficial factor to the intended strategic implementation, in the same token ,poor communication experienced by the managers in the organisation can be detrimental to the organisation failure.

5.3. Difficulties experienced by Department as a result of uncontrollable changes in the environment which affect the intended strategy

Second objective: To explore the intended and emergent strategy in the organisation.

The findings of this study revealed that different departments in the organisation have intended strategy which is used to guide the direction and contribute to the organisation success. However, having the intended strategy in place does not stop the internal or external environmental change which result to emergent strategy or affect the intended strategic. The study found that the organisation deals with the constant changes due to the internal and external environmental which cannot be controlled and this affects the intended strategy. The study findings also suggest that most of the time employees work in a panic mode as a result of the demand arising from the local and international funders including changes in the government mandates as these changes always come after the intended department plan has been put in place. These finding is in line with Rasche (2010) who argues that the environment in which organisation operates in can create pressure when the organisation is experiencing rapid change in the intended strategic plan and this can result into conflicts and dilemmas which need to be dealt with quickly in order of avoid organisation failure. According to Raynor (2007) the organisation internal and external forces which are opposite of what was expected are very problematic and they generally result in complexity and tension within the organisation. Business changing environment are the causes of the great pressure in which the organisation finds itself in and this requires strategic management where possible opportunities can be explored in order for the business to survive.

The other important information that was revealed by the findings is that intended strategic plan changes all the time due to the constant change in leadership which mostly happens before or in the middle of strategic implementation. When the department leader resigns or moves to another department after he or she has been working with all the employees and convincing them on why

the department intended strategy is of importance or sometimes the department might be in the process of strategic implementation when the shift in leadership takes place. This means that time and money is wasted because a process of a new plan will have to take place and might have been that, with the previous leadership, so many activities in the pursuit of strategic implementation would have already been completed. This reality requires the new leader to re-examine and think of how the department intended strategy should look like in order to succeed.

Liedtka (1998, in Graetz, 2002:456) suggest five major attributes of strategic thinking:

1. “Strategic thinking reflects a systems or holistic view that appreciates how the different parts of the organisation influence and impinge on each other as well as their different environments;
2. Strategic thinking embodies a focus on intent, in contrast with the traditional strategic planning approach that focuses on creating a fit between existing resources and emerging opportunities Strategic thinking involves thinking in time; strategic thinkers understand the interconnectivity of past, present and future;
3. Strategic thinking is hypothesis driven. Hypothesis generating and testing is central to strategic thinking activities, with the critical question being “What if?” followed by “If...then?” Strategic thinking spans the analytic-intuitive dichotomy that Mintzberg refers to in his definition of thinking as synthesis and planning as analysis;
4. Strategic thinking invokes the capacity to be intelligently opportunistic, to recognise and take advantage of newly emerging opportunities”.

When the new leader joins the department he or she needs to ensure that all the employees are committed to the new department intended strategy and also to ensure that the department strategy is clearly communicated. Nickols (2015) recommended the diagram below in order to guide the organisation leaders to deal with the strategic decision making process which will enable them to confront issues related to intended and emergent strategic matters.

Figure 5⁸: Strategic Decision Making



The study findings also showed that resignation of employees has a negative effect to the organisation as a result of short life span of the project, leading to employee resignation before the projects are completed. This causes the organisation to miss project deadline which might ruin the organisation's reputation. "HSRC mandate is to inform the effective formulation and monitoring of government policy; to evaluate policy implementation; to stimulate public debate through the effective dissemination of research-based data and fact-based research results; to foster research collaboration; and to help build research capacity and infrastructure for the human sciences". The HSRC is committed to using the public funds allocated to it to undertake and promote research that will benefit all the people of South Africa. Therefore, HSRC research is aimed at supporting societal goals, this research belongs to the public domain and as such should be able to withstand public scrutiny at all times.

Furthermore, HSRC research focuses on people, and the bulk of the information and data gathered is accordingly likely to be of a personal nature to the participants in the research. To honour the trust placed on the HSRC researchers by research participants, the researchers should at all times act correctly and in ways that respect the rights and dignity of the participants. The ethics guidelines contained in this Code of Research Ethics will consequently be made available to all participants in the research process". The mandate entrusted to HSRC requires that the organisation must employ a particular number of short term staff in order to work in different projects. Each department has different projects allocated to them and their intended strategy include how are they going to deliver on those project, how many full time and short term staff are needed in order to achieve their

⁸ Source: Nickols (2015)

objectives. The problem that was revealed by the findings is that short term staff resigned before the end date of their contract because they get better offers and job security in other organisations. When the department is awarded the project or research grant, the recruitment process starts immediately as per intended strategy. This means that the department has to train project staff in order to ensure adequate skills competencies and knowledge to perform their duties in order meet their objectives.

The organisations are obligated to put together a plan which outline human resource or employment status needed for a particular year as prescribed by the legislation (The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, RSA, 1997:11). This plan is very important strategic document because it outlines the number of human resources that are required in order to ensure the department meets its intended strategy. This plan seeks to understand if the department has enough staff member who has the right skill and competencies in order to ensure the department intended strategy are met as the same time meet the organisations overall strategy. Once the recruitment process is completed the department together with the Human resource department will put together enough resources and train all the project staff members so that they will be able to deliver on the department intended strategy. According to Noe (2008) it is important to involve department management when identifying the skills gaps required as they understand the intended strategy for the department.

However, when employees resign before the end of the projects this does not only affect the project but the department and the organisation, because a lot of money will have already been spent on the recruitment process as well as on the training of staff. The research project also delays because when the short term staffs resign the department will need to start the recruitment process from the beginning and also train employees. This affects the department's intended strategy as well as the organisation and department resources. The internal and external change in the organisation requires a quick turnaround strategy which details how these changes should be dealt with to avoid failure and commitment amongst employees in order to achieve the objective of the organisation (Grey, 2005).

5.4. The usage of open and transparent channels of communication by leaders when dealing with the emergent strategy

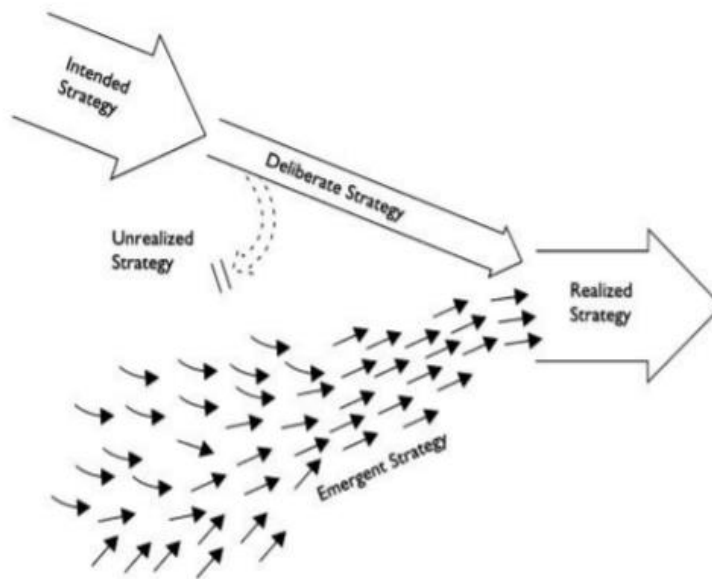
Objective three: To determine the relationship between intended strategy and emergent strategy.

This study revealed that there is a relationship between the intended and the emergent strategy. The researcher discovered that the leaders in the organisation believed that flexibility in the intended strategy and their ability to adapt to a pattern of unplanned action which is consistent over time as a result of changing environment allows emergent strategy to surface while ensuring that they do not deviate from the organisation's goal. The study also revealed that when the organisation is deals with the change on the intended plan, organisation leaders use motivation techniques in order to ensure that employees cope with the emergent plan, while keeping channels of communication open all the time. This allows the employee to understand why change is taking place and embrace and this in turn increases the productivity in the organisation.

The organisation leaders revealed that when there is constant change in the organisation, strengthening communication, transparency and letting everyone understand the why and what is leading to the change allows the employees to positively work towards a common goal. According to Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May and Walumbwa (2005) transparency within the organisation refers to a high level of openness, self-disclose and trust which are demonstrated by the organisation leaders in order to deal with issues related to strategies. When the organisation is dealing with the emergent strategy it is important for the leaders to be open in disclosing what is true in order to promote trust within the department. This makes things easy when there is a change or the department has to implement the emergent strategy as a result of the change in the environment or on the intended strategy because the foundation of trust will have already been built; and employees will easily accept the change when it occurs. These findings also showed that, it is important to understand the root cause of the problem or a reason why conditions of the intended plan changed before starting the process of implementing an emergent strategy. The department intended plan that is fully realised is referred to as deliberate strategies while the intended strategy that is not realised is referred to as unrealised strategy.

The other strategy is called emergent strategy where a realised strategic pattern was not necessary intended. The emergent strategy arises from the operational level of the department because the operations of the department are mostly affect how the organisation strategies are shaped (Barnes, 2008). "What does it mean for a strategy to emerge in an organisation, not guided by intentions?" (Mintzberg and Waters, 1985).

Figure 5⁹: Forms of strategy



According to Fuller-Love and Cooper (2000) emergent strategy requires management team which are flexible and have the ability to quickly adapt to a pattern of unplanned action, which are consistence over time as a result of changing environment. Mcgee, Thomas and Wilson (2005) suggested that the organisation responds to unexpected opportunities and problem which arises from the business level strategies. Therefore, communication is important in order to ensure smooth implementation. The emergent strategy is based on trial, experimentation and a lot of communication where potential challenges in the department are addressed. Lynch (2006) suggests that the organisation should continuously analyse the environment while simultaneously implement the intended strategy in order for the emergent strategy to be carried out.

The emergent strategy is normally developed within the department without prior planning, but it is important that the top management evaluate it. The evaluations are conducted in order to compare the organisation's goals, internal strengths and weaknesses and external environmental opportunities and threats. Hill, Jones and Schilling (2005) argue that the reason for this comparison is to investigate if the emergent strategy fits with the department and organisation needs as well as the capabilities.

⁹ Source: Mintzberg, *et al*; (1998:12)

5.5. Leading by example and respect while allowing flexibility on the intended strategic plan to increase productivity

Objective four: To understand the impact of intended and emergent strategies on decision making in research organisations.

This study revealed that intended and emergent strategy cannot be entirely separated and the impact which both can cause requires that organisational leaders take proper care in ensuring that employees understand where the organisation is going otherwise strategic implementation can be compromised. The organisation leader's relate to the individuals who has the authority over others or employees within the organisation. Their responsibility includes influencing the behavior of the staff or others in order to enhance the performance in the organisation. Organisation leaders play a crucial role in the organisation to achieve the organisation intended strategy and objectives while at the same time maintaining the trust and long term working environment. According to Gunavathy (2010) it is the responsibility of the strategic leaders to clearly communicate the organisation vision and strategy to all the staff members, with the aim of smooth implementation and ensure creativity amongst employees as well as to promote strategic direction in the organisation.

This study revealed that, when there is change on the intended strategy in the organisation or department, it is important to communicate with the employees, so that employees will be part of the change. In support of that Carpenter, Geletkanycz and Sanders (2004:753) suggested that the task of the organisation leaders include managing relationship with the lower level staff or employees. They further indicated that, "the top management team is powerful and makes choices and actions, which affect the entire organisation".

'Leading by example' also came up as the best tool when the organisation is dealing with the changing demands on the intended strategy at the same time allowing flexibility in order to succeed. Leadership is important when the organisation is dealing with the issues related to intended and emergent strategies. Employees need leadership in order to work together to achieve the organisation's objectives. When there are changes in the intended strategy or employees are uncertain on what to do next, leadership plays an important role. Organisation leadership role is important because employees look up to them as role models, so a leader's behavior is extremely crucial in the organisation. When the leaders behave that can affect the behavior of the other employees and can encourage employees positively and this makes it easy to communicate the intended strategy. Respect also emerged as an important factor for leadership, and also allowing flexibility amongst the team or staff members when they are in the process of strategic implementation. Beatty and

Quinn's (2010) work is similar to the study's findings in that the authors also indicated that participative leadership can be seen as a leadership style that depend on the leader functioning as an implementer rather than simply give out orders in order to motivate and increase performance in the organisation.

5.6.Organisational policies, culture and demands, resulting to strategic implementation failure

Objective five: Organisation policies, culture and demands resulting to strategic implementation failure.

This study revealed that the organisation policies and organisation culture has a huge contribution in strategic implementation. The culture of the organisation can be negatively or positively influence the intended and the emergent strategy in the organisation. This is in line with Lies (2012) who notes that the organisation culture can motivate employee, control decision making and also guide how the organisation resources are allocated in support of intended and emergent strategy. Organisations operate in a sensitive the environment. The information gained from the environment is used by the employees at all levels within the organisation where the intended strategies are formulated at the same time ensuring that, there is a fit between the intended strategy and the environment in which the organisation operate on. When the environment changes, the organisation needs to change their culture as a result of that, the existing strategy will no longer match the existing strategy. Furthermore, the organisation performance depends on the strategic plan while the success of the organisation strategy depends on the environment and the culture of the organisation (Zaheer and Saleem, 2013).

This study revealed that the executive leaders of the organisation did not think they were supported by the organisation in their departments' intended plans; these conditions resulted into frustration in their respective departments. They believe that the culture of the organisation is not flexible to accommodate their ideas and this caused problems when the decision regarding the change has to be made at the department level. Organisation policies and culture are very important when the organisation or the department is dealing with the issues related to strategic plan. Schein (2010) claims that everything is connected, has some kind of shared history which somehow evolved a culture to a certain degree. In relation to this statement, Alvesson (2002) suggests that even though it is hard to understand the culture, the theory of culture will be a great help to management, where, it will guide them on what to do or not to do in order to prevent problems that can emerge in strategic implementation resulting from the cultural clashes. "The culture of a group can now be defined as a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external

adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (Schein, 2010: 18).

The above statement confirms the importance of the organisation culture and the connection between the intended strategy and employees of the organisation. The intended and the emergent strategy can be affected by the culture of the organisation as this needs the involvement and acceptance of all the employees in order for the strategic implementation to be successful. Battilana, Gilmartin, Sengul, Pache and Alexander (2010) indicated that the greatest problems which are faced by the organisational leaders and managers when there are aiming to achieve the intended strategic plan is also to plan for the organisational change. There are different kinds of people within the organisation, some can be positive and others can be negative toward the change and this can be positively or negatively affect the strategic implementation. This implies that, it is important that all the staff members understand the intended strategy, and if for whatever reason the organisation or department needs to change the plan, organisation leaders need to clearly communicate the change and ensure that employees understand the importance of changing the plan in order for the organisation to achieve its objectives.

HSRC mandate include conducting different research projects. When these projects are conducted there is always a big chance that the original plan will change due to the fact that nobody can predict the future. Amongst other things, the change can happen because of the delays in getting the approval to conduct the research projects, availability of the participants on the particular research projects or conditions of the environment in which the research should be conducted and this can affect the intended strategic plan.

Alexander *et al*; (2010) recommended different activities which are the key for the organisation leaders to undertake when there are dealing with the intended strategy as well as the emergent strategy or a planned organisational change implementation, these are:

1. Communicating the need for change
2. Mobilising others to support change
3. Evaluating change implementation

Communication refers to the activities to be carried out by the organisation leaders or managers to justify change, this include sharing their vision with all the employees and the need for change. *Mobilising*, this relate to the actions which organisation leaders and manager should take in order to gain the employees support and acceptance to perform the new work or changed activities in the department.

Evaluation refers to measures which require organisation leaders to monitor and assess the implementation impacts.

There is a relationship between the organisation strategy and the organisation culture, and it is important that, there are aligned in order for the organisation to succeed (Baird, Harrison & Reeve, 2007).

This study also revealed that, the organisation has set targets for each department but as these targets are set, the organisation does not provide enough support which allows the department to achieve their intended strategy. The organisation leaders felt that these targets were problematic because they had no control over the environment. This study put forward that, the organisation has the system where those who fail to meet the set target will be undermined while praising best performers. The study further revealed that there is a lack of support within the organisation, which makes it difficult for the department to meet the intended strategy and the organisation demands. This lack of support in the organisation forces the department leaders to push employees in doubling their work load in order to meet the organisation's demands. Requests to get additional staff to assist in reducing the work load and ensuring targets are often rejected. The finding revealed that most of the time the executive leaders find themselves pushing in pursuit to ensure the organisation support their department intended plan.

Shane (2010:14) suggested that performance standards are “the numeric values of a performance metric that must be achieved by a given date and are typically expressed as a degree of excellence or some required level that meets or exceeds predefined specifications”. This suggest that the organisation should set performance standard and also provide enough information to all employees in order to understand what are the organisation expectation. Furthermore the performance standard should be in line with the department intended strategy in order for the organisation to succeed. The organisation should also consider job analysis where it looks at each and every individual employee's job description and whether they are in line with the department intended strategy and the organisation as a whole at the same time they should not ignore the capacity needed in order for the organisation to succeed. Job analysis is the “foundation of the performance plan for an individual employee within a specific job position” (Tsang, 2007:273). It is important that the intended strategy include a detailed description of activities needed and also provide the information of who will be accountable for which performance objective in order to promote smooth strategic implementation.

The organisation should also consider implementing the output control where the performance of employees can be tracked against set objectives. This can provide enough information which will allow the organisation leaders to see if the target set for employees are realistic or not in order to achieve the strategic plan. The output controls is a system which generate result data from the each

and every individual employees performance and is the most useful because employees know that the organisation objectives are known and measurable. Employee's performance is important and it should be taken seriously because in order for the organisation to meet its strategic objectives, employee's performance should be above board. However, if the target set for the employees is not easy to achieve that will continue to create a problem whether there is an output control or not. This was supported by Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2008) when they pointed out that, the organisation culture relates to the organisation norms, routines, values, rules and regulations that guide internal organisation activities. Furthermore, they suggest that all the organisation employees at all levels are consciously or unconsciously influenced by the organisation culture.

The organisation culture can positively or negatively influence the way in which the employees behave in the organisation and can positively or negatively affect the intended strategy. Furthermore, the strong organisation culture can help by reducing the tension and conflict in the organisation which result to motivated employees and smooth strategic implementation (Dawson, 2010, Schein, 2010, McKenna, 2012). The study revealed that HSRC culture negatively influences the employees because of the targets which employees are expected to meet. This indicates that it is important for the organisation to re-evaluate its culture because it has proved that it is one of the issues that causes the tension and conflict while demotivating employees at the same time. To respond to this problem, Gupta (2011) pointed out that it is important to align the organisation culture with the intended strategy in order for the organisation to be competitive and increase productivity. Furthermore, the organisation culture has a huge influence on the organisation's leaders who are responsible for the organisation strategy while the strategy affects the performance of the organisation.

5.7. Chapter summary

This chapter provided the summary of the key findings which revealed that the organisation understands the process to intended and emergent strategy. The findings also revealed that the perception of most organisation leaders regarding communicating with all the employees in the strategic planning stage and keeping the channels of communication open when the organisation is dealing with the emergent strategy is vital. However, the study findings revealed that the organisation does not support the departments' intended plan which results into frustration and anxiety amongst the employees. This chapter also provided information regarding the organisation culture and policies which makes it difficult for the departments to meet their intended strategies. The findings also revealed that there is a lack of support within the organisation particularly when the departments are dealing with change as a result of the change in the environment.

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

This study was conducted at Human Sciences Research Council. Organisation leaders included executive directors, directors and managers participated on this particular study. This study used qualitative method which allowed them the freedom to share their knowledge and experiences related to strategic paradoxes related to intended and emergent strategies. The findings of the study resulted to the recommendations which are discussed on this chapter.

The findings produced mixed results where some of the findings were in agreement with the literature, while some of the findings differed from previous studies. This chapter links the research topic which sought to explore strategic paradoxes related to intended and emergent strategies.

6.2. Recommendations based on the results of the study

The purpose of the department intended strategy is to outline the overall goal of the department and it includes how this plan should be achieved. It is important that everyone in the department understands the objectives of the department in order to succeed. The organisation leaders spend time re-examining and identifying exactly where they want to see their departments are going. However, in doing this they need the buy in from all the employees. In the current study numerous findings were revealed which allowed the researcher to bring forth the useful recommendation. The prominent themes that emerged are presented and thereafter this chapter presents implications and recommendation under each theme.

6.2.1. Communication is used as a tool to understand the intended strategy

The organisation executive leaders suggested that the communication is the key when it comes to intended strategic plan. They communicate with all the employees so that everyone understands where the department is going. They further revealed that communication is important when the organisation is dealing with the constant change whether internal or external change.

However, management of the organisation felt that there is a lack of communication from top to bottom. Although the executive management communicate however this is believed to be not enough and not clear and result in managers struggling because in order to give direction to others they need to clearly understand what exactly is needed to be communicated. It is therefore, recommended that:

- The organisation should continue to use communication channels with all the employees in order to ensure the organisation success.
- The executive management should include managers at the beginning of the intended strategic planning in their respective department.
- Managers must be given the chance to contribute on the strategic planning especially because they deal with day to day challenges and their contribution can have positive result in the success of the organisation.

6.2.2. Departments experiences difficulties as a result of the uncontrollable change in the environment which affect the intended strategy

The organisation leaders revealed that they deal with the change in the intended plan all the time. The result showed that communication is the important factor which is used by the organisation leaders in order to ensure all the employees understand why the change is necessary. Transparency was also mentioned as an important factor when the organisation is dealing with the emergent change in the organisation. Resignation of the senior members is also a huge contributor of changes in the department intended strategy. It is therefore recommended that:

- The organisation should ensure that they can easily respond to unexpected opportunities or problems in order to ensure that productivity is increased.
- The organisation should employ a system and also have a plan to deal with the changes in the organisation mandate when they occur.
- The organisation leaders should include the employees when dealing with change in the organisation, as this might also be a learning process for the organisation.
- It is important for the organisation to look at their policies regarding employment of the leadership in the organisation or leaders changing from one department to another. There should be a system which allows continuity of the strategic implementation when the leader resigns in order to avoid loss of resources.

6.2.3. The usage of open and transparent channels of communication by leaders when dealing with the emergent strategy.

The nature of the business allows the business to go through constant internal and external changes which cannot be controlled due to the political demands, external funder's demands which changes at any given time. The executives highlighted that the employees mostly work in the panic mode because their duties demand that they should raise a certain income. This is the problem because

they cannot control who can or will be awarded the grants they apply for. The organisation also deals with the executive leaders who resign or change departments before the intended strategic plan is completely implemented resulting to the new leader coming with the new plan. The other issue is that the organisation mostly experiences the resignation of the short term staff, because they get the better and longer job offers. It is therefore recommended that:

- The organisation should find a system which will assist the employees when they are applying for the research grants. This can be done by communication with all the research team as there are the ones who deal with challenges of finding the research grants in order for the departments to meet their intended strategies They can further look at other research organisations which are local and international, to understand what works for them and put the better systems in place which do not stress the employees.
- The organisation needs to revisit the retention policies in order to ensure that they do not lose the skilled as a result of the resignation as this does not only affect the department intended strategy but it affects the organisation as a whole.
- It is also recommended that the organisation should have employees responsible for the collection of data, these employees should not be assigned to a particular project but they should work across all projects. This can assist the organisation to offer long term employment contract and can improve strategic implementation.

6.2.4. Leading by example and respect while allowing flexibility on the intended strategic plan to increase productivity.

The organisation leaders use communication when the organisation is dealing with change in order to ensure that everybody in the organisation is on the same page. Other organisation leaders revealed that leading by example and respecting others can motivate employees in the time of change and allows for flexibility in order to ensure business success. In order to for the organisation to lead better, it is recommended that:

- The executive leaders should seek to understand the bigger picture, for instance: what is the root cause of the change and ensure that it is clearly communicated.
- It is important that the organisation leaders understand the impact as a result of change in the organisation and find solutions in consultation with the employees.
- The organisation should have a system which is in place to guide the employees in order to deal with changes on the intended strategy.

- Leaders should understand the organisation strategy and clearly translate it. This will allow them to easily develop the department intended strategy which is in line with the objectives of the organisation.

6.2.5. Organisational policies, culture and demands, resulting to strategic implementation failure.

The executive directors felt that the organisation did not support their department intended strategic plans and this result to frustrations. The organisation has high target sets for the employees but the reality is the employees cannot control the environment, where they apply for research grants. The organisation leaders suggested these targets were problematic for them because they forced them to push staff members even though they know that it is sometimes difficult to be awarded the grants because there are so many people who go for the same grant applications.

Therefore, it is recommended that:

- The executive director should ensure that the department intended plan is in line with the organisation strategy.
- It is imperative that the organisation implement the individual input and output control system to track individual performance, and this should be used in order to ensure that employees are allocated duties in a fair manner and it will also eliminate the issue of expecting employees to work more than 12 hours a day.
- The organisation should not only base the performance of individual on external income but other research performance e.g. journal publications, book chapters etc. should equally count and carry the same weight as external income.
- Organisation policies should be visited and revised if need be in order to accommodate the recruitment of staff if there is a reasonable request from the department.
- The organisation should also look other ways to motivate employee's anchorage them as they deal with different organisation demands.

6.3. Limitations of the Study

The challenge that was encountered by the researcher in this study was during data collection. The total number of the organisation leaders that were recruited was 28, but only 18 were able to participate in the study due to busy work schedules and that, most due to the time they travel out of the country to attend research conferences. However, this was beneficial because the researcher spent more time with each participant, who provided her enough information until saturation was

reached on the topic under study. According to Creswell (2014), a small sample size is acceptable in qualitative research where data saturation has been reached. The researcher also used the available time to read more literature related to the topic under study in order to equip herself and have better understanding of the topic being researched. Lastly, the study was restricted to Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to all organisations in South Africa.

6.4. Contribution of the study

This study set out to unpack strategic paradoxes related to intended and emergent strategy at Human science research council which has never been done before. A collection of empirical analysis technique was applied in this study and conclusively showed how strategic paradoxes related to intended and emergent strategies affects the organisation. Therefore, this study clearly provided information on what intended and emergent strategy mean within a research led organisation, and this can be used as the starting point for future research.

6.5. Conclusion

The findings revealed an understanding of the strategic paradoxes related to intended and emergent strategies. The participation of organisation leaders was useful and informative, and it provided depth and breadth of information. The qualitative methodology facilitated in depth discussions where participants were generally comfortable to voice their opinions and insight of the key factors related to strategic paradoxes. Other factors that emerged which are also important, included organisation culture, policies and lack of organisation support which result to strategic implementation failure.

6.6. Recommendations for Further Research

As this study was conducted with the aim of understanding strategic paradoxes related to intended and emergent strategies, further research may be needed to elicit responses from other organisation leaders and management who are strategic experts who might have different perspectives about strategic paradoxes.

The concept of strategic thinking was briefly addressed in this study as part of the intended strategic approach. However, the concept proved to be rich in its various aspects and could be studied further to show how it really works and can be used in the organisation.

This study proved the importance of the communication consensus. Communication consensus and its connection with other facets of the intended and emergent strategies unlock possibilities of future research.

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APPENDIXES

Appendixes A: Interview Guide



Interview Guide

Interview Schedule Guideline

No 1.

- 1) Can you please explain the process you undertake, when you are planning where your department is going, so that everybody in your department will work toward the same goal?
- 2) Have you ever been in a situation, where you had to change your plan due to unforeseen circumstances?
- 3) Tell me about the situation where the management team had to deal with the change as a result of the new commitments (For example: you deal with different research grants, each with its own time line and deadline) what processes do you have in place to deal with these conflicting demands?

No 2.

- 1) Can you explain why it is important to develop the department plan?
- 2) Tell me about other influences, which causes the plan or objective of the department as actually implemented to be different from what was originally planned?

No 3.

- 1) How do you turn tensions caused by changes in the department plan into positive energy?
- 2) Can you tell me about the time when the tension was necessary to achieving high performance in your department?


No 4.

- 1) When the organization is dealing with tensions and anxiety due to challenges or sudden change in the organisation, how do you help employees work through such discomfort, and frustration?

No 5.

- 1) How do you ensure that the department plan is clear in order to achieve the organisation goal and effectively deal with competing demands?
- 2) How does your organisational culture support department plan and goal?

Appendix B: Gatekeeper approval



Human Sciences Research Council
Lekgotla la Dinyakisifo tša Semahlale tša Setho
Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing
Umkhandlu Wezokucwaninga Ngesayensi Yesintu
Ibhunga Lophando Ngenzulu-Lwazi Kantu

Office of the DCEO: Research

8 August 2018

Ms AS Ngcobo
Human and Social Development
HSRC

Dear Ms Ngcobo

Gatekeeper approval for your MCom study at the University of KwaZulu-Natal: *Exploring Strategic Management Paradoxes related to Intended and Emergent Strategies: A case study at Human Sciences Research Council (South Africa)*

I acknowledge receipt of the proposal outline for the abovementioned study (received on 27 July 2018), as well as the provisional ethics approval granted by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

- Recruitment strategy: It appears from the submitted proposal that you will request to conduct interviews with senior HSRC staff working in selected research programmes (items 8.4 to 8.6 of your proposal).
- It was noted that you explicitly addressed ethical considerations for the study under items 9 and 10 of your proposal.

Based on the provisional approval granted by the UKZN Human and Social Sciences REC, you are granted gatekeeper approval to undertake the said study in the HSRC. This approval is subject to the following conditions, as outlined in the HSRC's guideline document regarding gatekeeper approval (attached herewith for your ease of reference):

- (1) Potential respondents will have the right as individuals to decide whether they are willing to participate in the proposed study, or not, as per national ethics guidelines (2015) on informed consent.
- (2) Ideally, the identity of individual HSRC participants and that of the HSRC as a participating entity should be anonymised. Should you wish to publish the findings in a manner that renders the HSRC or participants identifiable, the draft final report should be submitted to the DCEO: R and if necessary, participants, for review and response before such publication is finalised or published.
- (3) You are required to submit a copy of the dissertation and any subsequent report or other publication that was based on the research, once completed and approved, to the DCEO: R for record-keeping purposes.

Kindly indicate your acceptance of the above conditions, by signing the sheet on the next page and returning it to Ms Khutso Sithole, Administrator of the HSRC REC.

I wish you well with the proposed study.

Pretoria Office: 134 Pretorius Street, Pretoria, 0002, South Africa. Private Bag X41, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa.
Tel: +27 12 302 2000 Fax: +27 12 302 2299/2149

Cape Town Office: 116 – 118 Merchant House Building, Buitengracht Street, Cape Town, 8001, South Africa. Private Bag X9182, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa.
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Pietermaritzburg Office: Old Bus Depot, Mbulu Road, Sweetwaters. PO Box 90, Msunduzi, 3200, South Africa.
Tel: +27 33 324 5000 Fax: +27 33 324 1131

HSRC Board: Prof. M Tomi (Chairperson), Ms N Badsha, Prof. H Bhorat, Prof. M Bussin, Adv. R Dehal, Dr A Hamdok, Prof. I Moletsane, Ms P Sibiyi, Prof. C Soudien (Chief Executive Officer), Prof. L Zungu

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Appendix C: Ethics approval



20 August 2018

Mrs Angeline Sibongile Ngcobo (218052674)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Westville Campus

Dear Mrs Ngcobo,

Protocol Reference Number : HSS/0762/018M

Project title: Exploring Strategic Management Paradoxes related to intended and emergent strategies : A case study at Human-Sciences Research Council (South Africa)

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 16 July 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has 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

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Ms LL Ntombela and Dr VN Mtambu
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Isabel Martins
cc School Administrators: Ms Angela Pearce

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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