



**CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION: FACTORS INFLUENCING
THE SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION OF CHANGE AT A WORKPLACE**

by

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ABSTRACT

Change management and communication have been studied by researchers in the past. In this case the researcher identified the need to investigate specific factors influencing the successful communication of change at a workplace. The organisation used in this study recently experienced a range of changes and was the perfect case for the study. The paper deals with the communication of change to employees of different (1) age groups, (2) levels of education, and (3) positions in the organisation. The planning for this study was presented in a research proposal to the higher degrees committee (HDC) of Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). The researcher reviewed literature from previous studies and defined key concepts to be used in this study. The revised literature of previous studies, applicable to this study, can be found in Chapter 3 of this thesis. The researcher used the mixed method research design for the study. Data was collected through qualitative and quantitative research methods, using a questionnaire and interviews as data collection tools. The data collected with the questionnaire was analysed by use of the statistical package for social science (SPSS) to generate descriptive results. The data collected during the interviews was analysed qualitatively. The research findings indicate that the organisational change communication strategy does not provide for differentiation between age groups, varying education levels or positions in the organisation. The division, in which the research was performed, has its own internal ways of dealing with the differences in education levels and positions. Recommendations and suggestions are presented in Chapter 7. It is intended that this research will contribute to academic knowledge in the fields of change management and change communication fields. Further studies on this phenomenon will be required as the organisational environments are ever-changing.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my mother Elizabeth Shirley Packery and my father
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the reader with a background to the study and its objectives. The researcher presents the problem statement and introduces the research methodology employed to answer the research question. The focus of the study is change management and factors influencing the successful communication of change in a diverse workplace.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Change in the workplace is inevitable but not necessarily communicated to employees of an organisation (Fred, 2004; Gouillart & Kelly, 1995). Most organisations have change initiatives or processes planned or which arise unplanned, but their communication is done either insufficiently or not at all. Corporate organisations perform scenario development exercises, during which they look at where the company is and where it is heading (Fred, 2004). Similarly, organisations have to carry out environmental scanning, which requires a business to constantly monitor its environment, including its target market, product mix, competitors, new product development, technological advances, and changes in consumer demands. According to Robbins (2004) and Gouillart and Kelly (1995), a preferable way to steer the organisation in a favourable position is through change.

Changes within the workplace have several advantages to the organisation, such as strengthening its brand (Andrews & Morgan, 2008). According to Andrews and Morgan (2008), organisations will reflect a healthy degree of flexibility and adaptability to both their stakeholders and their employees with the successful implementation of change. The management of change and communication are important managerial functions, therefore it is important, as emphasised by Grobler and Puth (2002), for the organisation to have the active involvement of the managers, who are ultimately the persons responsible for communicating changes to their reporting staff (subordinates).

Communication is vital in the process of change, as it often help balance the mixed feelings staff may have (Nelissen & van Selm, 2008). Through communication, the management of organisations gain support from staff to participate in the process of change (Grobler & Puth, 2002). Salem (2008:338) argues that “Commitment to transformational change will not happen without communication, and lots of it.” If change is not communicated to all the parties involved and affected it will be regarded as a one-sided process and staff may become resistant to it (Johansson & Heide, 2008). In this study, the researcher will investigate how employee diversity in terms of levels of education, position in the organisation and age has an influence on the successful communication of change in the workplace. The research was conducted in a corporate organisation in the financial services sector.

1.3 THE CASE

The organisation used in this study has undergone a recent merger and is still in the process of change and working through post-merger changes. A merger in the corporate world has many business advantages for an organisation’s economic growth and development, but it can have a negative effect on employees. As Lawlor (2013) argues, a merger strategy is one of the major manifestations of change to the status quo in an organisation. Mergers differ in their size and scope though they were generally viewed as an attractive organisational strategy for a long time (Lawlor, 2013). She emphasised that very little research has been conducted into the human aspects of a merger, for instance how it affects the employees emotionally. Although the literature encouraged the engagement of merger strategies, constructive discussions on post-merger organisational processes only began in the 1980s (Lawlor, 2013). As stated by Vazirani and Mohapatra (2012), mergers and acquisitions have become a key strategy to improve organisational performance and competition in the global economy.

The merger between the two companies in this study resulted in one’s head office moving to another province, leading to staff relocation and retrenchments, as well as resignations by those fearful of change. The merger brought about a reduction of staff members in certain departments, transfers between departments and even restructuring. Some felt anxious about their future prospects with the organisation and wanted reassurance from management. The cultures of the two companies

are very different, one being people-orientated and the other more profit-orientated. Adapting to the different cultures was a major challenge to employees.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to identify and describe how diverse levels of education, positions in the organisation and age of employees have an influence on the communication of change. One of the factors the researcher looked at was the communication of change and how the diverse ages of employees played a role in the perception of the communication of change. The researcher also investigated whether people's positions within the company and levels of education of employees played a role in their perception of the communication of change. Ineffective communication or the lack thereof to employees can negatively influence the implementation process (Kitchen & Daly, 2002). The way in which managers approach and communicate change to different age groups is very important. Older people may be more resistant to change than their younger counterparts, and managers will need to communicate to them differently (Frahm & Brown, 2007).

With change being communicated, managers may have to use a different style or type of communication to employees in different positions and those having significant different levels of education. It is therefore important to use the appropriate methods and levels of communication with different target audiences (Kitchen & Daly, 2002). Good and effective communication will have a positive influence on the way employees perceive change and help the organisation gain their willingness to participate in the wider process (Stewart & O'Donnell, 2007).

In line with these arguments on the significance and effects of communication during change processes, the researcher found it useful to identify and investigate specific factors that had an influence on the communication of change within the organisation being researched, termed MIM Ltd as a pseudonym to preserve its anonymity. The organisation is diverse in terms of employee age, levels of education and positions within the organisation.

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The lack of communication may be detrimental to the process of change and the management thereof. Lack of communication may leave employees with unresolved feelings of uncertainty, resistance to change and unwillingness to cooperate according to Stewart and O'Donnell (2007), who also indicated the effect of change usually expose complex relationships between leadership and organisational learning that are normally not observed. If organisations do not properly plan around all aspects affecting the implementation of change projects from the start they will experience difficulty. In many cases managers first need to be informed and trained on change and the different phases of the implementation process, as this will equip them with necessary multi-level leadership skills (Schaafsma, 1997). Managers can be leaders on more than one level, in particular assisting in the change management and deterring resilience to change amongst employees, according to Schaafsma (1997). This leaves the researcher with the question of whether MIM Ltd has managers equipped with multi-level leadership skills to assist with the communication of change, to diverse groups.

According to Gouillart and Kelly (1995), the ignorance of the human side of change, such as people and their understanding, can be detrimental to an organisation's efforts to implement it. Nelissen and van Selm (2008) argue communication is a crucial factor in the successful implementation of change in the workplace, helping to balance the mixed feelings and employees responses about prospective projects, whilst Gouillart & Kelly (1995) recommends communication to put employees at ease and reduces feelings of uncertainty and increase the sense of control over circumstances. Organisations' failure to effect change may be due to communication of change during open information sessions, staff meetings and strategic planning sessions being ineffective or lack of communication (Nelissen & van Selm, 2008).

In this study the problem is how the management of MIM Ltd communicates change to their diverse group of employees. The communication of change is not as straightforward as it seems, as not all employees have the same levels of education, which influences their understanding of the change message and concepts used during communication sessions. The age of employees influence how the message of change is perceived and it is important for organisational

management to consider when communicating change. In corporate organisations there is usually a hierarchy, resulting in employees having different positions, which also contributes to change and the communication thereof. Failure to consider these factors during change in an organisation can lead to employees not understanding the change message and feelings of insecurity, which results in non-cooperation and resistance to change.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is as follows:

- How does the diversity in terms of levels of education, position in the organisation and age influence the communication of change?

This research question is broken down in the following investigative questions:

1. Do the levels of education of employees influence their perception of change and how change is communicated to them?
2. Do the positions of employees influence their perception of change and how change is communicated to them?
3. Do the ages of employees influence their perception of change and how change is communicated to them?

1.7 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The researcher set objectives to serve as a guideline for the study and to answer the research questions. The objectives of this study are to:

- Identify how employees with different education levels perceive change and the different ways in which it is communicated to them.
- Describe how employees in different positions perceive change and the different ways in which it is communicated to them.
- Identify how employees of different age groups perceive change and how it is communicated to them.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design refers to the type of study being conducted. The researcher used the mixed research approach, that is "... the application of qualitative and quantitative approaches within a single research project to generate multiple

perspectives of the phenomenon of interest and to attenuate the considerable risk of method bias” (Golicic & Davis, 2011:727). A questionnaire was used as the quantitative research tool, whilst interviews were conducted as the qualitative research tool. Rule and John (2011) advise case study researchers to use more than one data collection method for triangulation purposes, whilst for Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) they may adapt the collection procedures to benefit from data they only become aware of during the research process.

1.9 METHODOLOGY

The researcher performed a case study to investigate the research problem, since there were a limited number of units of analysis studied intensively (Welman et al., 2005). The process of conducting an investigation, the unit of study and the product of the investigation are all referred to as a ‘case study’ (Rule & John, 2011). To perform a case study involves investigating something specific and using the evidence generated as an argument (Rule & John, 2011; Welman et al., 2005). According to Rule and John (2011), case studies are used to investigate a particular instance systematically and in depth, to generate knowledge. According to Welman et al. (2005), the researcher is guided towards understanding the uniqueness and peculiarity of a specific case, and is provided with a rich description of the case, helping him or her to understand the instance being investigated. Case studies are used to explore a general problem within its context and can be used to generate theoretical insights referring to the case and help to clarify similar cases (Rule & John, 2011). The research methodology applied during the study determined the sampling methods used by the researcher.

1.10 SAMPLING

The researcher used mixed method sampling in this study. Mixed method sampling involves the combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques to answer research questions (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). For the quantitative research, simple random sampling was carried out amongst employees of MIM Ltd, in different positions, age groups and education levels in the company. Probability sampling methods were used, which, according to Teddlie and Yu (2007:77) “... aim to achieve representativeness, which is the degree to which the sample accurately represents the entire population”. This allowed the researcher to elicit

the input of all employees across all age groups, positions in the organisation and with all levels of education. The chance of each case being selected from the population is known and equal for all cases, and because of competing influences in determining the sample size the final sample size is a matter of judgement and calculation (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009). The sample size, which must be representative of the population used in the study, was determined after the sampling frame had been obtained. The researcher used 25 percent of the total employees in the division, with the information regarding the number of employees and demographic information obtained from the human resources department.

With regards to the qualitative research, the researcher made use of the non-probability sampling technique and carried out purposive sampling. The population from which the sample was selected were the executive managers of the division. Purposive sampling requires the researcher to sample participants who can offer insights into the phenomenon they are studying, i.e., approaching a particular group of people thought to share a common experience and willing and able to talk honestly about their experiences (Nicholls, 2009). For Teddlie and Yu (2007:77), “purposive sampling techniques are primarily used in qualitative (QUAL) studies and may be defined as selecting units (e.g., individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study’s questions.” In this case, the executive managers were all from the one division, shared similar experiences, and knew the underlying principles of the merger and how it affected their departments and the division as a whole.

1.11 RESEARCH METHODS

The researcher collected quantitative data by means of questionnaires and qualitative data through interviews. The data collected with the completed questionnaires was analysed by means of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). As required by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), the researcher observed all ethical considerations and procedures before distributing the questionnaires. Ethical considerations were observed by ensuring participants of anonymity and asking for consent to record interviews. The ethical considerations are elaborated upon in Chapter Four.

Table 1.1 (below) is a summary of how the research objectives were set and the methods used to answer the investigative questions.

Table 1.1: Sub-questions, research methods and objectives

Sub-Question	Research Methods	Objectives
Do the levels of education of employees influence their perception of change and how change is communicated to them?	Questionnaires & Interviews	To identify how employees with different education levels perceive change and the different ways in which it is communicated to them.
Do the positions of employees influence their perception of change and how change is communicated to them?	Questionnaires & Interviews	To describe how employees in different positions perceive change and the different ways in which it is communicated to them.
Does the age of employees influence their perception of change and how change is communicated to them?	Questionnaires & Interviews	Identify how employees of different age groups perceive change and how it is communicated to them.

1.12 DELINEATION OF THE STUDY

This study focused on an organisation within the financial services sector and was aimed at chief executive officers, board members and shareholders of companies.

1.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research was narrowed down to only one corporate organisation in the financial services sector and further to one division within that organisation. It was limited to the staff at the MIM Ltd offices in Cape Town and Centurion, and did not include staff based at the branches in and around Cape Town or Gauteng. A potential limitation to the study was that not all the participants returned the questionnaires in the required timeframe. The interviews took place at specific scheduled times, which suited the executive managers but there was not enough time to probe for more information with all.

1.14 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

According to Simon (2011), assumptions in a study are out of one's control but without them it would be irrelevant. Leedy and Ormrod (2010:62) state that "Assumptions are so basic that, without them, the research problem itself could not exist".

The following assumptions apply to this study:

- Change is communicated the same to all employees of MIM Ltd regardless of age, education level or position in the organisation.
- Respondents to the questionnaire and interviews will answer questions honestly.
- Managers ensure that all employees are informed about change plans before it takes place.

1.15 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Conducting a literature review on the subject of change management and the importance of communication gave rise to a need to explore factors influencing successful communication of change in a diverse workplace. The results of this study are available to the management of MIM Ltd, who can inform managers about what factors to consider when communicating change. They must in turn be proactive in managing these factors in future change projects. The results of the study may assist managers within MIM Ltd to realise the extent to which communication contributes to the successful implementation of change in the workplace and specifically their organisation. The management has an opportunity to learn from the results of this study, i.e., where they have made mistakes or succeeded in previous change management projects. This study contributes to the body of knowledge and further studies on change management and communication.

1.16 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The remaining chapters of this thesis are as follows:

Chapter 2: Concepts and theories

Chapter 2 clarifies key concepts conceptualised and operationalised by the

researcher, such as change, change management, communication and mergers. The researcher identifies and discusses theories applicable to the study and provides a theoretical framework. Organisation theory, theory of change management, organisational communication and how it applies to this study are discussed.

Chapter 3: Literature review

In Chapter 3 the researcher reviews the literature from previously published research papers, journal articles and books on communication and the management of change in a workplace. Its relevance to the current study, factors influencing change communication and its possible outcomes and the lack thereof are discussed.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

In Chapter 4 the researcher presents the research questions and objectives of the study. The researcher introduces and discusses the research design and methodology, the strategy of enquiry and the research methods, with the advantages and disadvantages. A motivation for the choice of research methods is presented, with the research population and sampling methods. In conclusion to the chapter, the researcher elaborates on the ethical considerations of the study and the significance, delineation and limitations of the study.

Chapter 5: Presentation and discussion of quantitative results

Chapter 5 is a presentation, discussion and analysis of the quantitative data collected during the study.

Chapter 6: Presentation and discussion of qualitative results

Chapter 6 is a presentation, discussion and analysis of the qualitative data collected during the study. Major themes that emerged from the qualitative research process are discussed in chapter 6.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations

Chapter 7 is the concluding part of the thesis, in which the researcher revisits the research problem, research questions and objectives. The research findings are

presented in this chapter and recommendations made for the organisation to solve the research problem. In conclusion, the researcher presents information to be considered in future research.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTS AND THEORIES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher defines and conceptualises the key concepts and discusses the theories applicable and relating to it. Theories on organisational change and communication are examined in terms of how they relate to the study. In addition, other theories and their applicability are discussed.

2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

In this section key concepts are conceptualised and defined as understood and used in the research.

2.2.1 Organisation

Trierweiller, Peixe, Tezza, Duarte do Valle Pereira, Pachecho, Bornia and Francisco de Andrade (2012) define an organisation as an open system which is in continuous interaction with its business environment. Open systems go through adaptation processes and are likely to present organisational dysfunctions, which in turn reflect in their performance (Trierweiller et al., 2012). Adler, Heckscher and Prusak (2011) believe a new form of organisation is emerging, one that is simultaneously innovative and efficient, agile and scalable. This leads to it becoming more collaborative in its operations and connecting with the knowledge workers. McGreevy (2008:357) argues that organisations are “political entities made up of individuals and groups pushing, pulling and accommodating each other...”, whilst Morgan (1986) used a metaphor of machines to explain some of the more complex dimensions, i.e., the purpose and interdependence between the parts of the organisation and the external environment. Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) define an organisation as comprising technologies, social structures, cultures and physical structures that exist within and respond to an environment. The definition of Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) relates to that of Smith (2011), in that organisations cannot remain static but should rather have the approach of continuous review, renewal and adjustment, making exploration, experimentation and risk-taking the norm. Jones (2010) defines an organisation as a tool that is used by people to

coordinate their actions in such a way that they receive what they desire or value, and it responds to satisfying the human need in society. For the purpose of this study an organisation is an entity in interaction with the business environment and employees.

2.2.2 Employees

Rupp, Ganapathi, Aguilera and Williams (2006: 538) define employees as anyone working for a particular firm and “non-management workforce because these individuals are less likely to be involved in developing and implementing CSR policy...” In terms of organisational communication, Jabri, Adrian and Noje (2008) refer to the organisation as a literary novel and the employees as the characters. Wallace, de Chernatony and Buil (2013) argue employees can be placed into different categories according to the service they provide and their level of performance, providing a profile for each type. In their study, males and older employees were found to be champions, the highest proportions of females to be outsiders, and those more likely to complain and lower performers to be disruptors. For the purpose of this study, employees are defined as people employed by the organisation and not on a management level.

2.2.3 Merger

Vazerani and Mohapatra (2012) define a merger as two or more organisations coming together to meet a strategic objective, whether by merging part or all of their operations and systems to form a new identity. The latter occurred between the two organisations that merged to form MIM Ltd. For Van Dick, Wagner and Lemmer (2004:122), a merger is “a tremendous process of organisational change”, whilst for Barratt-Pugh, Bahn and Gakere (2012) it is the destruction and reconstruction of organisational culture. Lawlor (2013:2) writes that “when two separate organisations join forces as a newly merged entity in pursuance of a new strategic direction, the nature of the accompanying change tends to be substantial and transformational.” The researcher relates the latter point to the merger of MIM Ltd, as it was between two large organisations that formed a new entity, and the effects were substantial and largely transformational. For the purpose of this study a merger refers to two companies joining forces to form one legal entity.

2.2.4 Change agents

Ford, Ford and D'Amelio (2008: 362) define change agents as those employees who are "doing the right and proper things..." in the change process. Barratt-Pugh et al. (2012) see them as usually managers in an organisation, whilst for Gioia, Thomas, Clark and Chittipeddi (1994) they strive to establish strategies to facilitate the change process in an organisation. Weick (2011:8) refers to them as "Change poets [who] create evocative images in the sense that their words include more of the flux of direct experience and fewer of the surface categories that reduce options. Change poets reconstitute larger fragments of experience". In this study, change agents are defined as employees within the organisation, responsible for communicating planned changed initiative to fellow employees in a clear and understandable manner.

2.2.5 Change recipients

Barratt-Pugh et al. (2012) refer to change recipients as usually being employees of an organisation, whilst for Ford et al. (2008: 362) they "throw up unreasonable obstacles or barriers" that block the change process. For Gioia et al. (1994) they focus on establishing how the change will directly affect them. For the purpose of this study they are defined as employees on the receiving end of the change message in an organisation.

2.2.6 Communication

For the purpose of this study, communication is conceptualised as any physical means of conveying information, such as e-mail, discussions, individual conversations and circulars. Grandien and Johansson (2012) define it as a dynamic and ever-changing process, which helps to create the organisation and develop systems of meaning that people use to make sense of their own actions. For Kitchen and Daly (2002), internal communication is such an integral part of the process of organising and in organisational culture that it can almost be said that organisations would not be able to exist without it. Communication is defined in this study as the exchange of messages in verbal, written and electronic format.

2.2.7 Organisational communication

The process during which employees and management make sense of complex situations, analyse organisational problems, decide on alternatives for action, and organise events is referred to as organisational communication (Putnam & Poole, 2008). Communication in organisations is a complex and continuing process during which members create, maintain and change the organisation (Keyton, 2011). An organisation cannot exist without communication between staff members and external parties. Keyton (2011) emphasises its importance for all members, and not only managers. For the purpose of this study, organisational communication is defined as any means of communication used in the organisation to share the message of anticipated change initiatives.

2.2.8 Communication management

Nothhaft (2010) regards communication management as direct, immediate management, but it also involves influencing the management of others, often with a view to long-term effects, with very soft, untraceable results, in a way which could be considered un-managerial. Therefore, Nothhaft (2012:27) describes it as “a second-order management function, i.e., a function which not only coordinates organizational performance by planning, organizing, controlling, but also institutionalizes certain concerns in the organization.” For Bentele (in Grandien & Johansson, 2012:210) it is “a process which includes the process of observation, analysis, strategy, development, organization, implementation and evaluation of communication processes.” Its function in organisations has expanded and developed in such a way that it is included in strategic planning, employee communication and change management communication responsibilities (Johansson & Ottestig, 2011). The definition applied to this study is of planning, implementation and management of change communication strategies in the organisation.

2.2.9 Change

Lawlor (2013) defines change as resulting in an alteration in the ‘status quo’, whilst McGreevy (2008) regards it as a conscious and planned process which results in a rationally reasoned and acted upon product. A reasonable outcome of an apparent cause and effect process, it does however often take place in a

spontaneous and unexpected way. Harrington (2006) defines it as a disruption in one's expectations of a situation, occurring when a person experiences a shift in balance and his or her expectations are disrupted. The stability of an organisation drops and the stress intensifies. According to Van de Ven and Poole (1995:512), "Change, one type of event, is an empirical observation in form, quality or state over time in an organisational entity." Van Tonder (2004) extracted the main ideas from all the definitions of change to describe a process that happens over time and is not discrete, while being evident in the different state and/or condition of an entity. In this study, change is conceptualised as going from using one to using another, more specifically to change from one system or situation to another

2.2.10 Organisational change

Pardo-del-Val, Martínez-Fuentes and Roig-Dobón (2012:1845) define organisational change as:

"an empirical observation of difference in form, quality or long term state of an organisational entity, coming out of the deliberate introduction of new styles of thinking, acting or operating, looking for the adaptation to the environment or for a performance improvement."

It can be viewed as a process which consists of an initiative to do things differently, following essential organisational processes that influence the activities of individuals and have an impact on organisational results (Porrás & Silvers, 1991). Jones (2010) regards organisational change as the process when organisations increase their effectiveness by making a transition from their current state to their future one, whilst Van Tonder (2004) defines it as a process that results in a different nature or condition of the organisation over time. For the purpose of this study, organisational change refers to changes within the organisation, such as the merger, structural, cultural and technical changes that lead to increased effectiveness and improved efficiencies.

2.2.11 Change management

Barratt-Pugh et al. (2012) and Hayes (2007) agree that change management is about the systematic, continuous and iterative practice of change in workplace systems, behaviours and structures needed to improve organisational efficiency or effectiveness. For Harrington (2006), organisational change management is an

inclusive set of planned procedures for the phases of a change process that includes decision-making, planning, execution and evaluation. In order to manage change successfully, the management of an organisation needs to have an organisation-wide approach, and organisational learning is of utmost importance for effective change (Carnall, 2003). Van Tonder (2004) cautions in order to effectively manage change in organisations a person should have a thorough understanding of change and its consequences. For this study, change management is defined as the management of change plans, communication strategies and implementation of change initiatives.

2.2.12 Change readiness

Kuntz and Gomes (2012:156) refer to change readiness as the attitude of individuals toward change, operationally defined as “the set of attitudes that reflect evaluations of the change process”. The lateral elements constitute support from organisational management and the appropriate change execution in relation to the strategy, as perceived by employees. Employee readiness for change reflects positive attitudes and beliefs about the need for organisational change, intentions to support change processes, the conviction that the intended changes will be successfully accomplished by the organisation and be beneficial to all parties involved (Jones, Jimmieson & Griffiths, 2005; Wanberg & Banas, 2000). The role of communication in the change process includes creating change readiness with employees of organisations (Jabri et al., 2008). Shah (2012) argues that employees are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward change if they feel that they are being treated fairly. For the purpose of this study, change readiness is defined as the positive attitude towards and cooperation of employees in the organisation’s anticipated change initiatives.

2.2.13 Change capacity

Organisational change capacity is defined by Judge and Douglas (2009: 635) as “a combination of managerial and organisational capabilities that allows an enterprise to adapt more quickly and effectively than its competition to changing situations”, whilst for Soparnot (2011:641) it is:

“...the ability of the company to produce solutions (content) that respond to environmental evolution (external context) and/ or organizational evolution

(internal context) and to implement these change processes successfully within the company (process).”

For the purpose of this study, change capacity is defined as the organisation’s ability to change.

2.2.14 Participative management

Participative management takes place when employees are involved in decision-making processes, all being asked to have strategic thoughts and to be responsible for their work quality. They are then rewarded for acting as they deem necessary to satisfy the client and improve the organisation’s productivity (Pardo-del-Val et al., 2012). The researcher understands participative management as the involvement of employees in change processes.

2.2.15 Change receptivity

Change receptivity refers to the willingness and openness of people to accept the ideas of change and cooperate in the process of change and change implementation (Frahm & Brown, 2007). Judson (1991) confirms that commitment and participation of employees are the most influential elements in ensuring acceptance of change. Butler (2003:S48) defines organisational change receptivity as “an emerging, but undeveloped, notion which attempts to reveal the factors which contribute to organizations being either low-change, non-receptive contexts, or high-change, receptive contexts.” Amburgey (1993) argues that for organisational change to be successful the employees must be receptive to it. Socio-demographic and work experience characteristics, such as education and race, are associated with employees’ receptivity to change (Cochran, Bromley & Swando, 2002). Change receptivity, in this study, is understood as being the employees’ positive attitudes towards change and sharing the organisational management’s commitment to change.

2.2.16 Resistance to change

Resistance to change refers to the non-willingness of people to accept change and an uncooperative state in which they will find themselves (Johansson & Heide, 2008). For Schein (1988) it is an ever-present phenomenon in organisations, and for Wadell and Sohail (1998) it is most commonly linked to the

negative attitudes of employees or counter-productive behaviours. Pearse (2010) points out that resistance to change is also referred to as 'organisational inertia', as do Kinnear and Roodt (1998:44), for whom it is "the resistance of an organisation to make transitions and its inability to quickly and effectively react to change". This term incorporates all the related concepts describing lethargic responses of organisations to change. Erwin and Garman (2010:39) regard resistance to change "...as a reason for difficulties in implementing and failure of change initiatives." For the purpose of this study, resistance to change is defined as the unwillingness of employees to cooperate with planned change initiatives of the organisation.

2.2.17 Corporate culture

Corporate culture is defined as "the informal values, norms and beliefs that control how individuals and groups in an organisation interact with each other and with people outside the organisation" (Vazirani & Mohapatra, 2012:33). Miller (2003) defines it as the way things are done in an organisation. Generally, Carlström and Ekman (2012) define culture as the bond between different individuals who share the same characteristics, a relationship between individual and collective behaviour, referring to the notion that organisational culture is personified in individuals but shared by the group. Jones (2010) defines organisational culture as a set of shared values and norms that control how the employees of an organisation interact with each other, suppliers, customers and people outside the organisation. For the purpose of this study, corporate culture refers to the way staff members of MIM Ltd interact with each other and others outside the organisation, as well as its values and norms.

2.2.18 Scenario development

Scenario development is usually described as the history of the future of the business. Scenario development looks in detail at different ways a business could develop into the future, as well as what impact these different outcomes might have on it. Corporate organisations perform exercises during which they look at where the company is at and where it is heading (Fred, 2004). The researcher defines it as looking at possible scenarios for the future and planning organisational changes accordingly.

2.2.19 Environmental scanning

Environmental scanning is a process of gathering, analysing and dispensing of information for tactical or strategic purposes (Robbins, 2004). It refers to the ability of the business to adapt to its changing operating environment, based on external analysis and utilised to detect scientific, technical, social and political trends and events important to the organisation. It also acts as an early warning signal for managers when there are changes in the external conditions (Fred, 2004). As the ability of the business to adapt to its changing operating environment (Robbins, 2004), environmental scanning requires a business to constantly monitor its environment, including its target market, product mix, competitors, new product development, technological advances, and changes in consumer demands (Robbins, 2004). Environmental scanning, for the purpose of this study, is defined as the business's ability to adapt to its changing environment.

2.2.20 Local identification

Local identification refers to the self-perceptions associated with the organisational roles that constitute a person's organisational identity (Salem, 2008). Similarly, organisational identification is defined by Agarwal (2013) as the process by which individuals link themselves to the targets of their identification, namely the organisation. For the purpose of this study, local identification is referred to as the way in which employees relate to the culture, norms and values of the organisation that employs them.

2.2.21 Organisational sense-making

Kuntz and Gomes (2012) define organisational sense-making as a social process during which individuals gather and convert information from formal and informal sources across organisational levels. This allows them to form a common or shared understanding of the organisation's identity in terms of intra- and inter-organisational environments, which determines subsequent behaviours in the workplace (Kuntz & Gomes, 2012). They describe it as mostly a continuous and unconscious process whereby employees work on their attitudes and efforts toward current and strategic goals of the organisation and to sustain valuable relationships in the organisation. In this study, it is understood to be that process

during which employees make sense of or grasp the message they receive from change agents and organisational management.

2.2.22 Sense-giving

Sense-giving, on the other hand, is defined and described as a political process in which different players work to influence the sense-making and meaning-creation of others, through different types of communication and interactions, towards redefining organisational reality in a preferred way (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). For the purpose of this study, sense-giving refers to the process during which employees, change agents or organisational management influence each other's understanding of information received.

2.2.23 Organisational storytelling

Mumby (2004:244) defines organisational storytelling as "a discursive site par excellence for the critical analysis of the dialectic of control and resistance". Storytelling can be used to explain complex events and enable sense-making (MacIntyre, 1981). Weick (2001) regards it as helpful to employees and others trying to make sense of organisations. For the purpose of this study, it relates to stories with regards to change told by employees, change agents and organisational management to enable easier understanding by listeners.

2.2.24 Knowledge creation

Alipour, Idris and Karimi (2011) define knowledge as including theoretical and practical rules and instructions, used skilfully by individuals to solve problems. According to Mathews (2012), knowledge is created by a process of linking related information and drawing conclusions. Organisational Knowledge creation is defined by Nonaka and von Krogh (2009:635) as "the process of making available and amplifying knowledge created by individuals as well as crystallizing and connecting it to an organization's knowledge system". For the purpose of this study, knowledge creation in organisations is defined as the process by which employees find new methods and processes to complete tasks and solve work-related problems.

2.2.25 Theory

A theory is a set of logically related statements and concepts that provide a credible explanation for an observed phenomenon (Kerlinger, 1973). Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) see abstractions, known as concepts, as useful in building theories. The next section is a discussion of theories applicable to this study.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A number of different theories that relate to this study are discussed in this section.

2.3.1 Organisation theory

Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) argue that the organisation is the primary phenomenon of interest in organisation theory, which studies its workings and how external factors influence it. Embracing multiple perspectives and offering a broad perspective on organisational life, it creates possibilities for the effective design and management of organisations. Different disciplines contribute, ranging from natural and social sciences to the humanities and arts. The organisation theory has been influenced by theorists such as Max Weber, whose theory of bureaucracy led modernist organisation theorists to believe that bureaucratic rationalisation will promote technical efficiency. The modern perspectives of organisation theory focus on finding universal laws, methods and techniques of organisation and control, and are in favour of rational structures, rules, standardised procedures and routine practices. The symbolic perspective describes how people give meaning and order to their experiences within a specific context, through interpretive and symbolic acts, forms and processes. Lastly, the modernist perspective deconstructs organisational texts and destabilises managerial ideologies and modernist modes of organising and theorising. The postmodernist perspective reveals marginalised and oppressed viewpoints, whilst encouraging reflexive and inclusive forms of theorising and organising. The modernist theorists believe that only once a person understands how and why organisations function the way they do and how environmental conditions influence their functioning, they have complete knowledge of organisations. Organisation theory is continuously evolving and will continue to

explore new ways of studying and managing organisations (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006).

Jones (2010) regards organisational theory as the study of how organisations function and how they affect and are affected by the environment in which they operate, pointing to a relationship between organisational theory, structure, culture, design and change, all of which are factors influencing the operations and effectiveness of an organisation. Organisations must design themselves in such a way that the culture and structure contribute positively to their effective operations. The researcher believes that people studying organisations and organisation theory must be aware of the relationship among these concepts, in order to have a complete picture of their influences on one another. The theory helps the researcher to understand that in this study there will be environmental, internal and human factors influencing the organisation. These influences will bring about change in the organisation and in turn result in change communication being required from management and change agents in the organisation. The organisational management have to understand the theory in order to develop effective change and communication strategies. It forms the base of organisational entrepreneurial theory, to be discussed below.

2.3.2 Entrepreneurial organisational theory

The entrepreneurial organisational theory states that organisations are continuously changing and therefore communication forms an important part of entrepreneurial organisations (Wadhwani, 2011). This theory relates to the way organisations identify opportunities for the creation of future goods or services, the ability to deal with the uncertainties of introducing such new goods or services and the ability to make new combinations of resources to create them. It helps organisations to account for geographic patterns in the ownership and governance structures of savings institutions (Wadhwani, 2011). The researcher understands that organisations following the entrepreneurial organisational theory must have all the attributes of economic success. The theory, as with knowledge creation theory, contributes to organisations having a competitive advantage in their respective industries. It relates to economic theory that speaks of organisations changing the products they produce according to changing market demand.

2.3.3 Economic theory

According to economic theory, organisations are forced to change by external events or demands, meaning if the client community changes its demands the organisation is obliged to change what it produces. The theory is one of the theories of change used by Zurewich (2008) in his research, the fundamental characteristic being that “all organizations are a function of the product they produce and that the product life cycle is the attribute that determines the structure of the optimum organization that competes in the marketplace” (Zurewich, 2008: 263). Nelson (2008: 9) distinguishes between “an evolutionary theory of economic activity and change and the neoclassical theory as articulated in economic textbooks.” The difference between the two is that evolutionary economic theory sees the economy as in a state of perpetual change which may not even be perfectly understood by or familiar to the role-players, whilst neoclassical economic theory views the economy as being relaxed or experiencing predicted change (Nelson, 2008).

Allen et al. (2008) believe the organisation’s human resources department should position itself so it can contribute to human development and economically viable outcomes. The researcher employs economic theory to argue that organisations are controlled by the demand of the marketplace for the products they produce. If the demand changes it must be reflected within the organisation. Sound economic results should be the ultimate goal of change initiatives in an organisation and organisations must use economic theory when motivating or substantiating change initiatives to the Board and employees. The researcher concludes that it is not important whether organisations follow evolutionary or neoclassical economic theory as both involve change. It can be beneficial for organisations to implement successful change initiatives if they follow the neoclassical economic theory, as this involves well-planned, organised change. The communication of change will be an easier task for change agents and managers, as the change plans are well thought of and thoroughly planned. Economic theory is an essential part of organisational change and the communication thereof. The latter point leads to the discussion of the theory of organisational change.

2.3.4 Theory of organisational change

The theory of organisational change indicates that change does not occur in isolation, but involves stakeholders and many factors that trigger it. Jacobs, van Witteloostuijn, Christe-Zeyse and Pólos (2013) developed this theory from their observations of the nature of organisational change. Frooman (1999) argues that internal and external stakeholders are involved in the organisational change process before, during and after the change. The theorists view organisational change as a risky strategy as it often affects an organisation's core values, cultures and potentially the organisational identity (Hannan et al., 1984).

Van Tonder (2004) believes that the core of change processes occurs at individual level through cognitive and affective change, before it can happen in the organisation. He derived this idea from Freud's theory of interpersonal change, which looked at the social context in human change and development. Taking this into consideration, Van Tonder (2004) argues it is the foundation of change within organisations as social collectives. Because of the factors emphasised by organisational change theory, organisational change cannot take place in isolation, thus there needs to be interaction with other organisations and individuals. Hence, the researcher concludes that it will be important to put employees, as internal stakeholders, at ease by means of communication. The external stakeholders equally need to know the progress of the organisational changes and the best way of informing them is by way of communicating with them. The risks associated with organisational change must be alleviated, and communication can reduce risks, such as resistance and non-cooperation with the change plans from internal and external stakeholders. The theory of change management, as follows, can assist organisational management with the change process.

2.3.5 Theory of change management

The theory of change management is made up of different viewpoints on how change agents or managers can affect and be affected by change in their organisations (Hayes, 2007). It is a combination of theoretical perspectives and how they influence the type of change in an organisation, as applied to a situation in order to manage the process (Hayes, 2007). The researcher can deduce from this that the theory uses different aspects from organisational management and

change management to guide organisations in managing change. These theories should, however, not be applied in isolation, but attention should be given to the organisational communication theory, discussed below.

2.3.6 Theory of organisational communication

The theory of organisational communication seeks to understand the communication process in organisations to solve practical and efficiency problems in companies (Berros, 2012). It posits that organisations must communicate and inform with reference to public opinion and define concepts as they apply to themselves. The Industrial Revolution brought about the appearance of rich and powerful industrialists, which was not favourably accepted by all members of the public and later gave rise to the theory of organisational communication. This was at first used to communicate from the inside out, to the public, and enhance the organisation's public image (Berros, 2012). This simple process expanded and underwent evolution that led to services being added to the communication, such as direct marketing and events. Van Ruler and de Lange (2003) argue that the communication executive of an organisation, with a communications background, is best suited to manage communication of strategic organisational change.

The researcher believes an organisation will be successful in communicating to employees if they understand the terms used and are able to relate to the concepts used. It is important that the people responsible for communicating the change plans to employees clearly understand the terms and principles of the anticipated changes. Organisations must apply the basic principle of the theory of organisational communication to gain the favour of the general public and engage in marketing and public relations events as enablers. Employing communication specialists will benefit organisations wishing to communicate changes to both the employees of the organisation and the outside audience. They must be aware of the social dynamics within the organisation, as in social theory.

2.3.7 Social theory

Social theory can be defined as the study of how societies develop and the development of social behaviours such as power, gender, social structure and class (Harrington, 2005). Social theory is strongly influenced by Karl Marx and Max Weber, who focus on how power becomes part of an organisation (Palmer,

Dunford & Akin, 2009). In terms of social theory, power can be used as a tool to overcome resistance and even exploit employees in the organisation (Palmer et al., 2009). The researcher believes that trust, rules and norms in an organisation and between employees are driven by the social theory, because that is how people are socialised. From their embedded social behaviours, it is clear to the researcher why employees use their power in an attempt to resist organisational change initiatives. In the same fashion, the way employees react to change depends on how they have been socialised. For example, if change is communicated to older males by a younger female the change may be resisted if the males come from a social background in which females are expected to be submissive to males. This resistance is used as a form of power over the person communicating the change and the organisation, because the male employees are not cooperating but rather delaying the change process.

The social theory is applicable to change communication in an organisation, due to its social roots. For example, people speak to each other if they feel comfortable doing so. Another reason for applicability is that communication is easier between people who trust each other and come from the same background, as is the case with the organisation in this study. An organisation's culture can be seen as stemming from social theory, as it requires people to have similar social beliefs and norms. Thus, employees from the same organisation and the same department will communicate and cooperate with change agents or managers from the same organisation if they trust them. The social theory is closely linked to social capital theory, discussed in the following section.

2.3.8 Social capital theory

Social capital theory is defined by Pearse (2010) as consisting of the informal norms, such as honesty, keeping commitments and reliable performance of duties, which promotes co-operation between two or more individuals. McElroy, Jorna and van Engelen (2006) define social capital theory as consisting of knowledge and organizational resources that improve the potential for individual and collective action in human social systems. Hitt and Ireland (2002) regard internal social capital as the relationship between strategic leaders and their subordinates, together with the relationships across the organisation's departments. The social capital within an organisation is related to the organisational background and

history, and the social capital is dependent on the actions and events which occurred in an organisation (Smith, 2012). McElroy et al. (2006) concur with Pearse (2010) that social capital refers to trust, rules and norms.

Mahajan and Benson (2013) believe that social capital is an important base for the development of relationships, including human and intellectual capital, within an organisation and should be used wisely by management. Opportunity, associability and motivation are determinants of social capital, when using social capital theory to explain organisational inertia. Pearse (2010) argues that the disruption of an organisation's social capital leads to the manifestation of organisational inertia, so as long as organisations can maintain and increase the social capital change will be accepted and not resisted by organisational inertia. One way of increasing an organisation's social capital is to ensure that change agents and managers receive proper training and/or coaching on the topic of change communication.

The researcher argues that organisations must empower employees by means of practical training programmes, knowledge-sharing and open communication, in order to build their social capital. Once the social capital is established and maintained, a trust relationship will be formed, communication of change plans will take place and employees will agree with the change plans of the organisation. The result will be less resistance and increased cooperation with change initiatives. For organisations to equip employees with knowledge and skills they must be familiar with knowledge creation theory, which will serve as a guideline in the building of social capital process.

2.3.9 Organisational knowledge creation theory

Subsequent to social capital theory, the organisational knowledge creation theory aims to clarify the make-up of knowledge assets and strategies to manage them, according to Nonaka and von Krogh (2009). The thoughts of the knowledge creation theory began after the theories of neoclassical economics, when knowledge was regarded as an explanatory factor to the unconventional behaviour of organisations. An organisation's management of its assets, such as knowledge, determines its competitive advantage to other organisations (Nonaka & von Krogh, 2009). According to Von Krogh (2000), people are allowed to define,

prepare and learn to solve problems through their knowledge. Organisations often facilitate the creation and sharing of knowledge among employees and provide an opportunity for them to work together for their mutual benefit (Kogut & Zander, 1996; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998).

Alipour et al. (2011) make references to knowledge-based theory, which emphasises knowledge and the application thereof to be the main factor of competitive advantage and improvement of organisational performance. As a result of the knowledge creation theory, in the researcher's view, organisations learnt to introduce the concept of knowledge creation and sharing amongst employees, to ensure that they were empowered to act as assets of the organisation. Employees need not only attend external training courses but can also learn from each other, by means of sharing knowledge.

Knowledge theory is applicable to this study as knowledge of how and when to communicate change must be acquired by managers and change agents. From the knowledge creation theory the researcher concludes that organisations can only prosper and grow when there is a constant form of knowledge creation and knowledge sharing amongst employees of the organisation. The execution and management of change communication can either be to the organisation's advantage or not, depending on the knowledge of the people communicating the change. There are however cases when there is no communication at all, which leads to the discussion of structural inertia theory.

2.3.10 Structural inertia theory

Contrary to theories which support change in organisations, the structural inertia theory refers to organisations that do not adapt to change, but develop a disinterest or reproducibility by institutionalising and standardising processes. When organisations adopt this theory, key people or management within the organisation approve structural inertia during organisational change (Schwarz, 2012). Hannan and Freeman (1984) argue that since an organisation's reproducibility increases with its age and size, the older and larger organisations have an increased chance of surviving, whilst the new organisations and those attempting structural re-organisation will fail because of the newness. Organisations which are mature in age and have long-standing relationships in

their markets will be more able to reproduce and standardise their processes. It is understandable that they will have a well-established communication strategy which contributes to the success of their planned inertia attempts.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The researcher concludes that theories are essential in understanding why and how organisations and employees develop ways of work, organisational strategies, cultures and labour relations within the workplace. Organisation theory appears to be the basis for all organisational activities and any further extensions to the organisation. Economic theory motivates why organisations are in business to make a profit and why that has to happen, whilst entrepreneurial organisational theory agrees with the tenets of economic theory. While organisations are in existence, social theory posits the building and maintenance of relationships amongst employees and management. Social capital theory expands on social theory in explaining the importance of developing and growing employees and knowledge within an organisation.

The next chapter reviews literature researched, relating to this particular study.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Many researchers have studied the topics of organisational change and change communication and the literature emanating from those studies is discussed in this chapter.

3.1.1 Change communication

Lawlor (2013) reports that public sector organisations are being overwhelmed with a multitude of demands to change, ranging from increased transparency of their activities to public accountability and ensuring the delivery of value-added services in a cost-efficient manner. The communication of change is thus a very important element in an organisation's existence, which with the communication strategies are regarded to by Hayes (2007) as important contributors to the success of change projects in an organisation. The form of communication used to communicate change must be of good quality, without spelling and grammatical errors, and understandable to the audience. The communication strategies used by the organisation involves how they approach employees, the manner in which communication takes place and the relationships between the communicator and the audience. Hence, communication of change can take place whilst having conversations with people or staff within an organisation.

Jabri et al. (2008) warn that people communicating change must think about whether people in the organisation are objects of communication or subjects in communication. Taylor and Van Every (2000) argue that the form and meaning of change communication are still influenced by the constant relations, which agrees with the communication strategies referred to by Hayes (2007). It is emphasised by Ford (1999) that change is driven by communication and by means of conversations. Communication can be seen as the instrument of change, that is it happens all the time, but in order for change to take place there must be communication, which can be in the form of conversations. Such conversations contribute to increased participation from employees within the organisation and

help people to reach consensus when there may be different viewpoints, and so agree to the way forward. It is thus very important that people speak and understand the language in which the conversations take place, in order for the communication to serve its purpose and have meaning, as stated by Alvesson and Kärreman (2000).

Fraser and Hemmings (2010) caution organisations that participation, involvement of staff and open, early and full communication are important factors in implementing change. It is not only important for staff to understand “why” change is necessary, but it will complete the picture once they know “how” it will be implemented. In the researcher’s opinion, conversations must be held in the language understood by all members of the audience, in order for everybody to comprehend the change plans and processes. It is clear that the “what, why and how” usually arise when change is being discussed. Therefore, management should be pro-active in communicating the reasons, rationale and plan of implementation to staff members in a clear and understandable fashion. The organisational management must be aware of the change readiness of employees when communicating change, as discussed below.

3.1.2 Change readiness

Within literature on organisational change, employee participation and effective communication are cited as two of the most effective means to increase the change readiness of individuals (Armenakis et al., 1993; Holt et al., 2007; Wanberg & Banas, 2000, in Hammond et al., 2011). Fraser and Hemmings (2010) advise that management must use face-to-face meetings to discuss sensitive issues around organisational change with staff members. Fraser and Hemmings (2010) believe that e-mails and written notices do not always convey the message intended and so should not be used to replace personal interaction with staff members. It is their opinion that because change has a naturally unsettling effect on staff, management should take their time and plan the change strategy carefully before communicating it to staff members. The researcher’s thoughts on this are that managers should not try to make fast or quick changes but rather take time to plan properly, receive support from staff through communication, then begin working on implementation of change. Proper planning and scenario

development must be carried out by organisational management, as precursors to change initiatives.

3.1.3 Scenario development and change

Organisations use scenario development as a tool to determine when change is needed. The new millennium saw the world changing from supplier-led to demand-led economies, and the focus has moved from scenarios in planning to scenarios in a story-telling sense (Ringland, 1997). Scenario development can be considered as the history to the future of a business, based on its vision and mission statements (Ringland, 2007). Scenarios are important tools to use during planning to order a company's thinking or perceptions of alternative future possibilities in which decisions made today might have an impact. This makes scenario development a powerful planning tool as the future is unpredictable; therefore companies are practicing, rehearsing and learning to anticipate it (Ringland, 2002). The researcher can conclude from this that management must be informed of eventualities in the business environment, both internal and external, in order to study and determine possible scenarios that may affect their organisation. This leads to the discussion of environmental scanning, to guide the nature of changes in an organisation.

3.1.4 Environmental scanning

Environmental scanning defines potential threats, opportunities and changes in trends and markets, and assists decision-makers in understanding the current and potential changes in order to determine strategies within the organisation (Fred, 2004). In using environmental scanning, the information collected through this process will aid management in planning for the institution's future course of action, and Robbins (2008) points to evidence that companies which scan the environment achieve higher profits and revenue growth than those which do not. Manning (2012) reports that environmental scanning is part of the strategic thinking and leadership of an organisation, two of five key themes in the management of change. Shah (2012) writes that the changes and tracking of new situations may cause uncertainty and anxiety for both the organisation and employees. Environmental scanning relates to the basic principles of economic theory, which posits that organisations change according to the needs and

demands of their markets. If the market requires changes the organisational management team will make the necessary changes within the organisation to produce the required products. Once again, prior to making these changes, management must communicate the change plans to the employees, as discussed in the next section.

3.1.5 Change communication

Contrary to the tenet of economic theory that change is triggered outside the organisation, Johansson and Heide (2008) argue that it is rather by the needs within organisations. They refer to previous studies that found many organisational change initiatives failed due to shortcomings in internal communication. These findings indicate the fact that there is a close link between communication and change management within organisations.

Previous studies (Coghlan & Rashford, 2006; Burke, 2008) on the perspective of communication help organisations to understand the needs for successful implementation of change. Communication is a tool organisations should use to declare and explain the planned change projects to staff. The focus must be on the “what, when, who and how” and management should, through communication, relay organisational members’ feedback of their attitudes and feelings (Johansson & Heide, 2008). For instance, “what” should be communicated to employees, “when” the communication should process start, “who” would be affected by the change and communication thereof, and “how” the message of change should be relayed to employees. All this implies that managing the process of implementing change, managers of organisations should bear in mind that information and the sharing thereof is a critical component and thus communication is key. The communication must be thorough and contain relevant information if it is to be effective.

While Johansson and Heide (2008) and Palmer, Dunford and Akin (2009) focus on such questions relating to change, Fourie (2007) and Fraser and Hemmings (2010) believe that openness and communication should be transparently present in an organisation. In most of the sources consulted by the researcher it is clear that communication is a critical component in the process of change management, as employees need to be informed in order to feel secure within their organisation.

Messmer (2004), on the other hand, stresses that lack of communication causes rumours, distrust, anxiety and ultimately a decrease in productivity and motivation. Change also creates stress for both those parties in favour of change and those opposing it (Carnall, 2003). Answering the fundamental questions employees pose, and being open and honest in communications, will put them at ease and reduce their concerns about the planned changes. Transparent communication will result in reduced stress in the organisation and increased optimism amongst employees and management.

3.2 FACTORS INFLUENCING SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION OF CHANGE

The process of communicating change is influenced by certain factors, which can lead to successful implementation of change initiatives or not. These factors are discussed below.

3.2.1 Communication processes

Invernizzi, Romenti and Fumagalli (2012) argue that communication plays a strategic role in change processes within organisations. They continue to argue that careful planning of different steps and initiatives are necessary to build a culture of change in organisations. Reference is made to the entrepreneurial organisational theory, which posits that in entrepreneurial organisations “communication offers a strategic contribution to support organizational decision-making processes in a continuously changing environment” (Invernizzi et al., 2012:483-484). The entrepreneurial organisational theory was discussed in Chapter 2 and explains that organisations exist and have to make changes for profit generation.

3.2.2 Training

It is important for managers to be clear and understand what the drivers of change are and how change can be successfully implemented. It is important for the managers to be trained if they do not have the necessary skills to manage and implement change (Salem, 2008). It has been found across several studies that it is ultimately the responsibility of the managers to communicate prospective change projects to possibly affected staff, and keep them updated thereafter

(Gouillart & Kelly, 1995). According to Bevan (2011), leaders should be guided, trained and equipped at every level in order for them to display consistent commitment to change. They should facilitate an effective two-way flow of information, be aware of issues and questions and provide timely responses. Skills in the area of communication, writing, speaking, listening, meeting and negotiating are essential to obtain effective results and can be cost-efficient to organisations (Fourie, 2007; Palmer et al., 2009). These skills will be useful to managers or project managers responsible for conveying the message of change and even when initiating the implementation phases of change. This, to the researcher, means that when change managers and/or leaders are well-informed, trained and equipped with the necessary skills, communication of change would be more effective and less stressful. Change management and communication training can be completed in the form of formal training courses, in-house courses offered by facilitators and knowledge-sharing from managers who have had the training. Training of change managers can contribute to the elimination of resistance to change, as discussed below.

3.2.3 Resistance to change

Resistance to change is viewed as an integral part of the power play within organisations (Pieterse et al., 2012). Fassauer and Schirmer (2008) are of the opinion that both the power models and micro-political theories of change explain resistance to change as a defence mechanism for the interests, benefits and power status of professionals in organisations. Professionals are often perceived as a barrier to implementing change, and although they often behave in a reserved manner they may oppose change (Fassauer & Schirmer, 2008). Bearing this in mind, it is evident that professionals resist change as a defence mechanism to protect their own interests and secure themselves. However, the resistance can be reduced and even eliminated by communicating to employees.

Resistance to change may have a negative influence on the successful communication and implementation of change, because people tend not to listen to ideas they do not like or approve of. This will then require further intervention and more strategies from management, in order to prompt their employees to listen and co-operate. Participative management can give employees the tools

necessary to question change projects and result in resistance to change. However, participative management can be used to work against resistance to change, as it should encourage employees to increase creativity and innovation (Pardo-del-Val et al., 2012).

Resistance to change can present itself in different ways, such as foot-dragging, withdrawal, material sabotage and even whistle blowing (Pieterse et al., 2012). For these reasons it is vital for managers to manage and eliminate resistance to change as soon as they become aware of it. According to Harrington (2006), employees should be involved in the development of the change design and plans for implementation so that their resistance can be changed into support and cooperation. He adds that resistance is normal in any change process and that the best way for managers to deal with it is to face it head on and deal with it from the onset of the process, rather than to wait. Sweers and Desouza (2010) argue that it is critical for change managers to identify resistance in its formative stages. Early detection will give managers time to identify the sources of resistance and make adjustments before implementation of the change process is completed. Hence, it is important for managers to be involved with the employees and not operate in isolation. Employees feel excluded when management operates in isolation and these feelings give rise to resistance and non-cooperation from employees.

Van Tonder (2004) argues that factors causing resistance, such as fear of the unknown, a loss of control and lack of confidence, are unavoidably mediated by perceptions. Proctor and Doukakis (2003:268) identified several sources of resistance to change, such as “fear of the unknown, lack of information, threats to status, fear of failure and lack of perceived benefits.” It could thus be said that if these perceptions are clarified by the sharing of knowledge and effective communication by management the issue of resistance can be eradicated. Johansson and Heide (2008:292) stated that “A frequent notion is that ‘effective communication’ will reduce or even overcome resistance to change in the organisation and willingness to change will evolve.”

Proctor and Doukakis (2003) argue that resistance to change is usually raised with those people in the organisation who run the risk of losing most due to the

planned change, therefore the key to successful introduction of change lies in effective communication. One way of effective communication is to provide information from management directly to all employees by way of the organisation's intranet and e-mail. In cases in which organisational reshuffling is involved, people often resist being treated as pawns, mainly because they want to feel in control of what is happening to them. This kind of resistance can be overcome by opening communication channels by which people can clarify their uncertainties around the planned changes and understand the reasons for them (Proctor & Doukakis, 2003). By overcoming resistance to change, employees will be more receptive to change ideas, which lead to the following discussion.

3.2.4 Change receptivity

Tony Manning (2012) writes that when change is resisted or rejected it is important that organisations manage emotions, avoid lies and engage in honest, open and constructive two-way communication. Receptivity of change has been identified as an important factor in the successful implementation of change. As argued by Frahm and Brown (2005), the receptivity of employees to organisational change is an up-and-coming and major issue for those tasked with creating successful change implementation strategies in organisations. This underlines the importance not only of employees in the process of change but also of communicating to them in order for them to accept the idea of change. Palmer et al. (2009) recon that change managers should point out to staff how they will benefit from the change, in order to garner their support. This depends on what they perceive as beneficial to them, for example whether there will be growth. In addition to communicating what will change it is important to communicate the things that will not change.

Messmer (2004) believes that a reasonable flow of information reduces the occurrence of any confusion and limits costly mistakes. This helps employees to feel acknowledged by their supervisor and colleagues, so making it easier for them to acclimatise to change and offer relevant ideas and perspectives. The management of organisations will gain the staff's cooperation and dispense with resistance, by communicating to staff and keeping them up to date. Whether change is communicated formally or informally it is important that it is effective in

relaying the intended message to the audience, who must understand the content and be able to clarify anything they do not understand with the change agents or management.

Proctor and Doukakis (2003) believe that the involvement of people early in the process is the key to effecting change, which requires consulting with people and persuading them to take ownership of new ideas being introduced. Management should provide staff with information and power to those who will be subject to change, as this will help overcome ambiguity and uncertainty (Proctor & Doukakis, 2003). This is a way of empowerment to employees by management and by doing so organisational converting resistance into a perceived need for change and cooperation. Change leads to culture change within the organisation and amongst employees, as discussed below.

3.2.5 Culture change

Cultural change in the organisation due to a merger is not easy for members to accept and gives rise to resistance, however, as Vazirani and Mohapatra (2012) argue, communication is key to overcoming it. They advise that the human resources department must then assist with a smooth transition through the process by means of communication. Mergers and cultural change make staff members feel unsafe, hence it is important to keep them informed and communicate to them. Change agents and human resources departments must use formal communication methods for less personal matters and personal interaction for matters that will affect staff members on a personal level, such as organisational culture.

3.2.6 Power

Power is given to staff by empowerment, which normally involves its redistribution through the participation of employees. Organisations use empowerment processes as an attempt to spread power, with the hope that collective decisions can be facilitated without having conflict (Palmer et al., 2009). The result will be that employees feel they own the changes and will not resist or oppose them. Power and resistance to change can be seen as intertwined, in the sense that power can be applied to combat resistance, whilst resistance can also be used as

a form of power. This is substantiated by social theory, which posits power as a tool to overcome resistance and even exploit employees. Marx viewed power in terms of the ill-treatment and constant exploitation of powerless employees in the capitalist class structure (Palmer et al., 2009).

In contrast to social theory views, the organisational theorists suggests that power can be used without people knowing and thus without conflict. Power has different bases and dimensions which can be used within organisations, determined by the actions to make it possible for people to become powerful. Therefore, power is not held by certain people, but people allow others to become powerful in their relationships and use that power over one another. When employees resist change they are using their power, and if organisational management cannot change the resistance to cooperation employees are allowed to use their power over that of management.

3.2.7 Organisational inertia

Hannan and Freeman (1984:150) argued that changes in major organisations over time can be indicative either of the adaptation of organisations or “selection and replacement”. Pearse (2010) investigated theories on organisational-level resistance to change and specifically noted structural inertia theory as proposing selection of organisational structures that are high in inertia. Organisations do not adapt to change but develop inertia or reproducibility by institutionalising and standardising processes. These strategies assist management to meet requirements for reliability and accountability and contribute to successful change efforts.

Caruth, Middlebrook and Rachel (1985) argue that fear of the unknown or of losing jobs, income and job status contribute to resistance to change in individuals. Justice theory, in terms of distributive, procedural and interactional justice, states that when people feel they are not being treated fairly there is an increased possibility for them to resist change (Pearse, 2010). Resistance to change can also occur in functional groups because the groups are prevented from participating in the decision-making process relating to change, caused by conflict between current group interests, values and norms with those promoted by the change and when the group perceive the change as disturbing existing group relations and unity (Newstrom & Davis, 2002). Organisational inertia occurs when

the immediate financial benefits of the change cannot be envisaged, when there is over-investment in previous decisions, the reward systems are not aligned with the proposed change, the existing power balances are under threat and the change is seen as incompatible with the culture of the organisation (Beatty & Gordon, 1988; Smither, Houston & McIntire, 1996). For Pearse (2010), an organisation's willingness and readiness to engage in a change process will determine the likelihood of resistance to occur as well as whether the change initiative will be successful.

3.2.8 Social capital

Leana and van Buren (1999:538) define organisational social capital as a reflection of the character of social relations within the firm, "realized through members' level of collective goal orientation and shared trust, creating value by facilitating successful collective action." If organisations have organisational social capital they can attempt any project, because members trust and support each other and so be successful. Organisations should continuously make efforts to renew social ties, trust and obligations, and social capital can be created through knowledge management and human sources.

3.2.9 Audience

Communication with different target groups and levels of employees can also affect the successful communication of change and so should be appropriately used. When addressing a group of employees on management level, the communication type and style will differ from when employees on a different level are being addressed. According to Kerfoot (1996), it is part of organisational life that managers and employees view change differently. Managers may perceive change as an opportunity to advance the organisation and, in the process, themselves, but employees may perceive change as disruptive and taking them away from their familiar surroundings. For this reason the communication to employees should be more explanatory and comforting than that to managers (Grobler & Puth, 2002).

3.2.10 Sense-making and storytelling

In addition to communication skills, Hope (2010) argues that sense-making and sense-giving plays important roles in the communication of change to staff. These roles are often fulfilled by middle managers in organisations, according to Hope (2010). Gioia et al. (1994) define sense-making as constructing and reconstructing meaning by the involved parties as they try to develop a framework for understanding the nature of the intended change. Weick (1995) describes sense-making as a continuing social activity in which plausible stories help people make sense of their experiences and enact the environment they face. Sensemaking is when managers explain intended change initiatives to employees in such a way that they understand what the goals are and not stand in contrast with the anticipated goals of the organisation. The employees are more likely to influence the outcomes of the change initiatives and therefore it is important for them to understand and make sense of them. Hope (2010) explains that most sense is made through social processes with change recipients by exchanging stories, gossip, rumours, jokes, conversations and discussions, where they form an understanding of what is required from them as employees to start the change processes.

The use of storytelling and making sense of it has become increasingly popular in the field of management and organisational studies (Dawson & McLean, 2013). The stories give meaning and a sense of togetherness to employees, in cases where the organisational life is uncertain. The employees use the stories to describe their situations by using examples that they know in everyday life and that way make sense of what is currently happening in their organisation. It is also through these stories that they decide whether they are going to support the change or whether they will oppose the change initiatives, which means stories may have the power to resist (Dawson & McLean, 2013; Hope, 2010). Employees tell different kinds of stories, but these will most likely be applicable to their current situation and are all central to change. In the case of Dawson and McLean's (2013) case study, the stories served the purpose of not only making sense of the change but also for the miners to shape the change and redefine the shattered identities of miners. The storying process during change emphasises the flexibility

and is non-linear, whilst stories of the past often shows a linear causality of events.

3.2.11 Effective communication

When communicating to staff, change managers should follow some basic principles of effective communication, essentially as a two-way process. Brightman and Moran (2001: 250) listed the following “basic principles of effective communication:

- Warmth: express caring, interest and positive regard
- Genuineness: being honest, open and trustworthy
- Concreteness: making clear, specific and understandable statements
- Self-disclosure: revealing one’s own thoughts and feelings appropriately
- Respect: communicate regard for human dignity in word and deed
- Empathy: communicate accurate understanding of other’s experience
- Assertiveness: avoid passive and aggressive communication styles
- Negotiation: balance competing interests for win-win solutions.”

3.3 COMMUNICATION REASONS FOR FAILED ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE ATTEMPTS

Previous research on the topic of communication and organisational change has found the following reasons relating to communication that contribute to unsuccessful organisational change attempts.

3.3.1 Insufficient communication

One of the reasons identified by Salem (2008) is insufficient communication, during which inadequate information forms a big role. Employees feel that the managers often have all the information but do not share it, leaving employees uncooperative (Salem, 2008). He adds that because employees feel they do not get enough information the organisations fail to implement change successfully. The main reason for this is that organisational change cannot take place without the entire corporation’s participation (Salem, 2008; Kitchen & Daly, 2002). The researcher concludes that too little communication results in employees not having enough information on the planned change initiatives and so is not convinced to participate. Organisations must focus on disseminating sufficient information to

their employees and by so doing they will have an opportunity to explain everything and gain the backing of employees to cooperate in change initiatives. Unlike Salem (2008), Smith (2006) believes “ineffective communication” to be one of the reasons organisational change projects fail, and that effective communication is critical for organisations to achieve successful and lasting change. The management of change requires leaders to be clear about the purpose and process, to seek input and information from those involved and affected, and maintains an effective multi-directional flow of communication and information (Bevan, 2011). It is evident that organisational management must ensure that the communication of change to employees is of use and not merely words that are meaningless to employees. Often managers or change agents think it is important simply to get “something” out to employees, but fail as they still do not understand what the goals of the change plans are and so do not cooperate.

3.3.2 Organisational silence

In addition to ineffective and insufficient communication, Hayes (2007) regards organisational silence as a major barrier to organisational change. The term refers to a situation in which employees do not voice their opinions or concerns about planned changes, and develops when managers avoid or dismiss negative feedback from subordinates because of their own insecurities. The researcher understands that it can begin on either the employees’ or management’s side. In the case of the former it can be a case of fear of being dismissed or victimised, whereas management does not want negative feedback because it already has an idea of the cause amongst employees. Organisational silence can also be the result of perceptions of colleagues or managers.

3.3.3 Local identification

Local identification has been identified as another reason organisations fail at change attempts (Salem, 2008). Organisations have an identity and all employees working for a specific one will relate to and carry that same identity. I understand that employees can feel “at home” while being at work, because of an identification process with the organisation. However, when change arises there is a feeling amongst employees that their identities are being disrupted and this must

be addressed by communication for change to be successful (Harrington, 2006). Pearse (2010) found that as employees identify with their organisations they experience disturbance of their personal identity when changes occur, and so lapse into the equivalent of a grieving process. Therefore, the management must ensure that they are informed of what is happening and what their identities will be after the changes have taken place or been implemented (Salem, 2008).

Agarwal (2013) defined organisational identification, which is similar to local identification, as a process by which individuals associate their identities with that of the organisation for which they work. This process can be linked to organisational activities such as socialisation, communication and personnel selection. The organisational communication and management of the value and decisional premises happens whilst employees build the relationship of identification with the organisation. The researcher's conclusion is that employees identify with organisations when they feel that they can relate to the values and norms of the organisation, which contribute to the feeling of being able to trust the organisation and its leadership. Employees also develop organisational identity after working for one particular organisation for a long time and when they are used to the way things are done, and have personal relationships with their colleagues and managers. This is in line with Agarwal's (2013) view that organisational trust can be positively associated with organisational leadership.

3.3.4 Management distrust

Salem (2008) argues that change gives rise to distrust of management and the future of the organisation amongst employees. This can only be alleviated by discussion and communication with management about the planned changes, because when employees do not trust the process or management, change initiatives may fail. Kitchen and Daly (2002) argue that the employees' perceptions of the organisation and how they feel about the planned change projects will determine a positive or negative end result. They believe that companies have a difficult task trying to correct errors and rebuild credibility with employees, shareholders and clients, when they have already lost the trust and support of its employees. Hayes (2007) believes it is the role of the organisation's leadership to ensure that change is communicated in the right way and therefore gain the trust

of employees. Organisations should continuously communicate to their employees, be honest and clear in their communications and combat feelings of distrust to achieve success in change projects, rather than losing the faith of their employees. The communicators of change must make sure they provide employees with some details on the plan to follow during the change process, to put employees at ease and not cause anxiety or distrust in organisational management.

3.3.5 Storytelling

Increasing interest has been shown in the relationship between leadership storytelling and change within organisations (Nissley & Graham, 2009). For Salem (2008), lack of productive humour in organisations is a reason for failed change attempts by organisations. The interest in storytelling techniques from leadership and lack of productive humour relate to each other. The link between these ideas explains that without using humour and telling stories about the planned changes within the organisation, management may experience a problem in making employees understand and not perceiving change as such a serious, rigid matter. The importance of communication is emphasised as an important contributor to successful change. The storytelling links with the views of Palmer, Dunford and Akin (2009), that change managers should not only act as reporters of information but also make sense of the change message and then relay it to staff. Making sense of the change message will help employees to understand the message and identify the important parts of the information shared with them, which means change managers will facilitate this process.

3.3.6 Interpersonal skills

Poor interpersonal skills are another reason for failed organisational change attempts (Salem, 2008). If managers or change facilitators do not have the necessary interpersonal skills it is more likely that communication of change will be poor and its implementation unsuccessful. Employees will have difficulty understanding what is being communicated to them, inaccurate perceptions will be formed and feelings of anxiety will not be resolved (Salem, 2008). Millar, Hind and Magala (2012) argue that organisational leaders need to have a change of thinking and attitude in order for change to be implemented and sustainable. This

means that even before organisational change plans are communicated to employees the leadership, which usually fulfil the role of change agents, needs to have a positive attitude towards the planned changes. Goehrig (2008) argues that leadership, executives and consultants need to understand and then implement changes or new strategies, in order for an organisation to change business outcomes and existing business structures.

Millar et al. (2012) suggest that besides having the vision of the proposed change, leaders must ensure that all required steps are taken for the vision to become a reality. Such steps will involve priority setting, and exercising choice and compromise in favour of the vision. All of these factors are required for leaders to experience an action before communicating organisational change to employees. I argue that employees will be able to pick up in the communication when leadership is not sharing or understanding the same vision of the change they are supposed to promote. Therefore, it is important for leaders to be prepared and understand what it is that they need to communicate and potentially obtain the support of the employees.

3.3.7 Conflict avoidance

Organisational change can be a continuous and incremental or rapid and discontinuous, it may also be planned or unplanned (Smith, 2011). Whichever way it occurs, managers avoiding conflict is another reason for organisations failing to implement changes (Salem, 2008). When they are in the process of change it is probable that people will not agree on everything, and in some organisations managers tend not to communicate changes to employees because they are avoiding the conflict that may arise. This in itself leads to non-communication of planned change projects and in effect employees not being willing to cooperate with projects of which have no knowledge or information.

3.4 CONCLUSION

The reviewed literature indicates that communication is vital to implementing a successful change management and attaining a desired change. By conceptualising the concepts used in this research paper the researcher explains the meaning. Change is defined as an alteration of the status quo and

communication is defined as conveying a message by means of written, verbal or electronic notices. The message of change should be relayed to all the parties concerned and involved in the process of change. It has emerged to the researcher that not only should the message be relayed but people should be involved and their input should be asked for before implementing the proposed changes. It is important for the successful implementation of the change process to be clear in the communication and make it very clear to employees that their inputs and ideas are valued. The researcher explored different theories on change, communication and power in organisations, and they all have change in organisations and the adaptability of employees and organisational management in common. Each of the theories has a different way of stating it, but all of the theories refer to the demand of the environment, markets and audience, which is subject to change. The product line, leadership approach and communication style must be able to change and adapt. There are also cases in which organisations can avoid change by creating structural inertia, which can be seen as a way of resisting change. Power in organisations is used as a tool to resist change, whereas social capital theories can be associated with change receptivity. All organisations are part of the social sector of society and by increasing social capital in organisations, knowledge is created and knowledge workers are retained. This results in improved and skilled employees, which in turn results in successful organisations. However, to achieve all of the above, the golden thread that cannot be ignored is the communication of change and gaining the buy-in of all parties to accomplish successfully implemented change initiatives.

Very little research has been carried out on the concept of change receptivity, but the concept is very much in existence. Many researchers have come across the problem of change resistance, but found that it does not always constitute negativity and can be changed with communication and used to the advantage of organisations. Resistance to change arise when employees have unanswered questions and issues. Change often leads to employees feeling insecure and threatened, thus having the ability and resort to exert power and use it as a tool to resist change. That employees do not agree and agree to change initiatives can be seen as power play because without it the initiatives are most likely to be unsuccessful. Thus, management should concentrate on dealing with issues and

answering questions of employees through constant communication during the change process.

It is evident that organisations should focus on the factors influencing successful communication of change, which leads to organisations being able to implement change. The communication strategy of the organisation must be well defined according to its needs and executed by trained staff in a manner that is comfortable to all employees of the organisation.

The next chapter presents the research methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the research objectives and research questions upon which this study is based. The researcher introduces the research methodology and provides the reader with the advantages and disadvantages of the research methods.

4.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) argue that the type of inquiry a researcher intends to conduct will have an influence on the decision whether to use qualitative and/or quantitative research methods. According to Henning et al. (2004), the purpose of the research has the most influence on the use of certain methods of data collection and data analysis specifically. This researcher used both qualitative and quantitative research methods in this study.

Welman et al. (2005) describe qualitative research as an approach, as opposed to a particular design or set of techniques. It is also largely exploratory, in other words generating hypothesis. The qualitative method of data collection and analysis refers to the data being collected, i.e., interviews, and analysed in the form of discussions. When conducting qualitative research, it would be expected that the researcher would have the necessary qualitative data interpretation skills (Davies, 2007). Qualitative research is not concerned with the methods and techniques to gather appropriate data for investigating the research hypothesis.

On the other hand, quantitative research focuses on the testing of hypothesis, and is used when the researcher identifies variables from the literature and wants to test and verify existing theories. According to Welman et al. (2005) there are three sub-categories to quantitative research, namely (1) experimental, (2) quasi-experimental, and (3) non-experimental. A quantitative research design has several important characteristics:

- the search to explain a causal relationship between variables
- the collection of quantitative data
- the employment of controls to allow the testing of the hypothesis

- the importance of concepts to be operationalized in a way that enables data to be measured quantitatively, and
- generalisation, i.e., in order to be able to generalise statistically about irregularities in human social behaviour it is necessary to select samples of sufficient numerical size (Saunders et al., 2009).

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is a general plan of how the researcher will answer the research questions, and use of both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques and data analysis procedures is referred to as a mixed method approach (Saunders et al., 2009).

4.3.1 Mixed methods research

In this study the researcher made use of the mixed method approach, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The central premise of this combination is that it helps the researcher to better understand the research problems (Creswell & Clark, 2007). For Bergman (2008:1) it requires the “combination of at least one qualitative and at least one quantitative component in a single research project or program...”, and in this study a questionnaire and interviews were used respectively.

The questionnaire was distributed amongst employees from different age groups in the company to determine different groups’ experiences and their expectations about how change should be communicated. Questionnaires were used amongst employees of the company on different job grade levels and in effect different levels of education to learn more about how change had been communicated to them and how it was perceived. The researcher conducted interviews with change facilitators and managers within the company to gather information around their perceptions of change and also their experiences around the communication of change in the workplace.

An advantage of mixed methods research is that it provides strengths that offset the weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research. By using mixed methods research the researcher can obtain a more comprehensive set of evidence than using either approach on its own. For Bergman (2008) it helps the researcher to

reach a better understanding of individuals and to answer questions which cannot be answered by using only form of method. Researchers are encouraged to use multiple paradigms in research (Creswell & Clark, 2007) to understand the problem from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective and make inferences based on both. Other advantages identified by Bergman (2008) include the opportunity for skills enhancement for researchers and to encourage original thinking.

Disadvantages of mixed methods research are that it can be very time-consuming and resource-intensive, as researchers collect and analyse both forms of data. Research procedures are complicated so researchers must be clear when presenting the findings, and schooled in theoretical issues and traditions (Bergman, 2008). For Creswell & Clark (2007), the advantages of mixed methods research outweigh its disadvantages.

4.3.2 Quantitative research methods

The researcher used the survey method of data collection, with the close-ended questionnaire as the instrument. A numeric description of the population is provided by a survey design, and the researcher made use of existing questionnaires, obtained from previous studies and published journals. According to Davies (2007), the purpose of questionnaires is to facilitate usually brief communication driven by the researcher's agenda. They have the advantage that participants can complete it, even at a distance from the researcher. Questionnaires are generally easy to complete and not time-consuming.

According to Crowther and Lancaster (2009:151):

“With all the possible variants on, and considerations in, questionnaire design, this mechanism for data collection through questioning can be a highly complex activity requiring skills and techniques that quite honestly require specialist training and knowledge.”

A disadvantage or risk that a researcher may take with the use of questionnaires is the possibility of a high rate of non-responses, or those who do respond may misread what is expected of them. Close-ended questionnaires limit the responses and the collection of data from a large number leaves the researcher with a large amount of data to be analysed. The researcher must be equipped with quantitative

analyses skills, and understand the principles of and various approaches to sampling.

Simple random sampling was carried out amongst employees of the company, in different positions, with probability sampling methods. As stated by Saunders et al. (2009), in probability sampling the chance of each case being selected from the population is known and equal for all cases, and it is therefore important to obtain a sampling frame. Because there is a list of competing influences in determining the sample size the final sample size is a matter of judgement and calculation. It is however important that the sample size is representative of the population (the employees). In this case, the researcher then determined the sample size after the sampling frame had been obtained. As an employee of the company, and a colleague of the respondents, the researcher eliminated bias by simple random sampling, and ensuring that the results were accurately recorded. The participants were allowed enough time to complete questionnaires, to eliminate procedural bias.

4.3.3 Qualitative research methods

Garcia and Gluesing (2013:423) argue that qualitative research

“...can be employed successfully and fruitfully in organization studies’ contexts to: help uncover new organizational phenomena; build and test theories of change; and create new methods that researchers can use specifically in international change studies.”

Qualitative research offers many advantages, of which a holistic measurement is one, as it helps the researcher build up an inclusive and complete picture of the entire situation in which the phenomena of interest occur. It can be seen as an effort to describe and understand as much as possible about the complete frame of interest (Gilmore & Carson, 1996). The researcher used the qualitative method of face-to-face, semi-structured interviews, comprising mostly open-ended questions and audio-recordings with the permission of the interviewees (informed consent). An advantage of the interview, in particular, is that it helps the researcher to gather valid and reliable data relevant to the research questions and objectives.

The semi-structured interview allows the interviewer to “probe” for answers, that is, to encourage interviewees to explain them further. Because interviews afford the

interviewee the opportunity to hear what they are actually thinking the interviewer is able to collect a rich and detailed set of data (Saunders et al., 2009). An added advantage of interviews is that the interviewer can pick up on non-verbal communication from the interviewee (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2010). Four forms of which Gorden (1980) listed as possibly transpiring during interviews: (1) proxemic, which refers to the use of interpersonal space to communicate attitudes; (2) chronemic, which is the use of pacing of speech and lengths of silence during conversations; (3) kinesic, which are body movements or gestures; and (4) paralinguistic, which are the variations in volume, pitch and voice quality. The researcher can use these modes to gather more information than the verbal alone.

A disadvantage of interviews is that they can be very time-consuming. As stated by Crowther and Lancaster (2009:150), "Interviewers not only need to be skilled at questioning but in particular need to be good at listening." For this reason, unless the interviewer is skilled in these areas, the use of interviews can be to the detriment of the study. Another disadvantage is that interviewer effect can result in distorted information. The volumes of data collected during interviews are large and much the researcher to analyse. A potential disadvantage with face-to-face interviews is that respondents may have a biased reaction to the questions owing to fear or mistrust, and this can lead to their providing inaccurate data. The researcher overcame this challenge by ensuring the interviewees of anonymity and confidentiality where applicable.

The sample was selected from the team of change facilitators, managers forming part of change management teams and employees on lower levels, employed by the company. The researcher used the non-probability sampling technique, which means the probability of each case selected from the total population was unknown to the researcher and it was not possible to answer research questions or to address objectives that required statistical inferences to be made about the characteristics of the population (Saunders et al., 2009). The researcher performed purposive sampling, to obtain a sample representative of the population, before conducting the interviews. As suggested by Creswell (2007), the researcher is expected to undertake between five and 10 interviews.

4.4 RELIABILITY OF DATA

The reliability of data refers to consistency and can be assessed by measuring instruments. Reliability is a central concept in measurement and it enables researchers to estimate error when assessing scores in qualitative data. For Punch (2005), two main aspects to this consistency are consistency over time and internal consistency. The best known split-half instruments are the Kuder-Richardson formulae and the coefficient alpha (Punch, 2005). The researcher used the coefficient alpha, also known as the Chronbach's alpha, to test the reliability of quantitative data collected.

4.5 METHODOLOGY

Methodology refers to the logical group of methods which complement each other and fit to produce data and findings to answer the research questions (Henning et al., 2004). For Babbie and Mouton (2001), it focuses on the process, tools and procedures used in a research study. The researcher performed a case study to investigate the research problem and answer the research questions. An advantage of using a case study is that it allows the researcher to reach conclusions by examining only one or a few samples. Case studies are flexible in terms of what they study and a variety of appropriate research methods can be used for data collection and data analysis, and are versatile and manageable for the researcher (Rule & John, 2011).

4.6 RESEARCH METHODS

Data collection consisted of interviews as the qualitative research method and a questionnaire as the quantitative research method. The data collected with the completed questionnaires was analysed by means of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). As required by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), the researcher observed all ethical considerations and procedures before distributing the questionnaires.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A number of ethical considerations were taken into account before and during the process of conducting this study. In doing so the respondents was protected and fairness on the part of the researcher's institution was ensured. Rule and John

(2011:111-112) consider ethics as reflecting the norms and rules for acceptable behaviour and research ethic requirements are based on the following three standard principles:

Autonomy is established by the researcher having to respect and protect the rights of respondents to be fully informed and able to decide whether they want to participate or withdraw from the study (Rule & John, 2011). The ethical issue of fear or mistrust needed to be given attention as this could lead to the respondent providing inaccurate data. The researcher overcame this challenge by ensuring the participants of anonymity and confidentiality, with respondents not asked to put their names on the questionnaires. The researcher sought and received the informed consent of respondents, and ensured they knew the purpose of the research.

Non-maleficence (doing no harm) requires of the researcher not to harm anyone by performing the study (Rule & John, 2011). The researcher mostly used open-ended questions during interviews, audio-recordings were made and the researcher obtained the permission of the interviewees (informed consent), to do so.

Beneficence (for public good) requires that research aim to contribute to public good (Rule & John, 2011). The researcher informed respondents and the company of what would be done with the data collected and how it would be circulated. The researcher ensured fairness to all when selecting the samples for the interviews and questionnaires. Pseudonyms were used for the participants and organization to adhere to the ethical considerations of anonymity and confidentiality.

To comply with the ethical policies and guidelines of CPUT for research and to ensure that all ethical considerations were adhered to, the researcher sought ethical clearance from its Ethics Committee. The researcher obtained permission from the organisation to perform the research and a formal request was sent to participants informing them about the nature and content of the study. The consent letter from the organisation was submitted to the Faculty of Business's Research Ethics Committee (REC), who awarded an ethics clearance certificate to the researcher.

4.8 JUSTIFICATION FOR RESEARCH METHODS

The researcher used the quantitative research method first, because more time was needed for the collection of data, by means of questionnaires and their analysis. The qualitative research method, interviewing, was used after the quantitative research method because fewer people were interviewed and less time was required for data collection and interpretation. Mixed method research and use of multiple methods helped obtain more reliable data and contributed to triangulation.

4.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This study was identified as significant after reading previous studies and by conducting a preliminary literature review, as very little research has been conducted on the factors influencing change communication. After the researcher had conversations with employees in different positions in the company, and understanding that every person has different perceptions and ideas, the importance of this study was reaffirmed. All this preliminary exploration on the subject of change management and the importance of communication gave rise to the need to explore the factors influencing successful communication of change in the workplace. This study can help managers to know what the factors are and be proactive in dealing with them in future change projects.

This study used mixed methods research, which have not been widely used in previous research into communication and change management. The need to use mixed methods research has been identified as a limitation in previous research so by using it in this study this limitation had be overcome. Upon completion this study will contribute to the available literature on communication and change management.

This research can help managers to identify factors that influence successful communication of change and being proactive in dealing with them in future change projects. Communication reasons for organisations not being successful in implementing change were pointed out and will alert managers not to repeat the mistakes, or at least to work on preventing pitfalls. Managers within the company may realise the extent to which communication contributes to the successful implementation of change in the workplace, specifically their organisation. The

management can also learn from this study where they have made mistakes or succeeded in previous change management projects.

4.10 DELINEATION AND LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

The research conducted in this study was narrowed down to only one corporate organisation in the financial services sector. The research was limited to the staff at the company office in Cape Town. Members of staff based at the branches in and around Cape Town were not included in the study, which is a limitation to the study and the research findings. Another potential limitation was that not all the participants returned the questionnaires within the required timeframe. Employees had different interpretations of the questions and their answers were based on their interpretations. Interviews could only be held at the fixed scheduled times, to suit the interviewees.

Biased answers from top management may also have been a limitation to the findings. Welman et al. (2005) regards as a disadvantage of unstructured interviews the direct involvement of researchers or interviewers, as they are in control of the respondents. The researchers may therefore display bias in the interview situation. The researcher bore this in mind when conducting the interviews and when writing up the findings of the study.

4.11 CONCLUSION

The researcher found, by consulting various texts, that qualitative and quantitative research methods are used to measure different aspects in studies, but can also be used to measure the same elements in the process of research. The advantages of qualitative research methods compensate and complement the disadvantages of quantitative research methods. There are certain studies that require the use of both approaches, hence the mixed method approach, followed to gather accurate data for the purpose of triangulation.

Chapter five is a presentation and discussion of the quantitative research results for this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher presents and discusses the findings of the qualitative research. The data was collected from employees of a financial services organisation, called MIM Ltd in Cape Town, South Africa, the employees of which had different education levels, age groups and positions. The research methods discussed in Chapter 4 formed the basis for the presentation and discussion.

5.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data is discussed in this section.

5.2.1 Questionnaire

Davies (2007) regards questionnaires as intended to facilitate usually brief communication, but driven by the researcher's own agenda. A questionnaire with 21 questions was developed and distributed to employees of the company for data collection. The first three questions focussed on the demographic information of the participants, the next two on the perceptions and preferences of the participants on how change is communicated within the company. The next set of questions used the four-point Likert scale as measurement, by which is 1= *strongly disagree*, 2= *disagree*, 3= *agree* and 4= *strongly agree*. The last set of questions required the selection of either 'yes' or 'no' as an answer.

5.2.2 Statistics

The researcher captured the results of the questionnaires in a Microsoft Excel file in order to transform answers to a numerical format. An SPSS file was then compiled to assist the researcher in analysing the research data. The chi-square test was used to determine significant statistical differences. From this point the data was combined in crosstabs to determine the correlation. For the chi square to be more reliable, the researcher combined the pre-matric and matric variables and the b-degree, m-degree and d-degree variables, to read pre-matric or matric and b

degree or higher. The researcher also combined the 46-55 and the 56-65 age categories for the purpose of the crosstabs and chi-square testing. The category called 'senior management' fell away when the crosstabs and chi-square test were performed, due to non-responses of participants. In terms of the questions using the 4 point Likert scale as a measurement, the categories of *strongly agree* and *agree* were combined to be *agree*, and the categories *strongly disagree* and *disagree* combined to *disagree*.

5.3 RELIABILITY

The researcher used the Cronbach's alpha to test the reliability of the research results. The results was tested and confirmed by an overall Chronbach's alpha of .834. The Chronbach's alpha is used as an instrument to estimate or measure the internal consistency reliability (Punch, 2005).

The reliability statistics are shown in the table below:

Table 5.1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.834	10

The statistical package for the social science (SPSS) was used to analyse the data collected with the questionnaire.

5.4 SAMPLING

Probability sampling, specifically stratified random sampling, was used in this study, the aim being to "achieve representativeness, which is the degree to which the sample accurately represents the entire population" (Teddlie & Yu, 2007:77). Teddlie and Yu (2007:79) define stratified sampling as sampling that occurs when "the researcher divides the population into subgroups (or strata) such that each unit belongs to a single stratum (e.g., low income, medium income, high income) and then selects units from those strata".

The researcher obtained a list of all employees within the division from the Human Resources department, which contained information such as the employees' name, job grade, position in the organisation, sex and age. The researcher used

this list to select the population sample, with employees from with different ages, positions. The sex (male or female) of the respondents was not important to the researcher as it did not form part of the research objectives or address the research questions. The qualifications of employees were not specified in the list received from the department. The researcher distributed 90 questionnaires to participants and 80 completed questionnaires was received and used for analysis. The following section of this chapter is a presentation and analysis of the results. The researcher presents and analyses each section according to the research objectives and questions of this study.

5.5 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Each of the sections discussed follows chronologically according to the research objectives and questions specified in Chapter 4 of this paper. An introduction and conclusion start and end of each section, to ensure easy reading. The first section is a presentation of the demographic information of the participants in the company selected for the study. This is presented to give the reader an overview of the milieu in which it was conducted.

5.5.1 Results on demographic information

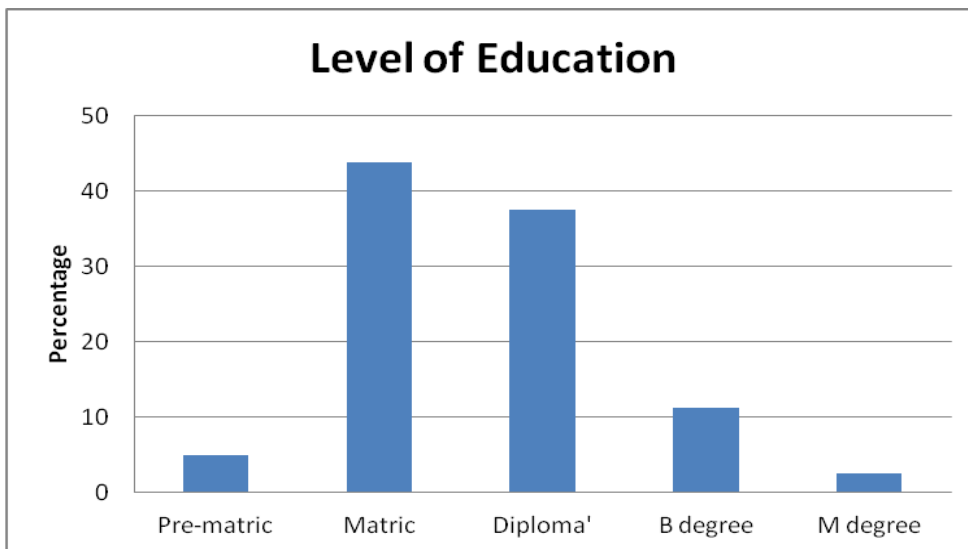
The demographic information referred to in this section is the employees' level of education, age and position they hold within the company in the financial services industry. This information provides a mental picture of the type of participants. To obtain it the researcher asked three questions the participants could use to indicate the group into which they fell:

1. My highest level of education is: pre-matric, matric, diploma, b-degree, m-degree or d-degree.
2. I fall in the following age group: 18-25 years, 26-35 years, 36-45 years, 46-55 years, or 56-65 years.
3. My position in the company can be categorised as: Unskilled Labour, Skilled Labour, Junior Management, Middle Management or Senior Management.

5.5.1.1 Participants' level of education

The level of education refers to the scholarly qualification of the respondents to the questionnaire. They consisted of male and females, of whom 49% had pre-matric or matric and 51% tertiary qualifications. To be specific, 5% of the total respondents had a pre-matric qualification and 44% a matric qualification. The respondents with a diploma qualification comprised 37.5% of the total respondents, while 11% had a b-degree and 2.5% an m-degree qualification. The researcher thus concludes that majority of the respondents to the questionnaire for this study, were from the group with a diploma or degree. The figure below is an illustration of this information in graphic format.

Figure 5.1: Education

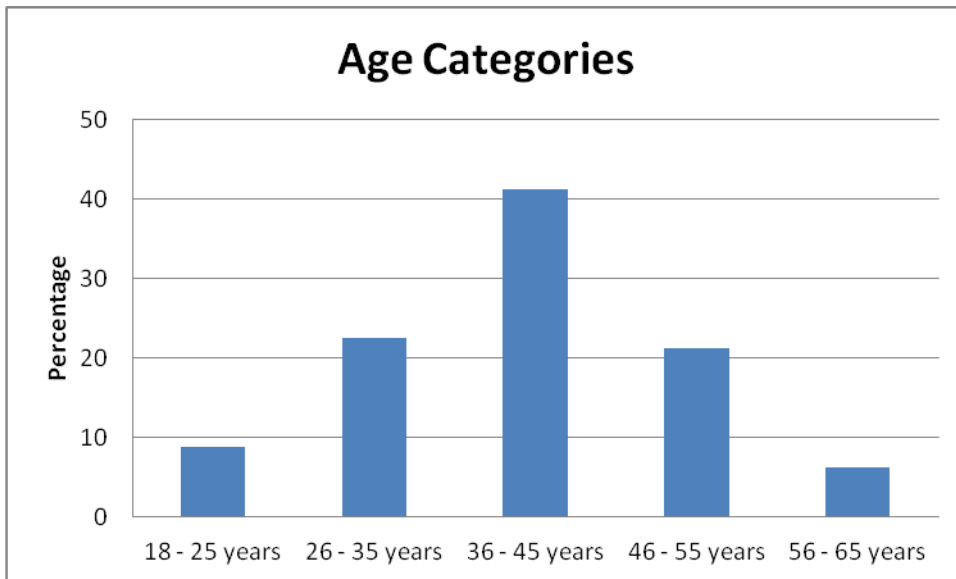


(Source: Field work)

5.5.1.2 Age categories of participants

The age of the respondents formed part of their demographic information, which they had to indicate on the questionnaire. Kim (2008) is of the opinion that older employees are more in control of their emotions and outward displays, hence, younger employees' emotions must be managed closely in times of change. 9% of the total respondents to the questionnaire fell in the 18-25 years age category, 23% in the 26-35 years age category, 41% in the 36-45 age category, 21% in the 46-55 age category and 6% in the 56-65 age category. The figure below illustrates the percentage of respondents in the different age categories.

Figure 5.2: Age Categories



(Source: Field work)

5.5.1.3 Position of participants in the organisation

Knowing the participants' positions in the organisation gives the researcher an idea of where he or she fits into it. It also allows the researcher to make certain inferences and answer the research objective and question about the communication of change to employees with different positions in the organisation. Johansson and Heide (2008: 294) suggest that because employees of "an organization have different backgrounds, interests, experiences, education, positions," they interpret the same situation differently. Only 78 of the 80 respondents responded to question three of the questionnaire, which means two people did not answer it. Of the 78 respondents, 6% had a position in the unskilled labour category, 51% in the skilled labour category, 25% in junior management and 15% in middle management. Hence, the category of senior management fell away when the chi-square test was performed for reliability.

The table below shows the non-responses of two participants on their position.

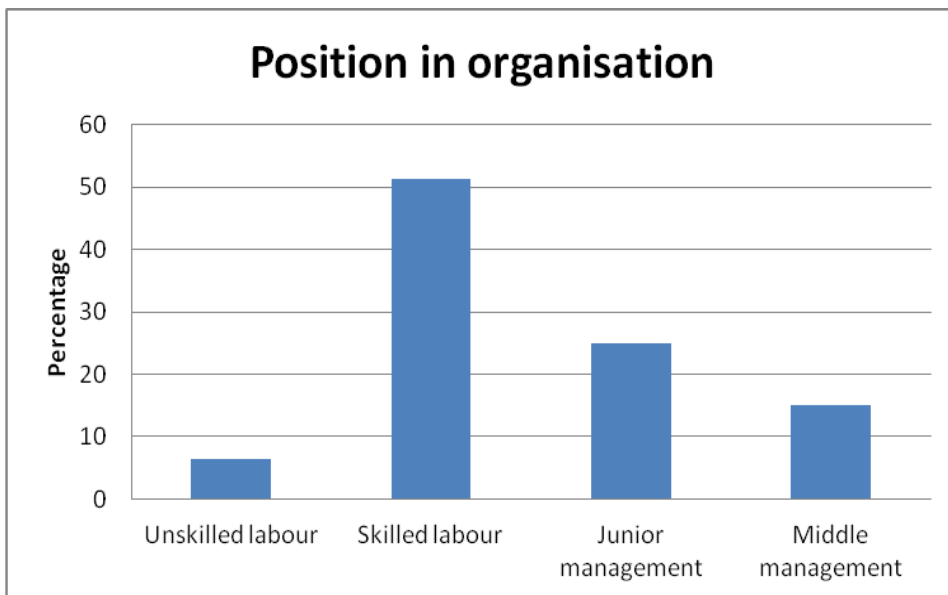
Table 5.2: Position in the organisation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unskilled labour	5	6.3	6.4	6.4
	Skilled labour	41	51.3	52.6	59.0
	Junior management	20	25.0	25.6	84.6
	Middle management	12	15.0	15.4	100.0
	Total	78	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.5		
Total		80	100.0		

(Source: Field work)

The figure below shows the positions of the respondents in graph format.

Figure 5.3: Position in the organisation



(Source: Field work)

5.5.1.4 Conclusion

The employees in the organisation were from a range of age groups and did not all have a formal qualification. The respondents to the questionnaire held different positions within the organisation, which made them a diverse group. The study shows a 100% response rate on the first two questions, but on Question 3 there were 2.5% non-responses.

5.5.2 Presentation of quantitative results – objective one

The researcher presents and analyses the research results for the first objective of this study. The first objective of this study is to *identify how employees with different education levels perceive change and the different ways in which change should be communicated to them*. The research question asked is “*Should change be communicated differently to employees with different levels of education?*” The graphs and tables below provide answers to the research objective and question.

5.5.2.1 Employees with different education levels’ perceptions of change communication

The following tables depict responses to the question on whether people with different education levels find change to be communicated verbally in the organisation.

Table 5.3: Perception – Verbal Communication

		Education			Total
		Pre-matric or Matric	Diploma'	B degree or higher	
Change is communicated by means of: Verbal Communication	Yes	20	23	6	49
	No	19	7	5	31
Total		39	30	11	80

(Source: Field work)

Table 5.3.1: Chi-square test - verbal communication in the organisation

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	4.845 ^a	2	.089	.099		
Likelihood Ratio	5.024	2	.081	.100		
Fisher's Exact Test	4.914			.086		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.027 ^b	1	.311	.339	.198	.078
N of Valid Cases	80					

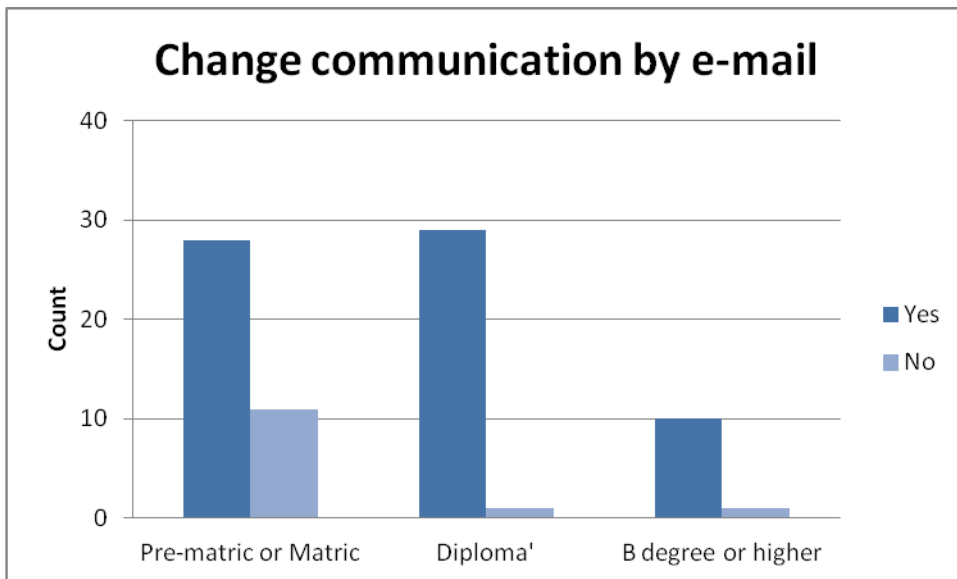
(Source: Field work)

Almost 50% of the respondents indicated that change was communicated verbally to employees, 59% of whom were employees with a tertiary education qualification. The employees who said change was not being communicated verbally comprised 39% of the total respondents, of whom 61% had a pre-matric or matric qualification.

From the group of respondents with diplomas, 23% said change was not communicated verbally while 77% said it was, within the company. The respondents with a b-degree or higher qualifications were split 50/50 on change being communicated verbally to employees. The same was the case for employees with pre-matric or matric as an educational qualification. The 50/50 results may be due to some managers using verbal communication with their subordinates, whilst others did not. The results of the respondents with diplomas show that their managers communicated verbally to them and vice versa.

The perception of employees with different education levels regarding change communication by e-mail within the organisation is shown in the figure below.

Figure 5.4: E-mail communication of change



(Source: Field work)

28% of the respondents with pre-matric or matric qualifications indicated change was not communicated in the organisation by means of e-mail, whilst 72% of the same group said it was. Contrary to the latter responses, 95% of the respondents

with a diploma, b-degree or higher qualifications indicated change was communicated in the organisation via e-mail. From the results to this question, the researcher considered it possible that the 28% of respondents with pre-matric or matric might not have had access to e-mail and therefore did not know that this form of communication took place in the organisation.

One of the questions in the questionnaire was whether change was communicated in the organisation, using auditorium sessions. The results are shown in the following table.

Table 5.4: Change communication by auditorium sessions

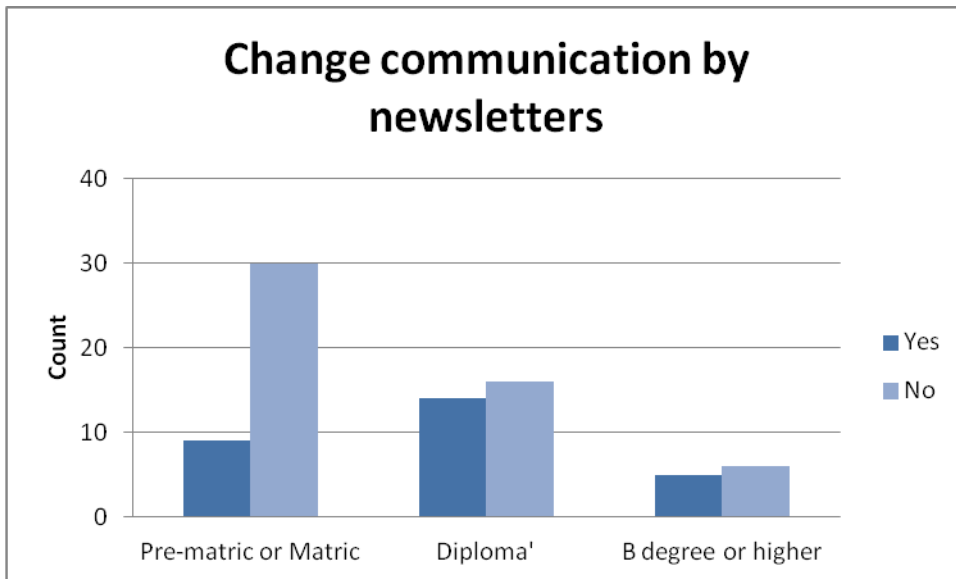
		Education			Total
		Pre-matric or Matric	Diploma	B degree or higher	
Change is communicated by means of: Auditorium Sessions	Yes	24	23	8	55
	No	15	7	3	25
Total		39	30	11	80

(Source: Field work)

Of all the respondents, 69% indicated change was communicated via auditorium sessions, with only 31% saying there was no such means of communication. From the results 73% of employees with degrees, 77% with diplomas and 62% with pre-matric and matric qualifications agreed that change was communicated via auditorium sessions. These are higher percentages than those that said change was not communicated in auditorium sessions, so the researcher can conclude that the employees indicating the negative either did not attend the auditorium sessions held did not understand what was being said during the sessions. With this being said, no statistical significant difference was found by the chi-square test.

The figure below shows how many respondents from the different education categories indicated change was communicated by means of newsletters in the organisation.

Figure 5.5: Communication by Newsletters



(Source: Field work)

Other than the previous forms of communication, the majority of the respondents said change was not communicated by means of newsletters within the organisation. 77% of the respondents in the pre-matric or matric group indicated change communication was not publicised in newsletters, 53% with diplomas and 54% with degrees agreed change was not communicated in newsletters.

The results of the questionnaire above suggest that employees did not receive newsletters in the organisation or they did not read them. That there were respondents answering yes to change being communicated via newsletters means that newsletters were distributed in the organisation. Not reading the newsletters can be seen as a form of resistance to change by the employees, since they were not participating (Erwin & Garman, 2009).

5.5.2.2 Preferred methods of change communication from employees with diverse education levels

Subsequent to asking respondents about their perceptions of how change was communicated in the organisation, the respondents were asked about their preferences.

The table below depicts the preference to have change communicated via e-mail.

Table 5.5: Verbal Communication as preference

		Education			Total
		Pre-matric or Matric	Diploma'	B degree or higher	
I prefer change to be communicated via: Verbal Communication	Yes	18	26	8	52
	No	21	4	3	28
Total		39	30	11	80

Table 5.5.1: Chi-square of verbal communication as preference

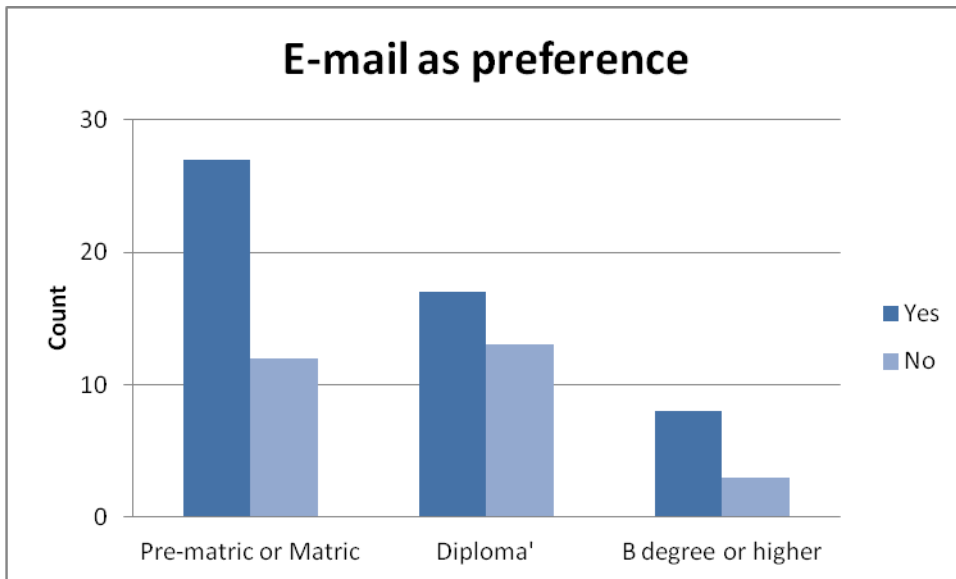
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	12.568 ^a	2	.002	.002		
Likelihood Ratio	13.306	2	.001	.002		
Fisher's Exact Test	12.689			.001		
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.260 ^b	1	.007	.008	.004	.003
N of Valid Cases	80					

(Source: Field work)

The chi-square test shows a statistical significant difference in the number of people preferring change to be communicated verbally to them. 83% of the respondents with tertiary education qualifications preferred to have change communicated to them verbally, whilst 54% with a pre-matric or matric qualification did not prefer verbal communication. The p value of the chi-square test showed a statistical significant difference of 0.002. The researcher's finding is an employee with tertiary education qualification prefers to have the personal discussion with his or her managers or change agents. The personal discussion presents the employee with an opportunity to debate issues with the manager or at least clarify issues that are unclear to him or her.

The next question in the questionnaire was whether change should be communicated by means of e-mail to employees. The graph below illustrates the preferences of employees with different education levels.

Figure 5.6: E-mail Communication as preference

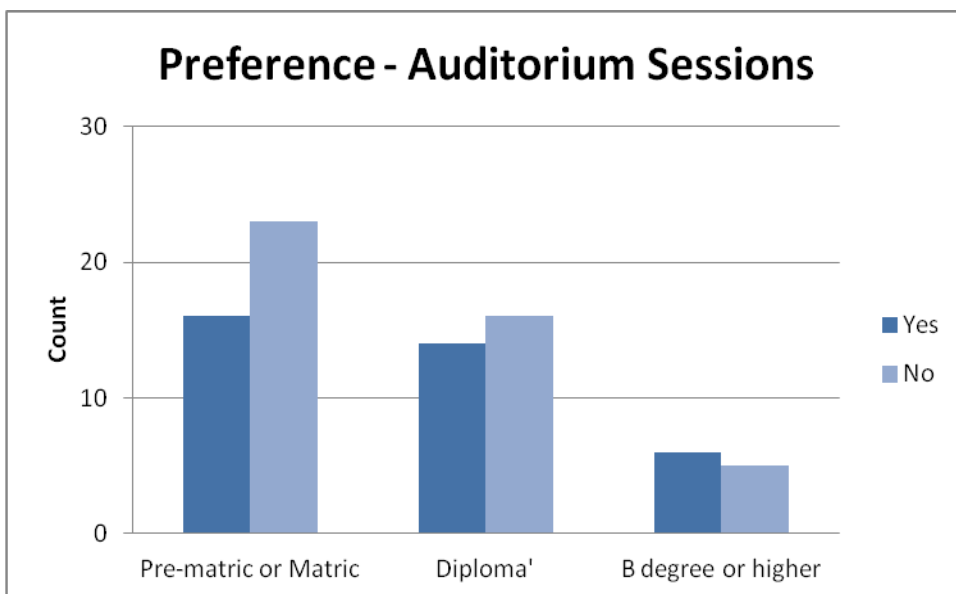


(Source: Field work)

Most of the respondents preferred to receive change communication via e-mail. From the pre-matric or matric group, 69% of the respondents preferred to receive change communication via e-mail, 57% with diplomas and 73% with b-degrees or higher preferred to receive communication on change by e-mail.

Figure 5.7 below shows whether respondents prefer auditorium sessions as a way of communicating change to employees in the organisation.

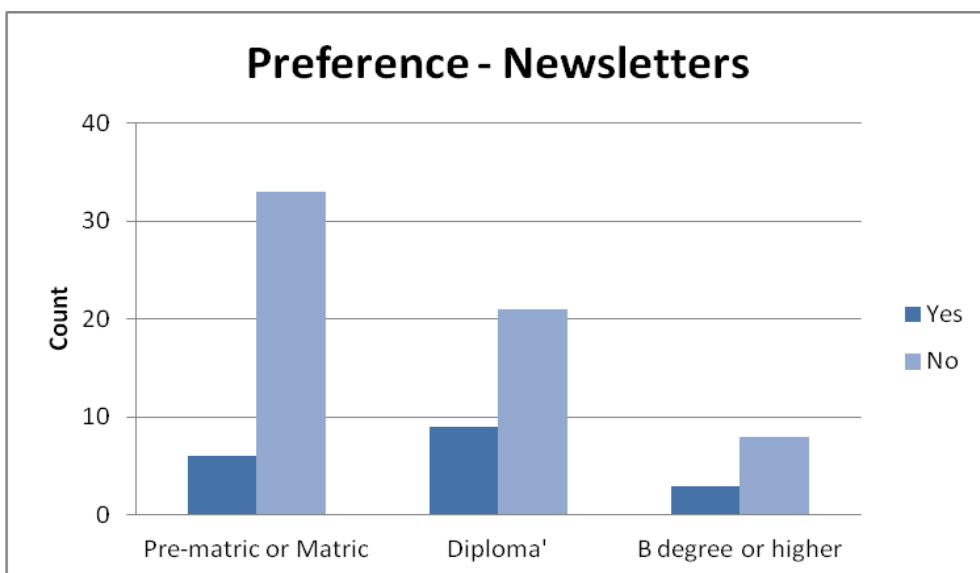
Figure 5.7: Auditorium sessions as preference



(Source: Field work)

Of the respondents from the pre-matric or matric group, 59% responded that they did not prefer receiving change communication during auditorium sessions, compared to the 41% who responded positively. 53% of the employees with a diploma as qualification also said they did not prefer auditorium sessions as the means to communicate change, whilst 47% indicated their preference for this means of communication. On the other hand, 55% of the employees with a b-degree or higher preferred auditorium sessions as a means of change communication and only 45% indicated they did not prefer auditorium sessions. Respondents to the questionnaire were asked if they preferred to receive communication of change by means of newsletters. The responses are shown in the graph below (figure 5.8).

Figure 5.8: Newsletters as preference



(Source: Field work)

Earlier in the chapter it came to the researcher's attention that newsletters are not perceived as a tool used in the organisation to communicate change. The respondents were asked about their preference to have change communicated to them by means of newsletters in the questionnaire. The results showed the majority of the respondents did not prefer newsletters as a tool to communicate change. Specifically, 85% of the respondents with pre-matric or matric as qualification did not want to receive newsletters about change, with the remaining 15% indicating they preferred newsletters. 70% of the respondents with a diploma

as educational qualification did not prefer newsletters, whilst 30% of the same group preferred newsletters. The respondents with a b-degree or higher show results of 73% against newsletters and 27% for newsletters.

5.5.2.3 Results of 4 point Likert scale questions

This section is a presentation and discussion of the research results on the questions using the four point Likert scale as measurement, which is 1= *strongly disagree*, 2= *disagree*, 3= *agree* and 4= *strongly agree*. These questions were asked to determine the employees' feelings and perceptions around change in their organisation.

The question asked in the questionnaire based on the 4 point Likert scale was; "*Change is important for the progress/ growth of the company*". Tables 5.6 and 5.6.1 below indicate there were no statistical significant differences in the responses to the question in the questionnaire.

Table 5.6: The importance of change for the organisation

		Education			Total
		Pre-matric or Matric	Diploma'	B degree or higher	
Change is important for the progress/ growth of the company	Agree	38	29	11	78
	Disagree	1	1	0	2
Total		39	30	11	80

(Source: Field work)

Table 5.6.1: Chi-square test - Importance of change for the organisation

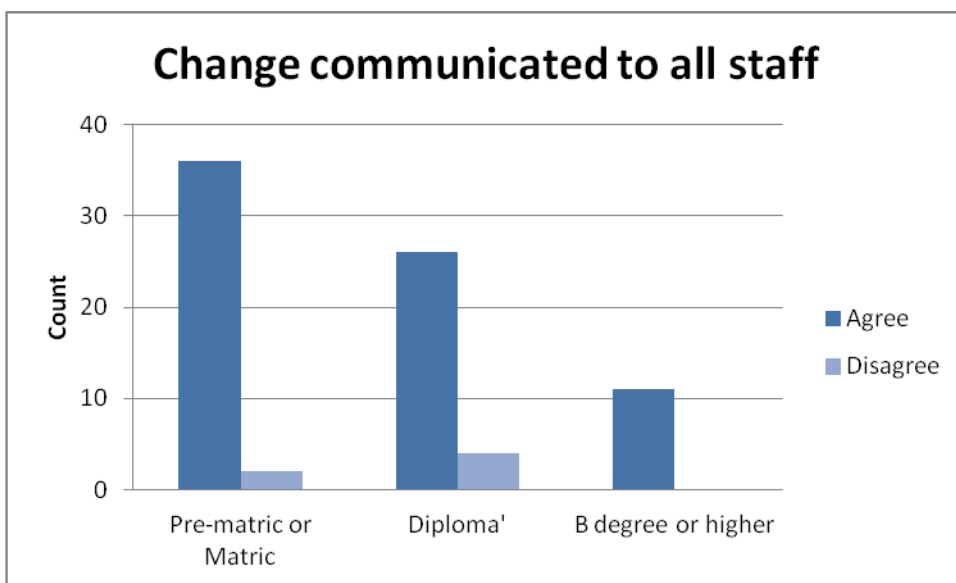
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	.368 ^a	2	.832	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.635	2	.728	1.000		
Fisher's Exact Test	.659			1.000		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.091 ^b	1	.763	1.000	.605	.370
N of Valid Cases	80					

(Source: Field work)

The majority of the respondents from all the education levels indicated that change was important for the progress or growth of the organisation. Of the respondents with pre-matric or matric as qualification 97% indicated change was important for the progress or growth of the organisation, 97% with diplomas and 100% with a b-degree or higher agreed with this statement.

The next figure shows the results on the question if “*change is communicated to all staff in the organisation*” on which respondents had to reply by ticking either of the following boxes: *agree, strongly agree, disagree or strongly disagree*.

Figure 5.9: The communication of change to all staff members



(Source: Field work)

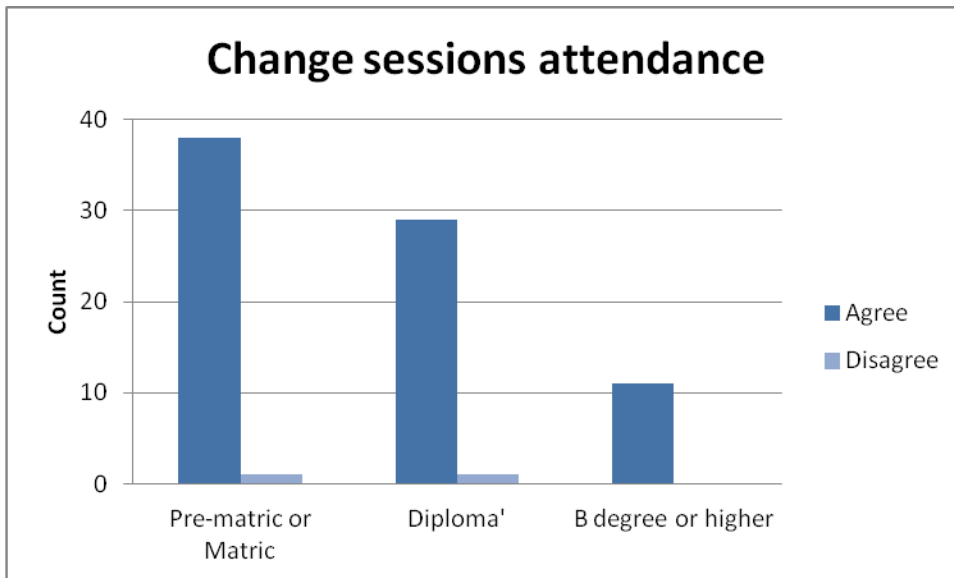
From the group of respondents with pre-matric or matric as educational qualification, 5% disagreed with the statement and 95% agreed. The respondents with diplomas had a response rate of 13% disagreeing and 87% that agreed with the statement. 100% of the respondents with a b-degree or higher qualification agreed that change was communicated to all staff within the company.

The respondents mostly agreed with the statement that change was communicated in their organisation, which leads the researcher to believe that it is indeed so. The people who responded that change was not communicated to all staff in the organisation may be cases that they were not at work on a particular day when change was communicated or that they did not have access to the

means used to communicate change. It may also be a case of resistance to change that placed them in a position of disagreeing with the statement.

The next statement in the questionnaire was “Attendance to change communication sessions is important”, the results of which are presented in the following figure.

Figure 5.10: Importance of attending change communication sessions



(Source: Field work)

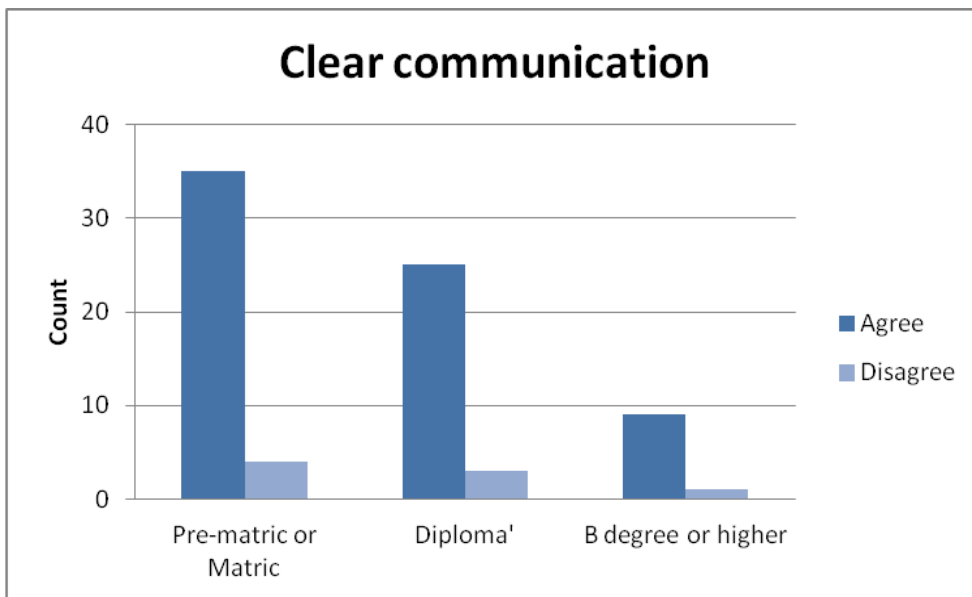
Figure 5.10 illustrates that 97.5% of all the respondents agreed that it was important to attend information sessions about change in the organisation. Of the pre-matric or matric group 2.5% indicated that it was not important to attend change sessions, while 97.5% agreed to the importance of attending change sessions. Of the group of respondents with a diploma as qualification, 3% disagreed with the statement and 97% agreed that attendance of change sessions was important. All (100%) the respondents with a b-degree or higher agreed that it was important to attend change communication sessions.

The respondents showed through their responses that they benefitted by attending these communication sessions and therefore agreed that the attendance of the sessions was important to employees. By attending the communication sessions, employees granted themselves the opportunity to hear the story from the original source and not by word of mouth. Attendance of change

communication sessions was another way of alleviating resistance to change and fear of change plans in the organisation (Erwin & Garman, 2009).

Figure 5.11 (below) is a reflection of the results on the statement “*The communication of change is clear and understandable*”. The results were taken from a crosstab with the respondents’ level of education.

Figure 5.11: Clear and understandable change communication

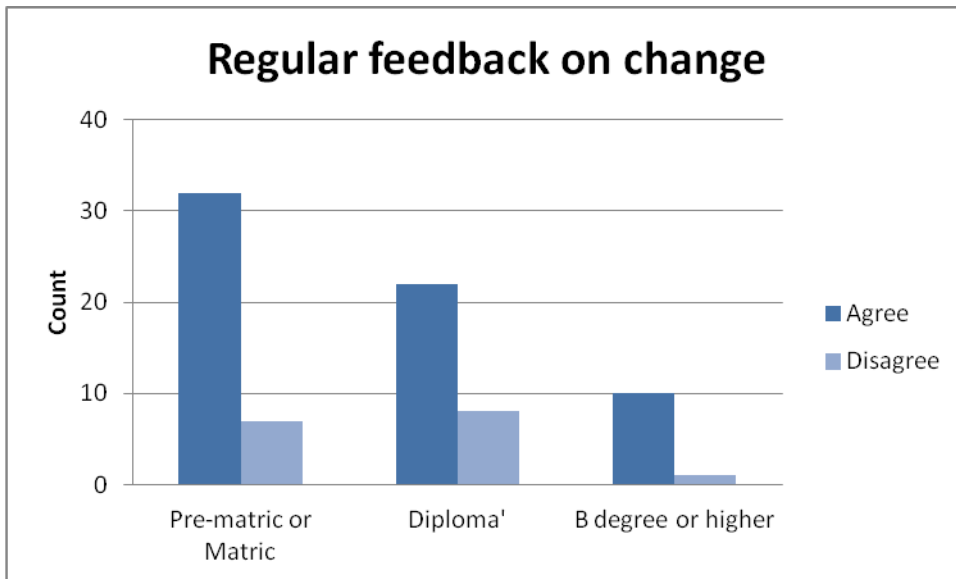


(Source: Field work)

The importance of clear and understandable communication about change plans or initiatives had been discussed in chapter three. The question was posed to questionnaire respondents, 89% of whom with pre-matric or matric agreed that change communication was clear and understandable to them, compared to the 11% of the same group who said it was not. The response from the group with diplomas as education level was the same with 89% agreeing to the statement and 11% being in disagreement. Of the group with a b-degree or higher, 90% of the respondents agreed the change communication was clear and understandable to them, with 10% disagreeing.

The graph below reflects the results of the statement “*Regular feedback is given when changes take place in the company*”, to which respondents had to respond with either selecting *strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree*.

Figure 5.12: Regular feedback on changes in the organisation



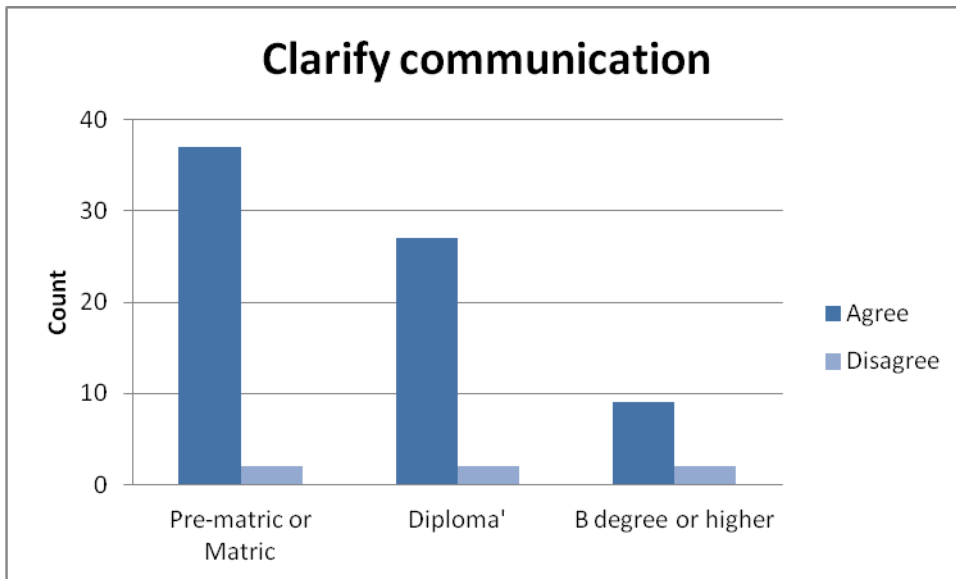
(Source: Field work)

The responses to the question in the questionnaire showed 82% of the pre-matric or matric group agreed with the statement that regular feedback was given on changes in the organisation, while 18% disagreed. From the respondents with a diploma as qualification, 73% agreed with the statement and 27% disagreed. 90% of the respondents with a b-degree or higher agreed that regular feedback was provided, whilst only 10% disagreed with the statement.

The researcher surmises the employees who disagreed with the statement were probably not attending feedback sessions, or reading the e-mail or newsletter communications. The reasons for this may be that they did not have access to the e-mails or newsletters or they did not prefer the methods of communication used in the organisation.

The next graph deals with the responses on the statement of employees asking questions if something was unclear to them.

Figure 5.13: Clarifying unclear matters/ communication



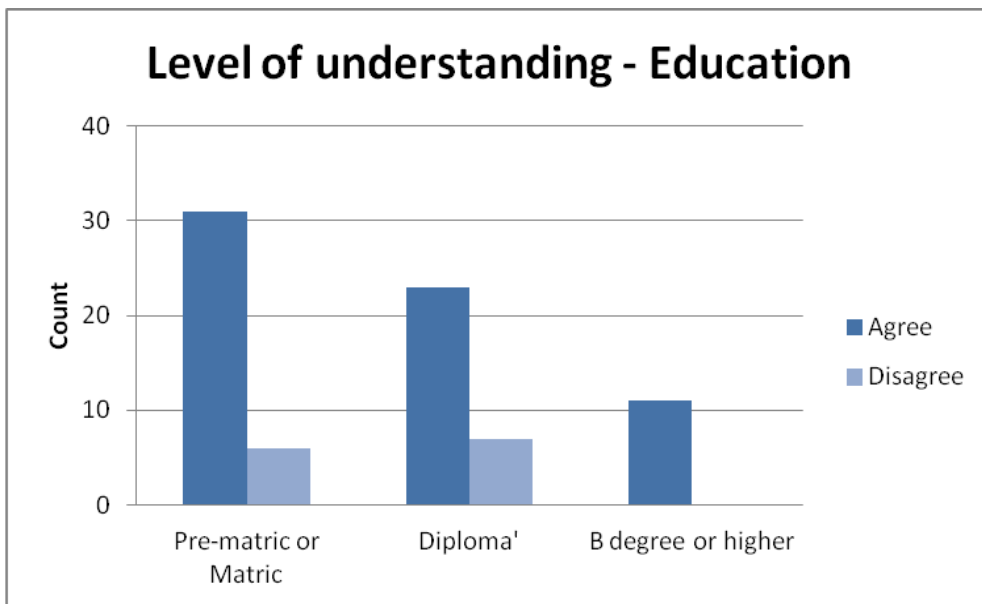
(Source: Field work)

On the mentioned statement, 94% of the respondents with pre-matric or matric responded that they did ask a question when something was unclear to them, with 6% not agreeing to the statement. Of the respondents with a diploma as educational qualification, 93% agreed they asked questions and 7% did not agree with the statement. The group of respondents with a b-degree or higher indicated nine of the 11 (81%) agreed with the statement and two (19%) did not ask questions if something was unclear to them.

The above results are an indication that employees were interested enough in the communication around change to clarify matters not clear to them.

The following graph shows the results on the statement *“I understand change communication due to my education level”*.

Figure 5.14: Understanding change communication – education



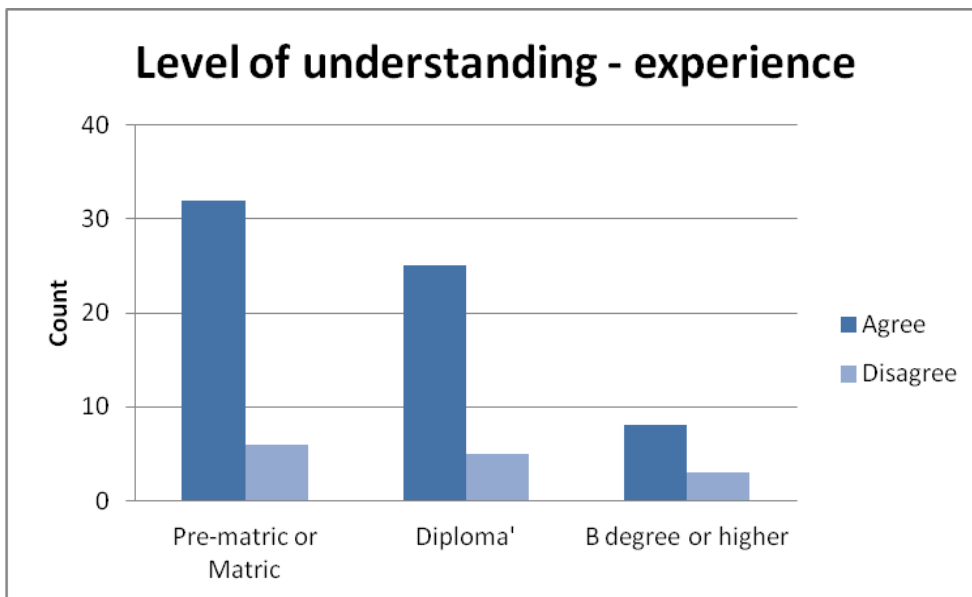
(Source: Field work)

The responses to the statement show 16% of the pre-matric or matric group of respondents did not agree with the statement, whilst 84% did. 76% of the respondents with a diploma as qualification agreed with the statement and 24% disagreed. Of the respondents from the b-degree or higher group, 100% agreed with the statement that they understood change communication due to their level of education.

The respondents not agreeing to the statement may have felt they had other reasons for not understanding change communication, such as the manager or change agent not being a good facilitator or speaker. It may also be that these respondents did not bother to attend communication sessions and therefore did not know what had been communicated. There can be a range of reasons for respondents not understanding change communication, other than their level of education.

The next graph (figure 5.15) shows the results of the responses on the statement “*I understand change communication due to my years of experience*”. The four-point Likert scale was used as measurement, which is 1= *strongly disagree*, 2= *disagree*, 3= *agree* and 4= *strongly agree*.

Figure 5.15: Understanding change communication based on experience

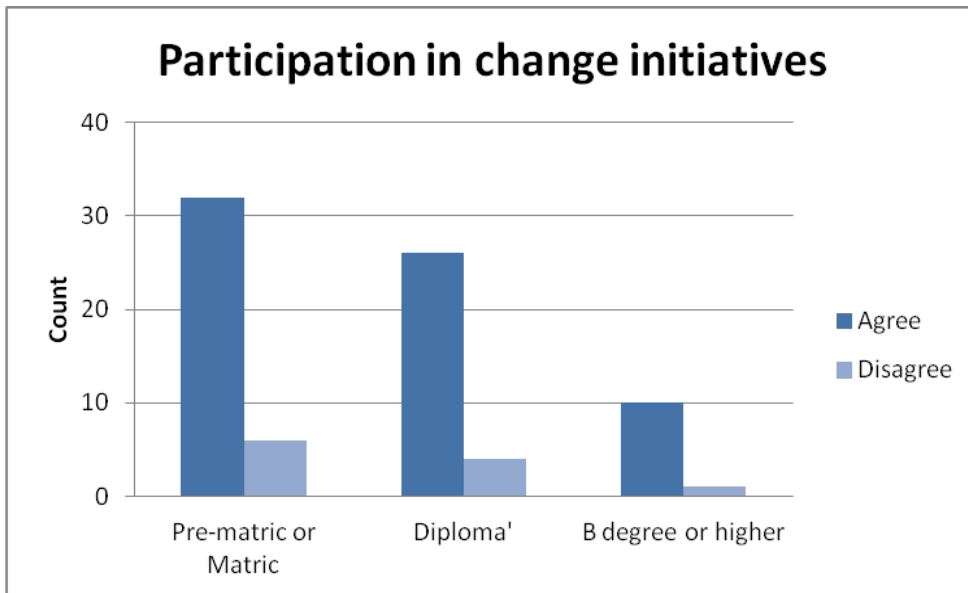


(Source: Field work)

The purpose of this statement was to get an idea of whether employees understood change communication because of their years of experience in their careers or not. 88% of the respondents with pre-matric or matric as qualification agreed with the statement, but 12% did not. From the group with a diploma as qualification, 83% agreed with the statement and 17% were not in agreement with the statement. The group with a b-degree or higher showed 72% agree, whilst 28% did not agree with the statement.

The next graph depicts the results for the last statement in the questionnaire which uses the four-point Likert scale as measurement. The statement was *“I participate in change initiatives of the company”*.

Figure 5.16: Employee participation in change initiatives



(Source: Field work)

The results of the responses on this statement show 84% of the respondents with pre-matric or matric as qualification agreed that they participated in change initiatives of the organisation, despite the 16% who did not agree with the statement. 86% of the respondents with a diploma as qualification agreed with the statements and 14% did not agree, whilst 90% of the respondents with a b-degree or higher agreed with the statement and only 10% disagreed.

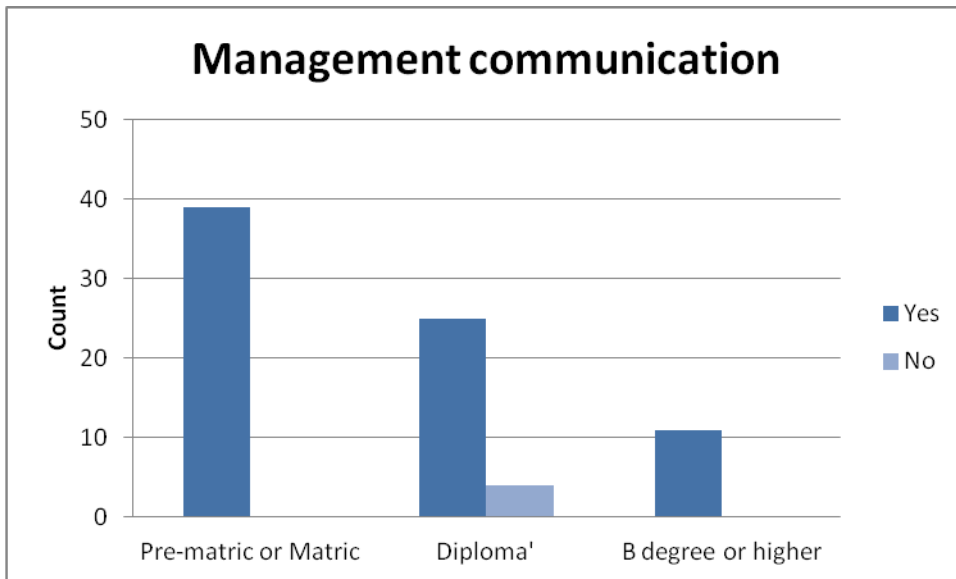
The next section is a presentation and discussion of the yes or no questions in the questionnaire.

5.5.2.4 Results of yes or no questions

The next sets of results were those of the 'yes' or 'no' questions, where respondents had to select either as an answer.

The subsequent graph (figure 5.17) reflects the results on the question *“Does your manager/ supervisor communicate change?”*

Figure 5.17: Management communicating change



(Source: Field work)

This is a very positive result for the organisation and for validity the researcher includes the chi-square results for the readers.

Table 5.7: Chi-square test for change communicated by managers

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	7.264 ^a	2	.026	.023		
Likelihood Ratio	8.390	2	.015	.023		
Fisher's Exact Test	5.630			.038		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.030 ^b	1	.310	.481	.250	.159
N of Valid Cases	79					

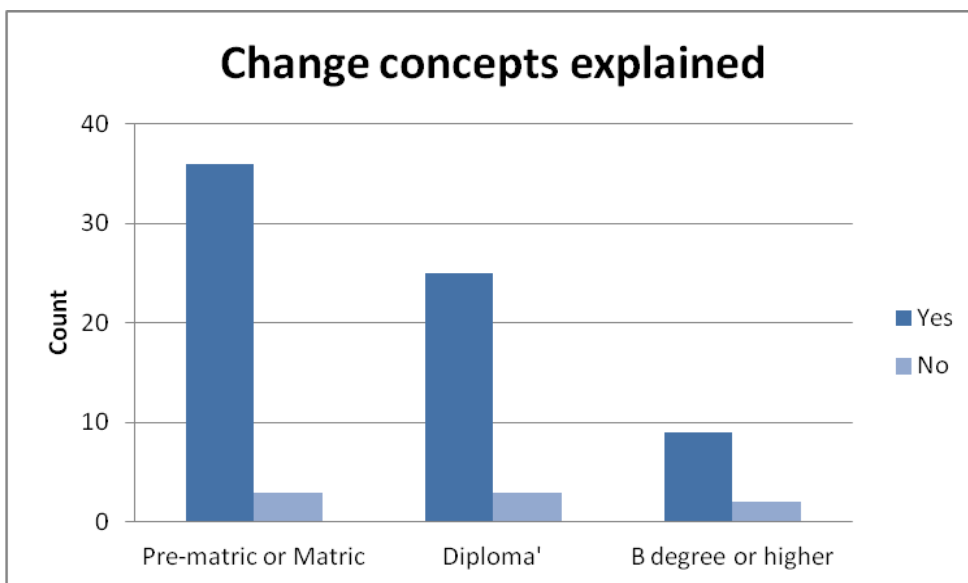
(Source: Field work)

The above results show a statistically significant difference between the answers provided by groups of respondents. Only four of the total respondents of 80 employees responded that their manager or supervisor did not communicate change to them. This means 95% of all respondents were receiving communication on change from their managers or supervisors. More specifically, 100% of both the pre-matric or matric and b-degree or higher groups answered

'yes' to the above mentioned question. From the group of respondents with a diploma as qualification 86% answered 'yes' to the question and 14% answered 'no'.

The next yes or no question in the questionnaire was "Are change concepts and terms used explained to staff members?", results for which are shown in the following graph.

Figure 5.18: Change concepts and terms explained



(Source: Field work)

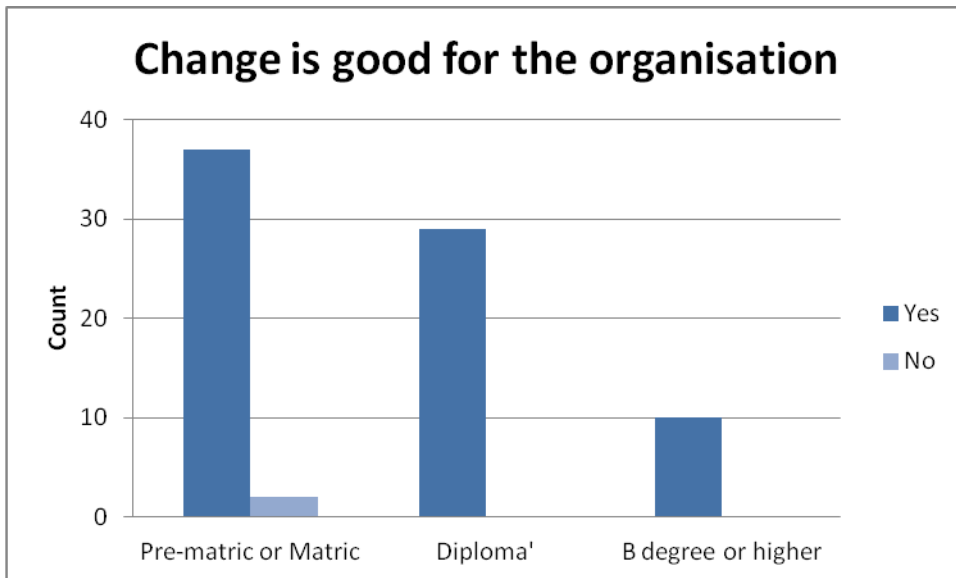
92% of the respondents with pre-matric or matric responded yes to this question and 8% answered no, that change concepts and terms were not explained to them. From the group with a diploma a qualification 89% indicated 'yes' and 11% indicated 'no' as answer to the question. The group with a b-degree or higher had 81% answering 'yes' and 19% answering 'no' to the question.

The reasons for the different answers may include:

- Respondents not requesting explanations from the communicator.
- Management not enquiring if everybody understood the concepts and terms used.
- Non-participation in discussions on change.
- Resistance to change, resulting in no interest shown by respondents.

The next figure (5.19) illustrates the responses on the question if change was good for the organisation. This question tested the perception of respondents on change in the organisation.

Figure 5.19: Change is good for the organisation

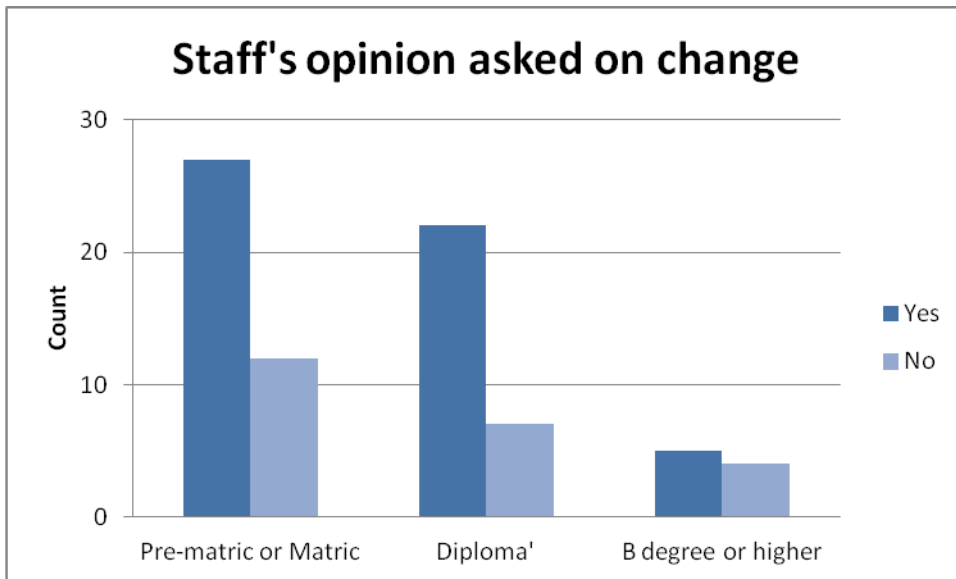


(Source: Field work)

Both the groups with diplomas and b-degree or higher, 100% of the respondents, answered 'yes' to the question. 95% of the respondents in the pre-matric or matric group answered 'yes', whereas 5% answered 'no' to the question. From these results, the researcher concludes that the majority of employees felt change was good for the organisation and the staff members, hence making an inference that resistance to change will be in the minority in the organisation.

To follow is a graph with the results on the question *"Is the opinion of staff members asked when change is communicated?"*

Figure 5.20: The opinion of staff on change

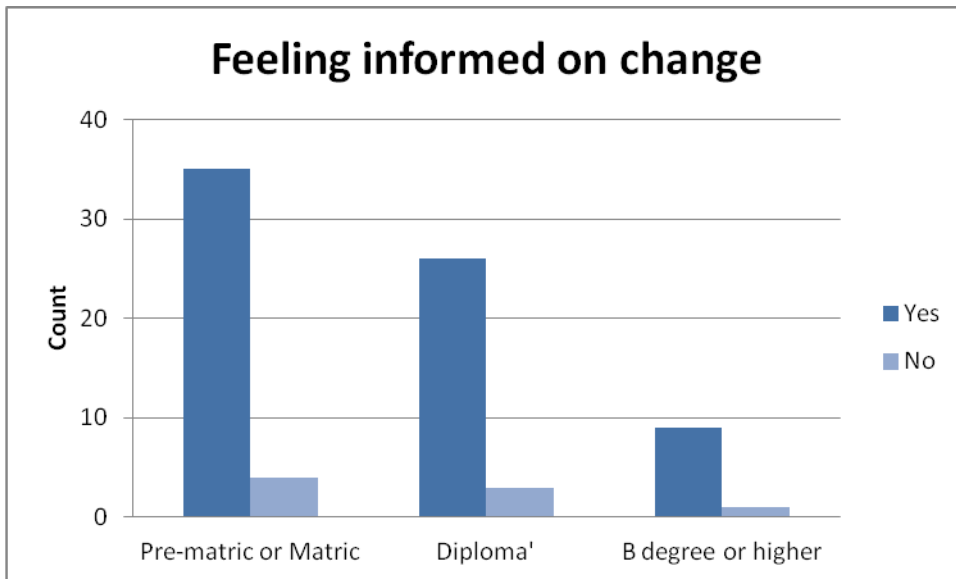


(Source: Field work)

The results show higher percentages of negative answers to the mentioned question. Of the pre-matric or matric group, 30% answered 'no' and 70% answered 'yes' to the question. The group with a diploma saw 24% answering 'no' and 76% answering 'yes', while the b-degree or higher group saw 44% answering 'no' and 56% answering 'yes'. It seems that although change was communicated in the organisation, management and change agents neglected to ask employees for their opinion on change plans. The researcher concludes that employees did not feel free to give their opinions on change plans, unless it was asked of them, hence the high rate of negative answers to this question in the questionnaire.

The last question in the 'yes or no' set of questions in the questionnaire was "*Do you feel informed on change initiatives in the company/ department?*" The answers are depicted in the next graph (figure 5.21).

Figure 5.21: Staff feeling informed on change



(Source: Field work)

On the mentioned question, 89% of the pre-matric or matric group answered 'yes' to the question whereas 11% answered 'no', meaning they did not feel they were informed on the change in the organisation. At the same time, 89% of the respondents with a diploma answered 'yes' and 11% answered 'no' to the same question. From the b-degree or higher group, 90% answered 'yes', they felt informed on change in the organisation, while 10% answered 'no' to the question.

5.5.2.5 Conclusion

The majority of the respondents with diverse education levels perceived change to be communicated verbally, by e-mail and auditorium sessions. There was however a different response to newsletters, which leads the researcher to the conclusion that the company was not making use of newsletters to communicate change to their employees or they were not readily available to them.

Staff members will cooperate with their preferences and the above research results show that the highest preferred ways of change communication to the employees of were e-mail and verbal communication. The results of the last section led the researcher to believe that the resistance to change within the company was not a great problem, as staff thought change was good for it and the staff members. The respondents felt they were informed on change plans or

initiatives in the organisation. Another positive result was that change was being communicated to employees by their managers and supervisors.

The next section deal with the research results to answer the second objective.

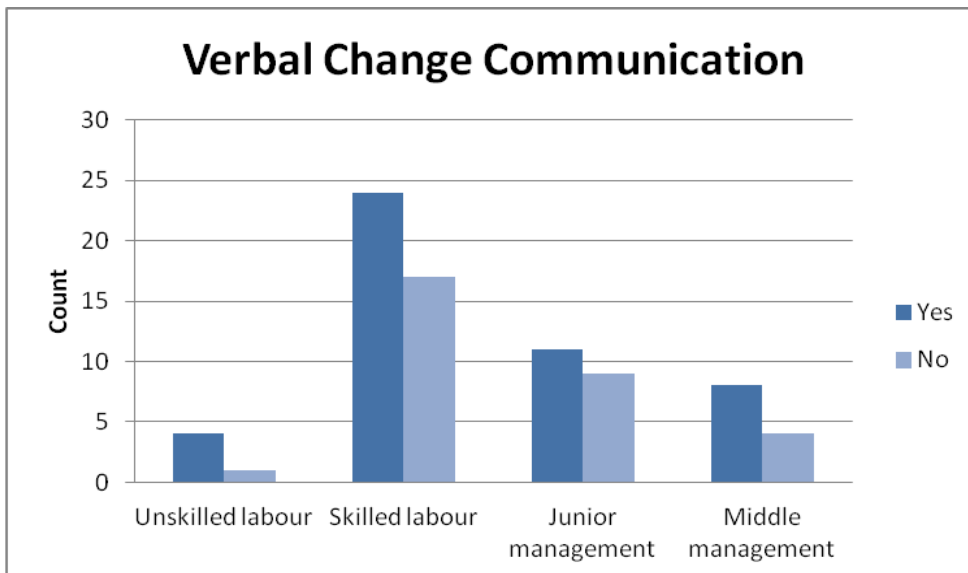
5.5.3 Presentation of quantitative results – objective two

This section is a presentation and analysis of the results on the second research objective of this study, namely to “describe how employees in different positions perceive change and the different ways in which change should be communicated to them.” The research question was “Should change be communicated differently to employees in different positions within the organisation?”

5.5.3.1 Perception of change communication to employees in different positions

The graph below shows how employees in different positions in the organisation perceived change to be communicated verbally.

Figure 5.22: Perception on verbal communication of change



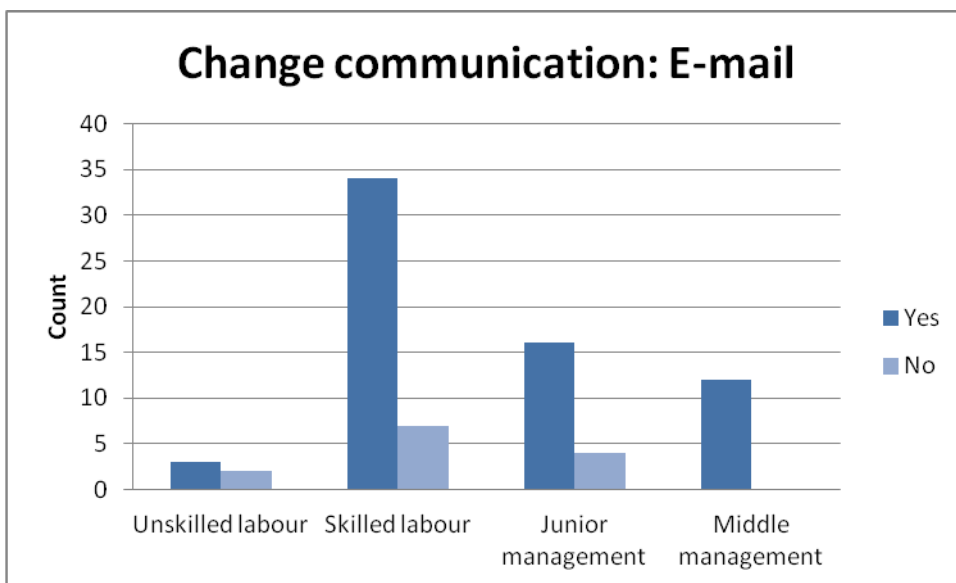
(Source: Field work)

The graph shows the majority (60%) of the respondents agreed that change was communicated verbally in their organisation. The unskilled labour group had 20% who did not agree to change being communicated verbally, whilst 80% did. Of the skilled labour group 41% indicated change was not communicated verbally, but

59% indicated the opposite. Contrary to the skilled labour group, 45% of the junior management group said change was not communicated verbally to employees, but 55% of the same group responded that change was. The last group of respondents came from the middle management group, of whom 33% answered 'no' and 67% answered 'yes'.

The next graph (Figure 5.23) is an illustration of change communication via e-mail.

Figure 5.23: Change communicated via e-mail



(Source: Field work)

The graph shows 100% of the respondents in the middle management group answered 'yes' to the question as to whether change was communicated via e-mail in the organisation. Of the junior management group of respondents, 20% indicated change was not communicated via e-mail, compared to the 80% in the same group who answered 'yes'. 83% of the respondents from the skilled labour group answered 'yes', whilst 17% answered 'no'. The unskilled labour group of respondents had a different response rate of 60% answering 'yes' and 40% answering 'no' to whether change was communicated via e-mail. The reason for the response rate may be that these employees did not have access to a computer or e-mail. This can also explain the high positive responses from the skilled labour, junior management and middle management groups.

The following table is a depiction of the responses on the question of whether change was communicated with auditorium sessions.

Table 5.8: Change communicated by means of auditorium sessions

		Position in company				Total
		Unskilled labour	Skilled labour	Junior management	Middle management	
Change is communicated by means of: Auditorium Sessions	Yes	2	24	18	9	53
	No	3	17	2	3	25
Total		5	41	20	12	78

(Source: Field work)

The chi-square test below shows the significant difference in responses.

Table 5.8.1: Change communicated by means of auditorium sessions

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	8.201 ^a	3	.042	.038		
Likelihood Ratio	8.985	3	.029	.039		
Fisher's Exact Test	8.411			.030		
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.766 ^b	1	.029	.040	.019	.011
N of Valid Cases	78					

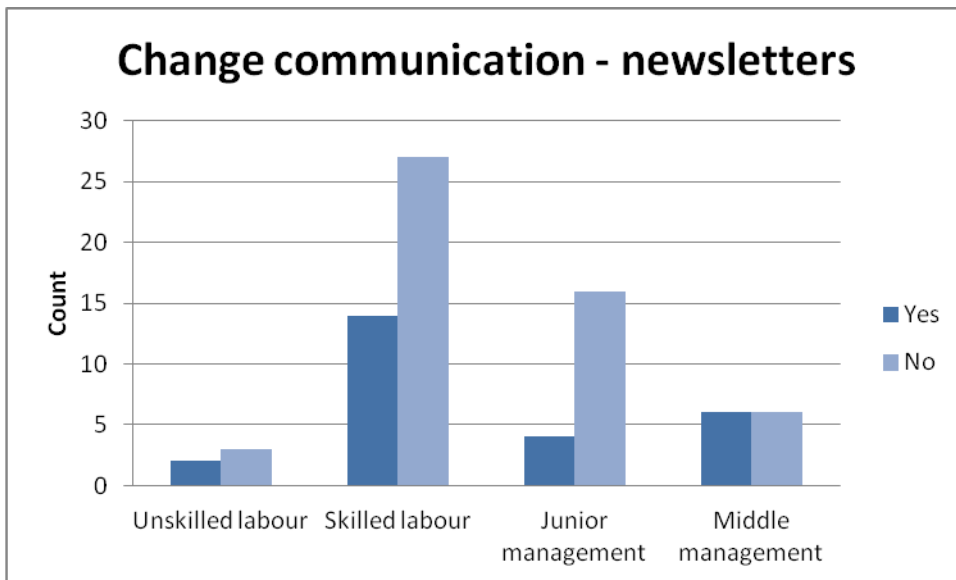
(Source: Field work)

The tables above show a contrast in responses, with only 32% of the respondents indicating change was not communicated by means of auditorium sessions, whilst 68% indicated that auditorium sessions were. A statistical significant difference in responses can be seen in the junior management group, of whom only 10% answered 'no' to the question compared to the 90% who indicated change was communicated by means of auditorium sessions in the organisation. The skilled labour group was divided, with 41% answering 'no' and 59% answering 'yes'. 25% of the middle management group said change was not communicated by means of auditorium sessions, whilst 75% of the same group said it was. Of the unskilled labour group, 40% indicated change was communicated by auditorium sessions and 60% indicated it was not. The researcher concludes that those in higher positions in the organisation were more inclined to attend auditorium sessions, hence knowing that change is communicated during these sessions. It seems that

employees in the unskilled labour group did not attend auditorium sessions or may not have understood what was being communicated if they did attend.

The next graph is an illustration of the employees' perceptions of change being communicated in newsletters within the organisation.

Figure 5.24: Change communicated by newsletters



(Source: Field work)

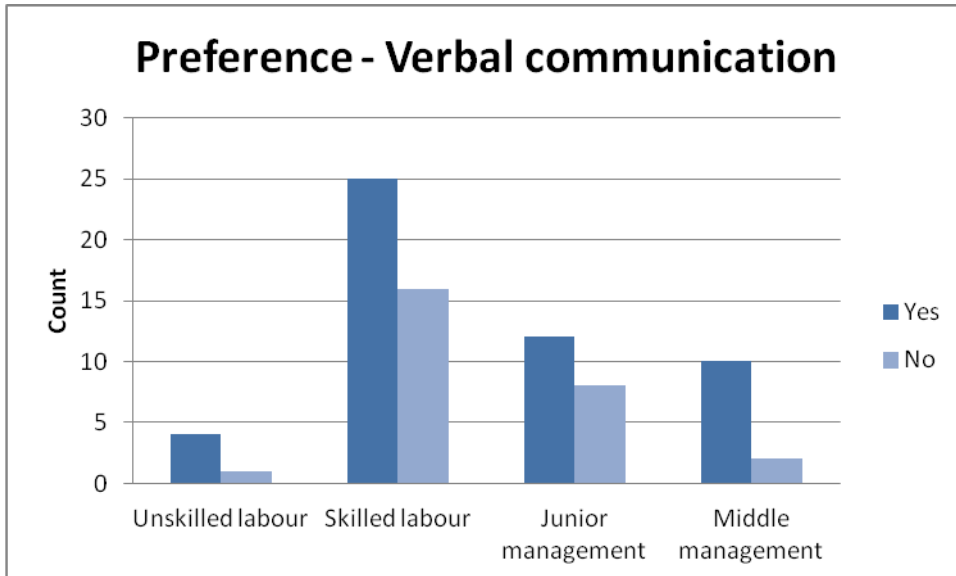
The results shows most (66%) of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated that newsletters were not used to communicate change to the company's employees. The unskilled labour group of respondents perceived change communication by use of newsletters to be 40%, saying it did happen, and 60% indicated that newsletters were not used to communicate change. From the skilled labour group, 66% answered 'no' to the question, whilst only 34% answered 'yes'. 80% of the respondents in junior management positions answered that newsletters were not used and 20% answered that they were used to communicate change in the organisation. The middle management group was split, 50% to 50%.

5.5.3.2 Employees in different positions' preference of change communication

The next questions in the questionnaire dealt with the employees' preference of change communication in the organisation. The first question was whether

employees preferred change to be communicated verbally, the results being depicted in the graph below.

Figure 5.25: Verbal communication as preference to employees

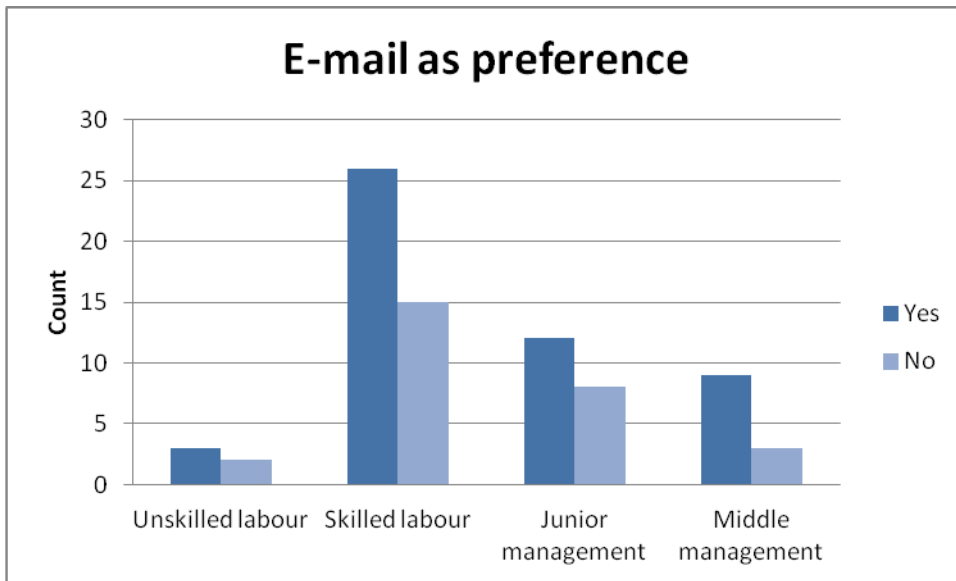


(Source: Field work)

The results show 65% of employees preferred change to be communicated to them verbally. Of the respondents in middle management positions, 83% preferred verbal communication of change, compared to the 17% who did not. At the same time, the respondents in junior management positions showed 60% preferred verbal change communication, whilst 40% did not. 61% of the respondents in skilled labour positions indicated they preferred change to be communicated verbally, whereas 39% indicated they did not. Of the respondents in unskilled labour positions, 80% preferred verbal change communication, whilst 20% did not. The researcher can conclude that employees from different positions in the organisation generally preferred change plans or initiatives to be communicated to them verbally.

The next graph shows respondents reaction to e-mail as a preferred method of communicating change in the organisation.

Figure 5.26: Using e-mail to communicate change as a preference



(Source: Field work)

The highest count in favour of e-mail as a preferred method of communicating change came from the employees in skilled labour positions. 63% preferred to receive e-mails communicating change but 37% did not. From the unskilled labour group of respondents, 60% answered in favour of e-mail, but 40% were not. The respondents in junior management positions showed similar results, but 75% of the respondents in middle management position indicated they preferred e-mails. The following table shows the results on the question of whether employees preferred change to be communicated by way of auditorium sessions.

Table 5.9: Auditorium sessions as preference for change communication

		Position in company				Total
		Unskilled labour	Skilled labour	Junior management	Middle management	
I prefer change to be communicated via: Auditorium Sessions	Yes	1	15	14	6	36
	No	4	26	6	6	42
Total		5	41	20	12	78

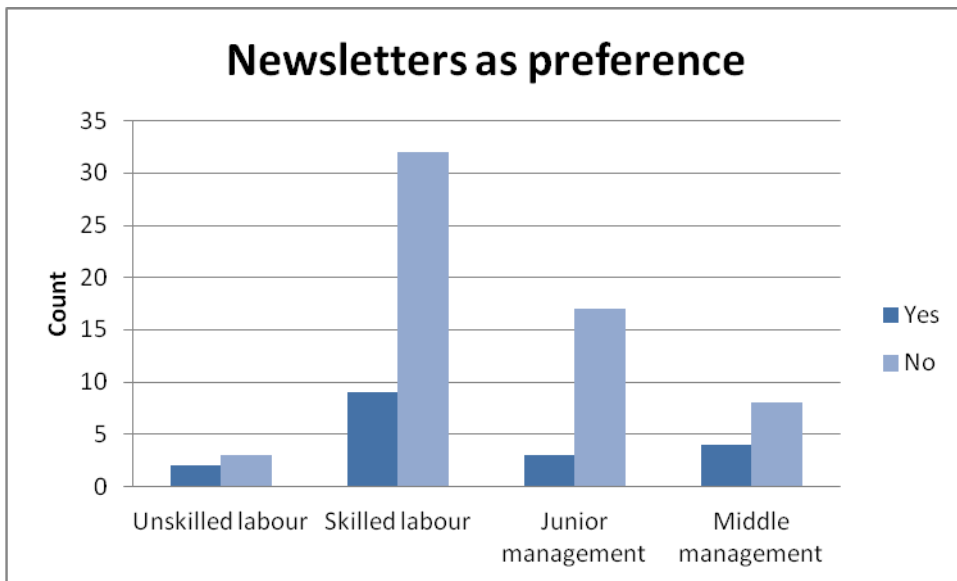
(Source: Field work)

It is significant to the researcher that 80% of respondents in the unskilled labour category did not prefer change to be communicated in auditorium sessions,

compared to the 20% respondents from the same category who did. 63% of the respondents from the skilled labour group did not prefer change to be communicated in auditorium sessions, whilst 37% did. Contrary to the results from the latter two groups the results from the junior management group was the opposite, with 70% indicating that they prefer auditorium sessions. The respondents in the middle management group's responses were split 50% to 50%. From these results the researcher can conclude that staff in junior management positions did not have an issue with change being communicated to them in an auditorium session, which is more of a public platform, whereas employees in other positions do not prefer this way of communication and may prefer more private interaction.

The next graph presents the results on the question of whether employees preferred newsletters as a tool to communicate change to employees in the organisation.

Figure 5.27: Newsletters as preference to employees in different positions



(Source: Field work)

The results shows 76% of the total respondents were not in favour of newsletters as a means of change communication. 60% of the unskilled labour respondents indicated they did not, whilst the skilled labour category's responses were 78% not preferring newsletters. From the junior management category 85% of the

respondents did not prefer newsletters, and of the middle management category 66% did not.

5.5.3.3 Results of four-point Likert scale questions

The following set of questions in the questionnaire used the four-point Likert scales as a measurement, ranging from strongly agree to *strongly disagree*. The following shows the results of whether change is important for the progress or growth of the company.

Table 5.10: Important of change for progress/ growth of the organisation

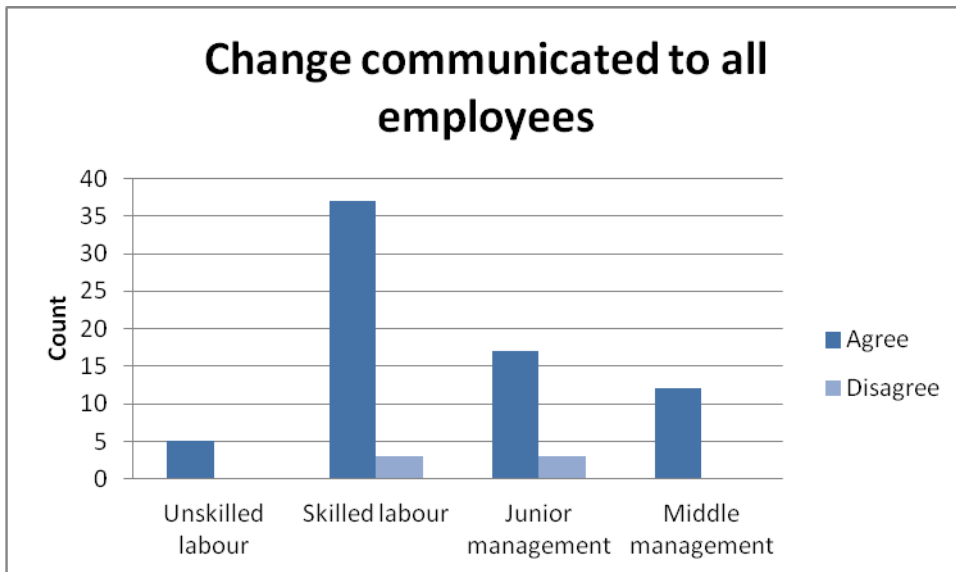
		Position in company				Total
		Unskilled labour	Skilled labour	Junior management	Middle management	
Change is important for the progress/ growth of the company	Agree	5	39	20	12	76
	Disagree	0	2	0	0	2
Total		5	41	20	12	78

(Source: Field work)

The table above shows 100% of the respondents in the unskilled labour category agreed that change was important for the progress or growth of the organisation, as did those in the junior and middle management categories. In the skilled labour category, only 4% did not agree with the statement. The researcher concludes that the respondents, irrespective of their positions in the organisation, realised the benefits of change more than its negative elements.

The graph below shows responses to the statement “*Change is communicated to all staff in the company.*”

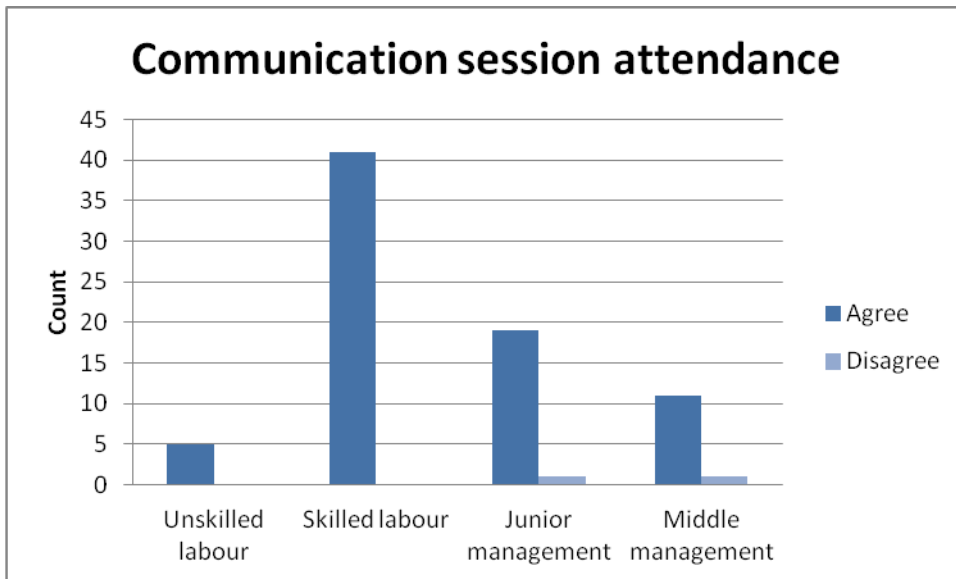
Figure 5.28: Change is communicated to all staff in the organisation



(Source: Field work)

Most (92%) of the respondents to the questionnaire agreed with this statement. 100% of the respondents in the unskilled labour and middle management categories agreed that change was communicated to all employees. 7% of the respondents in the skilled labour category disagreed with the statement whilst in the junior management category 15% of did not agree that change was communicated to all staff. The conclusion the researcher makes is that these two groups of employees who did not agree with the statement may not have read the written communications sent out in the organisation or not attended information or communication sessions held in the organisation or their respective departments. The next figure illustrates the responses to the statement: *“Attendance to change communication sessions is important”*.

Figure 5.29: Importance of attending change communication sessions

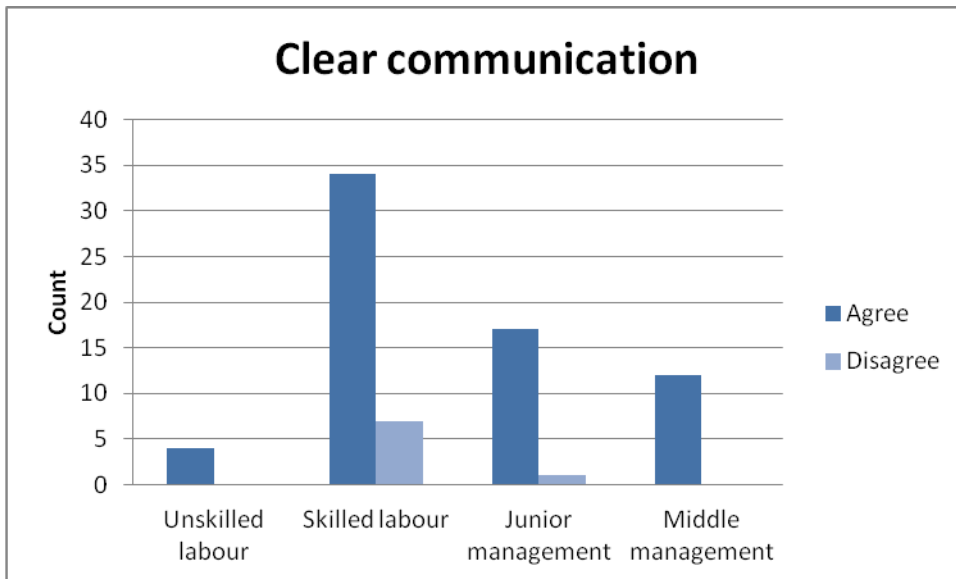


(Source: Field work)

97% of all the respondents agreed that the attendance of change communication sessions by employees was important. Respondents from the unskilled labour and skilled labour categories had a total of 100% agreeing with the statement. In the junior management category 5% of the respondents disagreed with the statement, but 95% agreed that attendance of change communication sessions was important for employees. 8% of the respondents in the middle management category disagreed with the statement, whilst 92% agreed. The researcher's thoughts are that employees who disagreed with the statement probably felt that they could obtain the information from their colleagues and did not have to attend the change communication sessions themselves, or they did not see the value in attending such sessions.

The next figure shows results of responses on the statement "*The communication of change is clear and understandable*"

Figure 5.30: Clear and understandable change communication



(Source: Field work)

The graph above illustrates that 100% of the respondents in the unskilled labour and middle management categories agreed that communication about change in the organisation was clear and understandable to them. However, 17% of the respondents in the skilled labour category and 5% of the respondents in the junior management category did not agree with the statement. 83% of the skilled labour respondents and 95% of the junior management respondents agreed with the statement that change communication was clear and understandable to them. The difference in responses from employees in different positions in the organisation leads the researcher to conclude that respondents who did not agree with the statement did not clarify terms and concepts unclear to them, or the change communicators they encountered did not communicate in a clear and understandable manner.

The following table shows the results on the statement of regular feedback on change being given to employees. The statement read *“Regular feedback is given when changes take place in the company.”*

Table 5.11: Regular feedback on change to employees

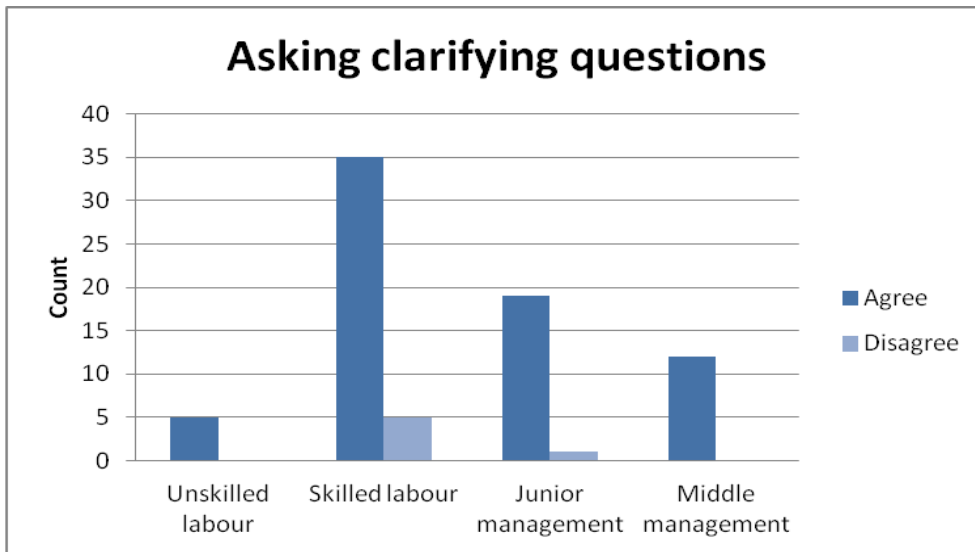
		Position in company				Total
		Unskilled labour	Skilled labour	Junior management	Middle management	
Regular feedback is given when changes take place in the company	Agree	4	33	15	10	62
	Disagree	1	8	5	2	16
Total		5	41	20	12	78

(Source: Field work)

Of the respondents in the unskilled labour group, 80% indicated regular feedback on change was given to employees, while only 20% disagreed with the statement. The skilled labour group also found 80% in agreement, whilst 75% of the respondents in the junior management agreed that regular feedback on change was given to them. The respondents in the middle management category's results were 83% agreeing with the statement. The conclusion of the researcher is that there must have been feedback given in the organisation, as the majority of respondents agreed with the statement. Those who did not agree must have missed the feedback sessions or not read the e-mails or newsletters on change. This can be seen as non-participation in the change processes, which is a form of resistance to change (Erwin & Garwan, 2009).

The following graph illustrates the results on a statement to which the respondents had to denote level of agreement: *"I ask questions if something is unclear to me"*.

Figure 5.31: Employees clarifying their understanding of concepts

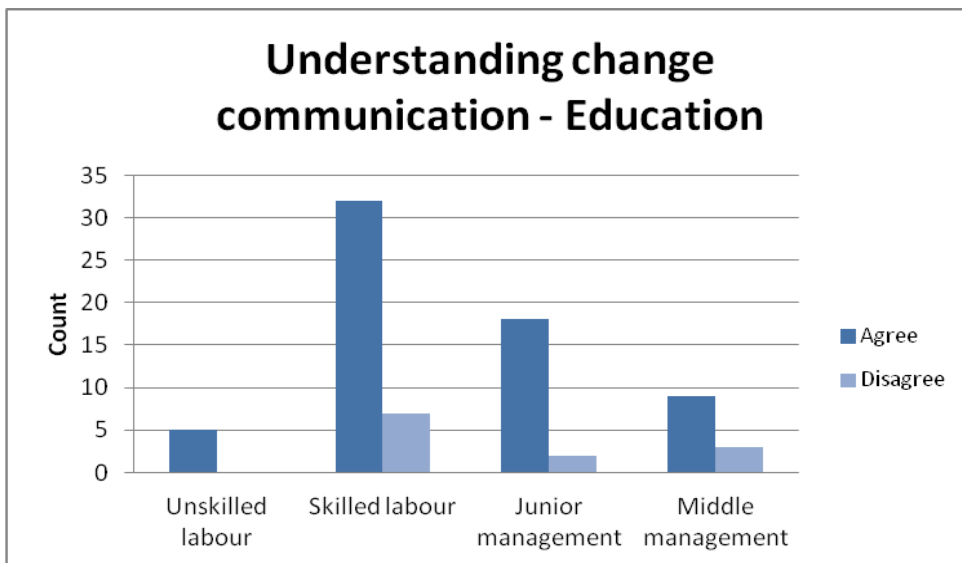


(Source: Field work)

All (100%) respondents in the unskilled labour and middle management categories agreed with the statement that they asked questions if they did not understand something during the communication of change. The skilled labour category showed results of 87% respondents agreeing and junior management category 95%. The respondents not asking clarifying questions may have been amongst those who did not attend communication sessions.

The next graph illustrates the results on the statement *"I understand change communication due to my education level"*.

Figure 5.32: Influence/ role of education in understanding change

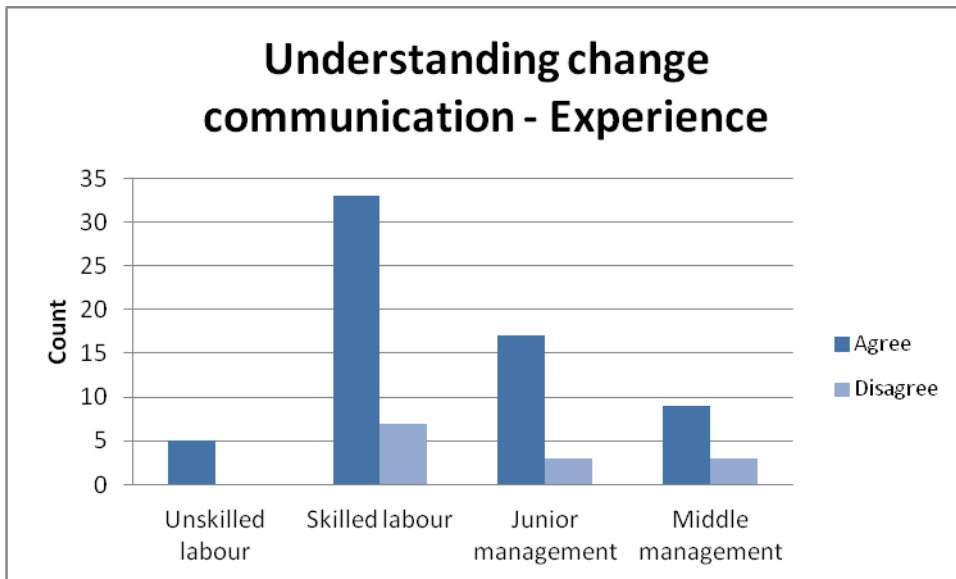


(Source: Field work)

The purpose of this statement was for the researcher to test the perception of respondents in different positions around the link between understanding change communication and education. The graph shows that 100% of the respondents in an unskilled labour position agreed with the statement, however, 82% of respondents in skilled labour positions agreed. The respondents in junior management positions' responses were 90% who agreed with the statement, but 10% did not understand change communication, because of their education level. 75% of the respondents in middle management positions in the organisation agreed with the statement. The researcher concludes that respondents who disagreed with the statement may have felt that their education did not influence the way they understood change communication or did not see the connection between change communication and education.

In the next graph the results of the statement "*I understand change communication due to my years of experience*" are illustrated.

Figure 5.33: Influence/ role of experience in understanding change



(Source: Field work)

100% of the respondents in unskilled positions agreed with the statement. Of the respondents in skilled labour positions 82% agreed that they understood change communication because of their years of experience. The respondents in junior management positions who agreed with the statement were 85%, and in middle management 75%.

The next table contains the results on the statement *“I participate in change initiatives of the company.”*

Table 5.12: Employee participation in organisational change initiatives

		Position in company				Total
		Unskilled labour	Skilled labour	Junior management	Middle management	
I participate in change initiatives of the company	Agree	4	34	17	11	66
	Disagree	1	6	3	1	11
Total		5	40	20	12	77

(Source: Field work)

85% of the total respondents agreed with the statement that they participated in change initiatives of the organisation. The result was 80% from the respondents in unskilled labour positions who agreed. Of the respondents in skilled labour

positions 85% agreed and 91% of the respondents in middle management positions agreed they participated in organisational change initiatives.

5.5.3.4 Results of the yes or no questions

The next section of the questionnaire required of the respondents to answer either 'yes' or 'no'.

The next table shows results of the question on whether management communicated change to employees.

Table 5.13: Communication of change by management

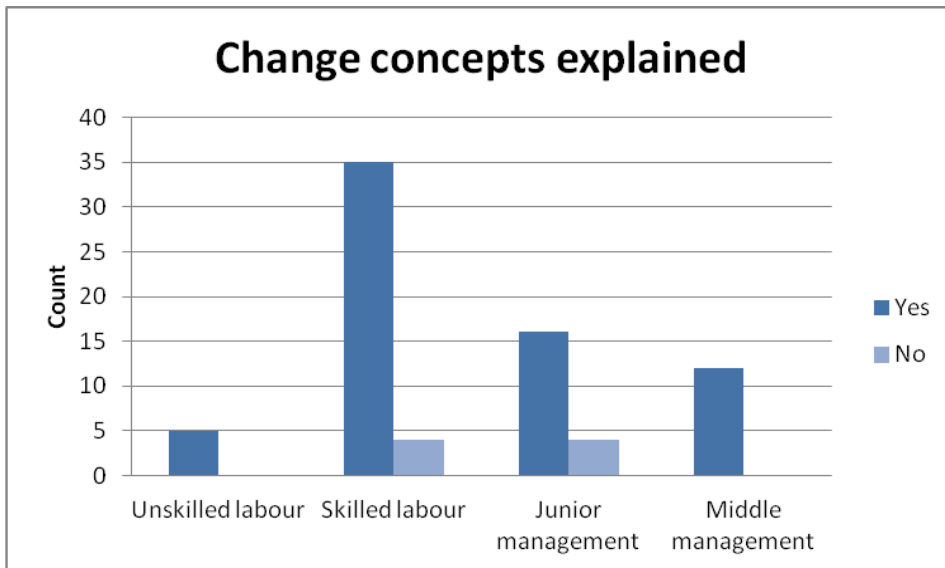
		Position in company				Total
		Unskilled labour	Skilled labour	Junior management	Middle management	
Does your manager/ supervisor communicate change?	Yes	5	39	17	12	73
	No	0	1	3	0	4
Total		5	40	20	12	77

(Source: Field work)

The communication of change is very important in an organisation and as discussed in Chapter 3, in most cases management is responsible for it. The results of the answer to this question are very interesting to the researcher as 94% of the total respondents indicated that management did communicate change to them. 100% of the unskilled labour and middle management respondents answered yes to the question, which is a positive results for the company. Only 2% of the respondents in the skilled labour positions answered 'no', whereas 98% of the same group answered 'yes' to the question. 15% of the junior management respondents answered 'no', but 85% answered that their managers or supervisors did communicate organisational change to them.

The following graph depicts the results on the next question, which was "Are change concepts and terms used explained to staff members?"

Figure 5.34: Explanation of change concepts and terms

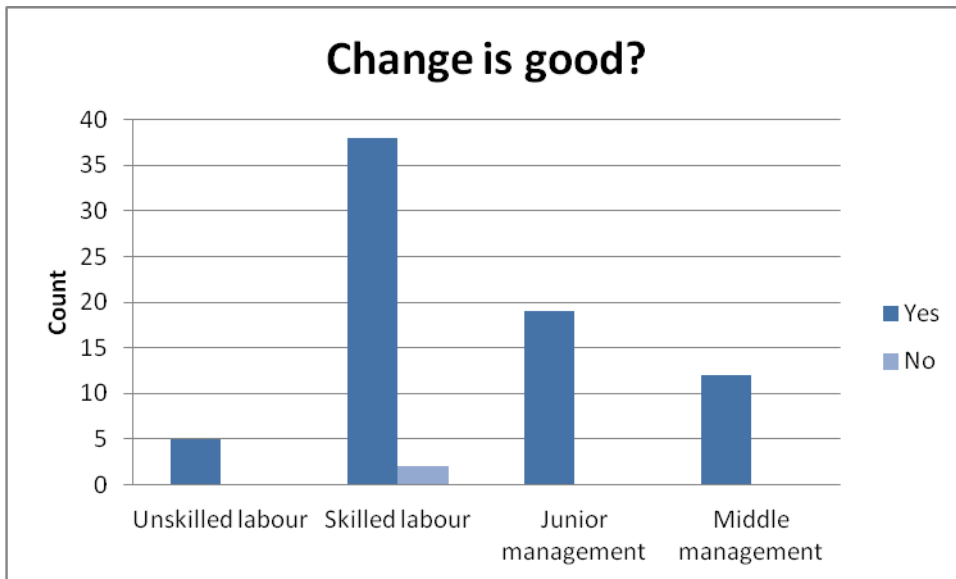


(Source: Field work)

Of the respondents in unskilled labour and middle management positions, 100% answered 'yes' to the question, showing that their experience was that change concepts and terms were being explained to staff members within the company. In contrast, the respondents in skilled labour positions did not all answer 'yes' to the question, with 89% saying 'yes' and 11% 'no'. 80% of the respondents in junior management positions answered 'yes', change concepts and terms were explained to staff members. The researcher's conclusion is that employees, specifically the respondents to this questionnaire, experienced things differently and it may be that one manager or change agent explained change concepts and terms whilst another did not. Hence, the different responses to the question.

The following graph illustrates the results on the question "Do you think change is good for the company and staff members?"

Figure 5.35: Change is good for the company and staff members



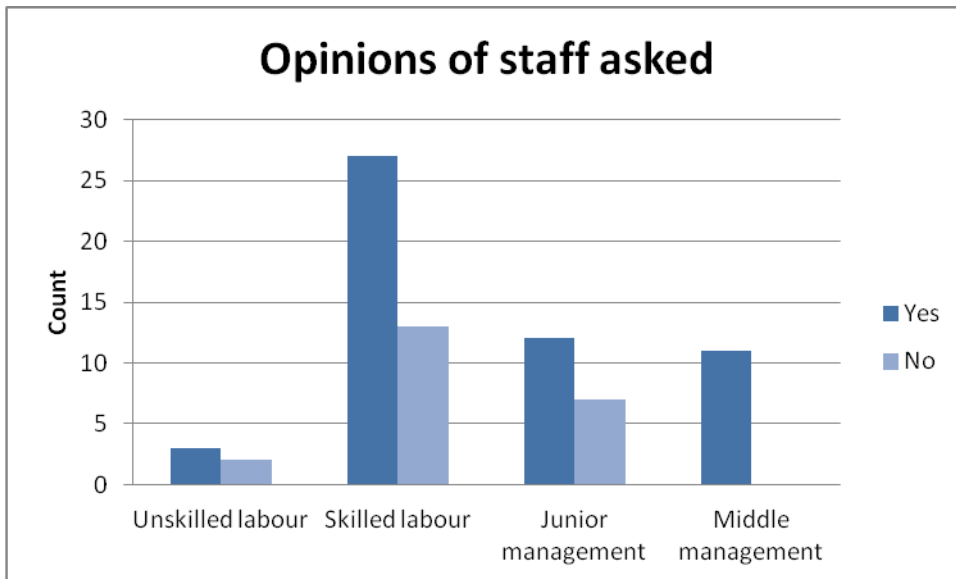
(Source: Field work)

The results above shows that majority of the respondents agreed that change was good for the organisation and staff members. This shows in 97% of the respondents answering 'yes' to the question and only '3%' answering no.

In this case, the response was 100% 'yes' from the respondents in unskilled labour, junior management and middle management positions. It was only in the skilled labour category where 5% of the respondents answered no to the question, whilst 95% answered yes, change is good for the company and staff members.

The following graph shows the results on the question *"Is the opinion of staff members asked when change is communicated?"*

Figure 5.36: Opinions of employees invited during sessions



(Source: Field work)

The responses from unskilled labour positions were 60% answering ‘yes’ and 67% from skilled labour positions. A majority, 63% in junior management positions answered in the affirmative. Of the respondents in middle management positions 100% answered ‘yes’ to the question, their opinions were asked during change communication sessions.

The following table depicts the responses on the question “Do you feel informed on change initiatives in the company/ department?”

Table 5.14: Employees feeling informed on change initiatives

		Position in company				Total
		Unskilled labour	Skilled labour	Junior management	Middle management	
Do you feel informed on change initiatives in the company/ department?	Yes	5	35	17	11	68
	No	0	5	2	1	8
Total		5	40	19	12	76

(Source: Field work)

100% of the respondents in the unskilled labour positions answered ‘yes’, they felt informed on change initiatives in the company or department. Of the respondents

in the skilled labour positions, 87% answered 'yes', whilst a similar 89% in junior management also answered 'yes'. Of respondents in middle management positions, 91% answered yes. Overall, 89% of the total respondents felt they were informed on organisational or departmental change initiatives.

5.5.3.5 Conclusion

Respondents in different positions in the organisation had different perceptions about how change was communicated in the company. They also expressed diverse preferences of how change should be communicated in the organisation. From the results it is evident that respondents in all positions preferred verbal communication and to attend sessions in which where there is personal contact with the change communicator and they can discuss matters. The same respondents, in all positions, did not prefer to read about change in newsletters. Generally, the respondents to the questionnaire felt they received regular feedback on change in the organisation and understood change communication, however, they also asked questions to clarify unclear matters to themselves. The overall results shows respondents were in favour of changes and felt that change could be to the advantage of the organisation and the employees of the company.

5.5.4 Presentation of quantitative results – objective three

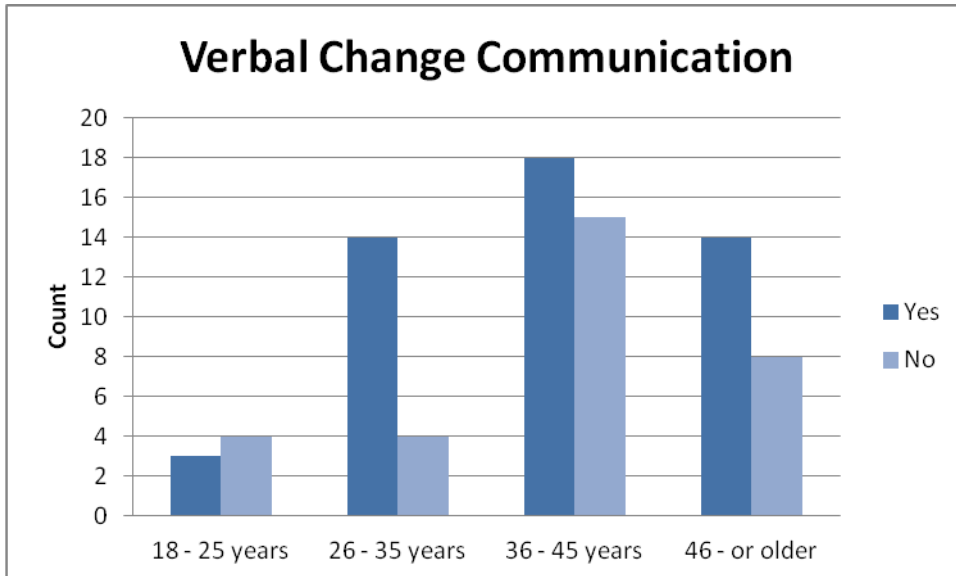
In this section the researcher presents, analyses and discusses the research results for the third objective of this study, to *“Identify how employees of different age groups perceive change and how change should be communicated to them”*. The research question asked was *“To which extent does the age of employees influence how change is communicated?”* The researcher uses the graphs and tables in this section to provide answers to the research objective and question. The first set of graphs and tables deal with the perceptions of employees from different age groups, followed by their preferences on how change must be communicated.

5.5.4.1 Employees from different age groups’ perception of change communication

The first part of the questionnaire probed the employees’ perceptions of how change was communicated within their organisation.

The graph below illustrates the perception of respondents from different age groups on the verbal communication of change.

Figure 5.37: Change communicated verbally

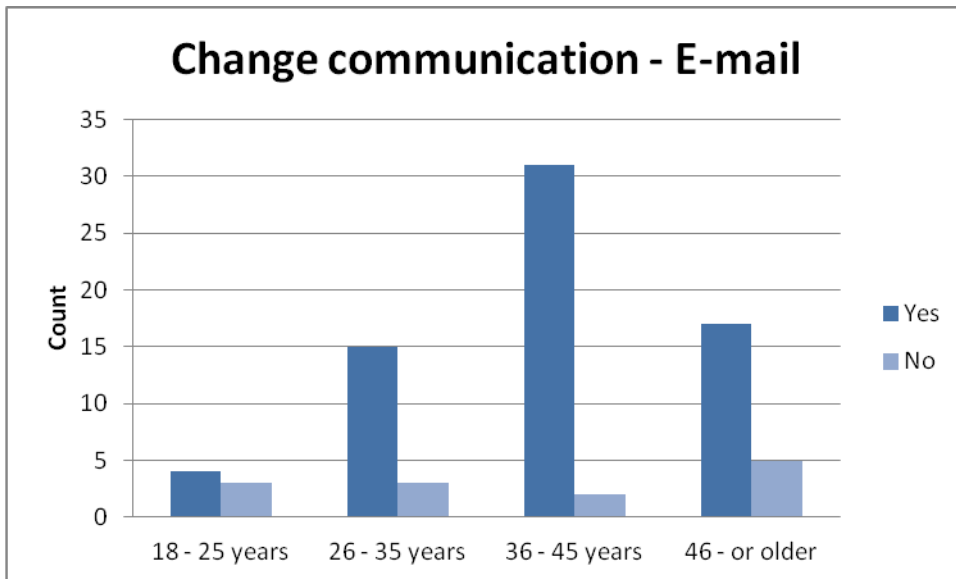


(Source: Field work)

The majority of the the total respondents indicated change was communicated verbally in the company, but 57% of the respondents in the 18-25 year age group indicated it was not happening. Of the respondents in the 26-35 years age group 77% indicated change was communicated verbally and in the 36-45 years age 54% did so. 63% of the 46 or older age group answered that change was communicated verbally. The results indicate that more respondents in the younger (18-25 years) group perceived change not to be communicated verbally in the organisation. This negative response could be a result of younger employees not attending communication sessions, not paying attention or not being interested when change talks were being held in the office.

The next graph shows results of perceptions on e-mails being used to communicate change in the organisation.

Figure 5.38: Change communicated by e-mail



(Source: Field work)

57% of the respondents in the 18-25 years age group indicated change was communicated via e-mail. Of the respondents in the 26-35 years age group 83% indicated change was communicated via e-mail, whilst the 36-45 years age group showed a very positive response with 94% answering in the affirmative. Respondents in the 46 or older age group's results were 77% saying 'yes', change was communicated by e-mail. One of the reasons respondents felt change was not communicated by e-mail may be because they did not have access to e-mail or did not read internal communication e-mails.

The following table contains the results of employee perception on change communicated by use of auditorium sessions.

Table 5.15: Auditorium sessions used for change communication

		Age group				Total
		18 - 25 years	26 - 35 years	36 - 45 years	46 - or older	
Change is communicated by means of: Auditorium Sessions	Yes	1	12	24	18	55
	No	6	6	9	4	25
Total		7	18	33	22	80

(Source: Field work)

Table 5.15.1: Chi-square test - auditorium sessions to communicate change

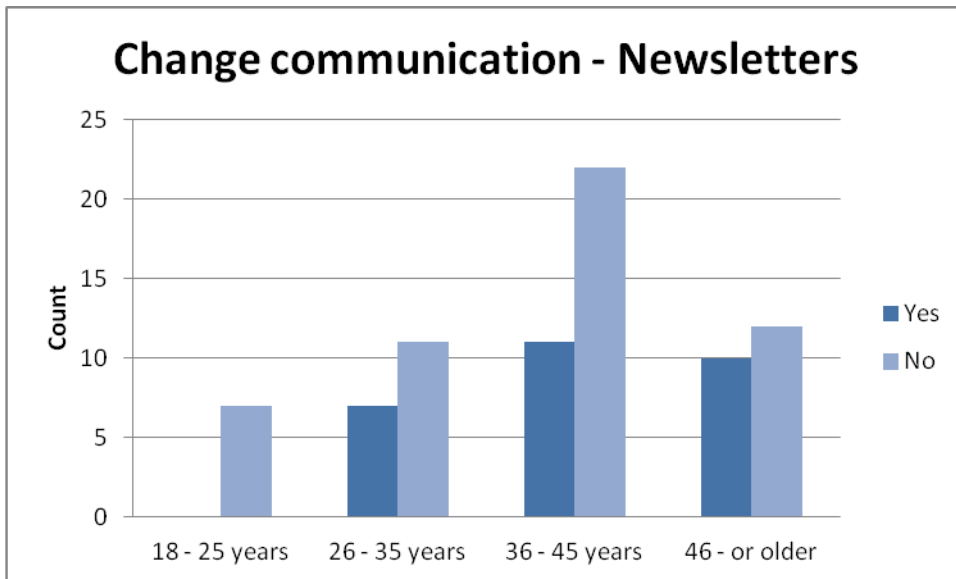
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	11.693 ^a	3	.009	.007		
Likelihood Ratio	11.183	3	.011	.014		
Fisher's Exact Test	10.461			.012		
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.144 ^b	1	.004	.005	.003	.002
N of Valid Cases	80					

(Source: Field work)

The table above shows 85% of the respondents in the 18-25 years age group indicated change was not communicated by means of auditorium session, whereas 66% in the 26-35 years age group pointed out change was communicated by means of auditorium sessions. Of the respondents in the 36-45 years age group, 72% indicated auditorium sessions were used. Results from the 46 or older age group were 81% saying change was communicated by means of auditorium sessions. That there are respondents saying auditorium sessions were used to communicate change leads the researcher to conclude that the respondents expressing the contrary did not attend auditorium sessions or may not have known about the auditorium sessions being hosted.

The following graph illustrates the results on whether change was communicated by use of newsletters in the company.

Figure 5.39: Change communicated by means of newsletters



(Source: Field work)

The majority (65%) of the respondents answered that newsletters were not used for the communication of change in the organisation. 100% of the 18-25 year old respondents indicated change was not communicated by use of newsletters, 61% of the 26-35 year old respondents agreed with this. Of the 46 or older group respondents, 55% indicated newsletters were not used to communicate change.

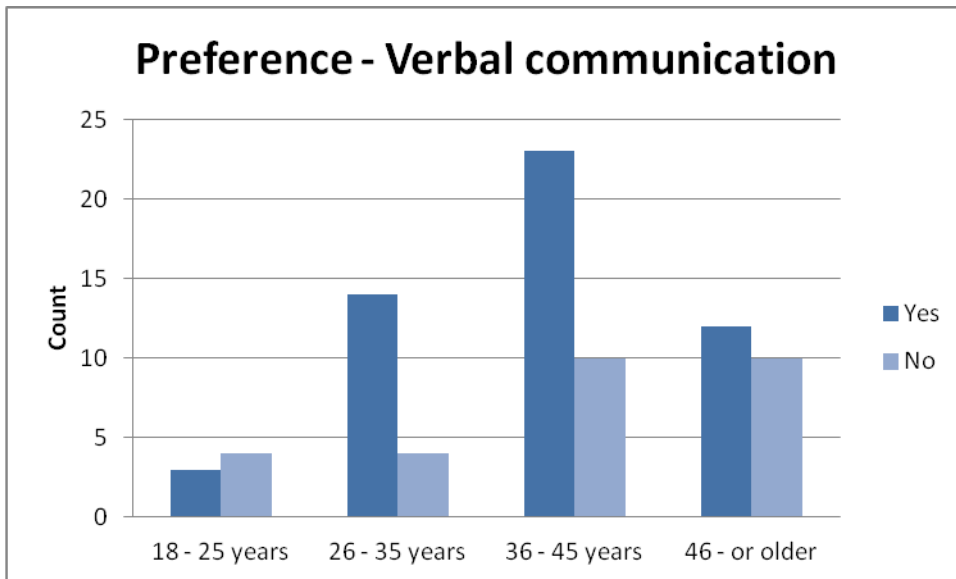
The following section examines the change communication preferences of employees from different age groups.

5.5.4.2 Employees from different age groups' preference of change communication

The second part of the questionnaire probed respondents on how they preferred change to be communicated in the organisation.

The following graph contains results on the preference of verbal communication from respondents in different age groups.

Figure 5.40: Verbal communication as preference of respondents

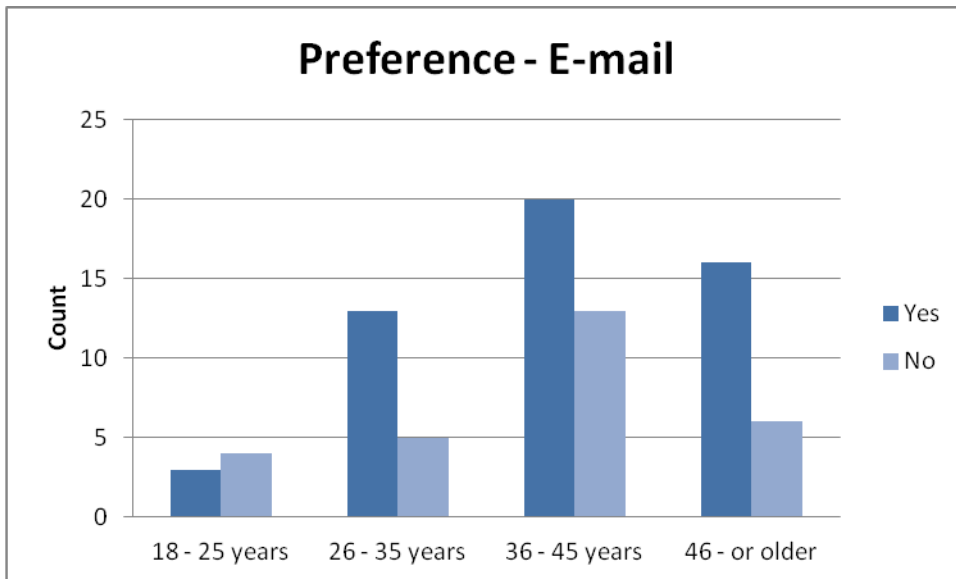


(Source: Field work)

Most (65%) of the respondents indicated that they preferred change to be communicated verbally. However, only 42% respondents in the 18-25 years age group indicated they did so, and of the 26-35 years age group, 77% showed they preferred verbal change communication. The responses in the 36-45 years age group were 69% preferring verbal change communication whilst the 46 or older age group showed results of 54% indicating verbal communication of change as a preference.

The next graph shows the respondents preference of using e-mail for change communication.

Figure 5.41: Change communication by e-mail as preference

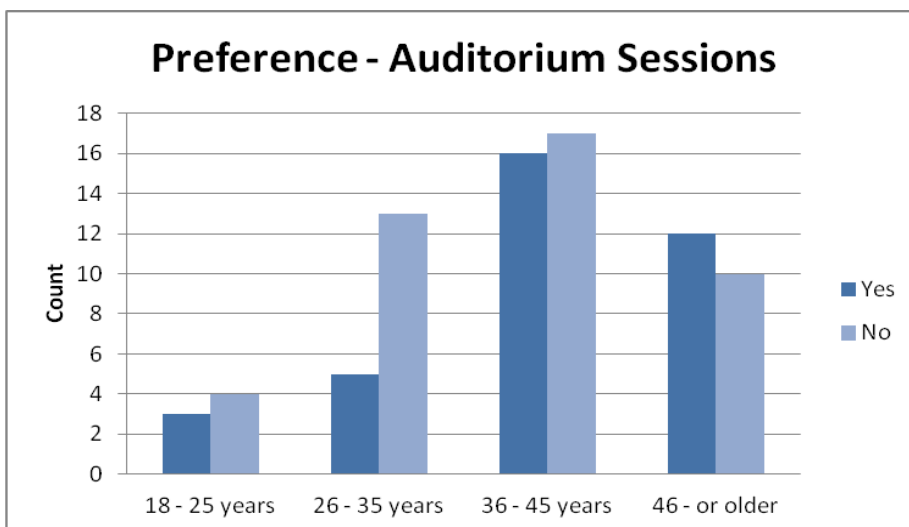


(Source: Field work)

The minority (42%) of the respondents in the 18-25 years age group preferred e-mail as a tool to communicate change, whilst 58% did not. In the 26-35 years age group, 72% of the respondents indicated they preferred e-mail, as did 60% of the 36-45 years age group, and 72% of the 46 or older age group.

The graph below illustrates the results on auditorium sessions as preference for the communication.

Figure 5.42: Auditorium sessions as preference to respondents

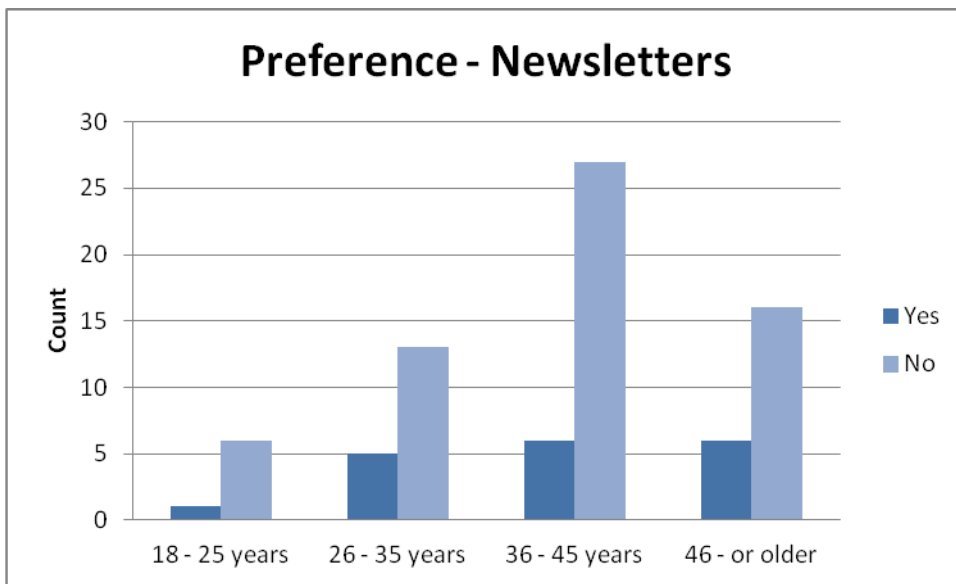


(Source: Field work)

Again, only 42% of the 18-25 year old respondents indicated they preferred auditorium sessions for change to be communicated, as did 27% of the 26-35 year old group. In the 36-45 years age group 48% preferred auditorium sessions, as did 54% of the 46 or older respondents.

The following graph illustrate the respondents' responses on using newsletters as a preference for change communication.

Figure 5.43: Newsletters as preference to respondents



(Source: Field work)

The overall response to newsletters was negative in this case. Only 14% of the respondents in the 18-25 years age group indicated that they preferred change to be communicated via newsletters, and of the 26-35 year old respondents only 27% did so. Of the 36-45 years group, 18% preferred newsletters, and of the 46 or older age group the figure was also 27% showing they preferred newsletters as a means of change communication.

The following section examines the responses to the four-point Likert scale questions.

5.5.4.3 Results of four-point Likert scale questions

After the questions about respondents' preferences, the questionnaire had questions where the four point likert scale are used as measurement, i.e., 1= *strongly agree*, 2= *agree*, 3= *disagree* and 4= *strongly disagree*.

The next table shows the results on the statement "*Change is important for the progress/ growth of the company.*"

Table 5.16: The importance of change for organisational growth/ progress

		Age group				Total
		18 - 25 years	26 - 35 years	36 - 45 years	46 - or older	
Change is important for the progress/ growth of the company	Agree	7	17	33	21	78
	Disagree	0	1	0	1	2
Total		7	18	33	22	80

(Source: Field work)

100% of the 18-25 year and 36-45 year old respondents agreed that change was important for the progress or growth of the company. In the 26-35 year old category 94% agreed with the statement. Of the 46 or older age group, 95% agreed that change was important for the progress or growth of the company.

The following table depicts the results of responses on the statement "*Change is communicated to all staff in the company*".

Table 5.17: Change communication to all employees in the organisation

		Age group				Total
		18 - 25	26 - 35	36 - 45	46 - or older	
Change is communicated to all staff in the company	Agree	6	17	28	22	73
	Disagree	1	1	4	0	6
Total		7	18	32	22	79

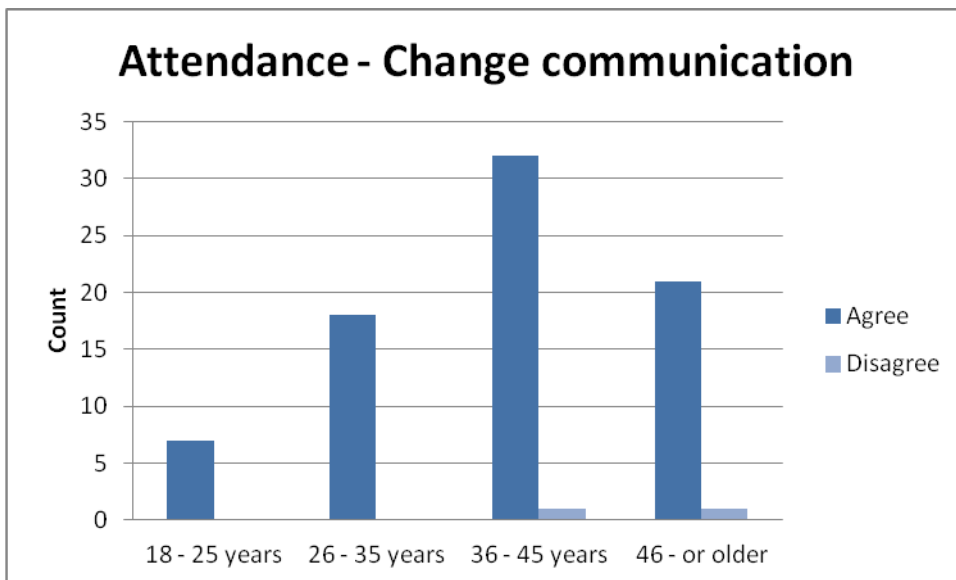
(Source: Field work)

The purpose of this statement was to test the respondents' perceptions of the communication of change in the organisation. In the 18-25 year old category 85% of the respondents agreed with the statement, but 5% disagreed. 94% of the 26-35 year old respondents agreed that change was communicated to all staff in the

company. Of the 36-45 year old respondents 87% agreed with the statement. All (100%) of the respondents in the 46 years or older category agreed that change was communicated with all staff in the company. Of the total (79) respondents to the question, 7% disagreed that change was not communicated to all staff in the company, whilst 93% agreed, which led the researcher to infer that change was indeed widely communicated in the organisation and the 7% may not have read the communication or attended communication sessions about change.

The next graph is an illustration of how important the attendance of change communication sessions is to employees. The statement in the questionnaire was *“Attendance to change communication sessions is important”*.

Figure 5.44: Importance of attending change communication sessions

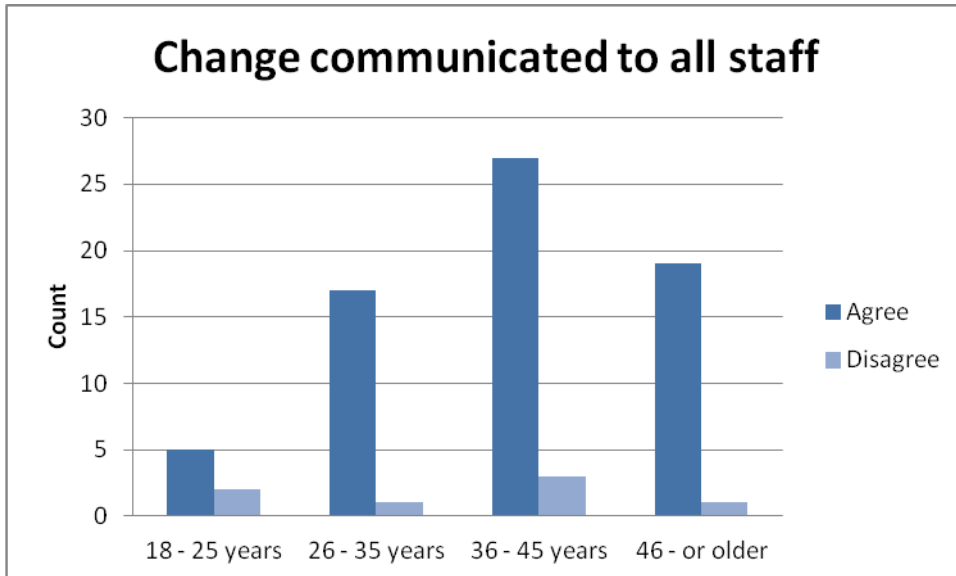


(Source: Field work)

The respondents in the 18-25 years and 26-35 years category all agreed with the statement that the attendance of change communication sessions was important. 3% of the 36-45 years age group disagreed with the statement, but 97% agreed that it was important to attend change communication session. Furthermore, 4% of the 46 or older age group disagreed on the importance of attending change communication sessions, whilst 96% of the same group of respondents agreed with the statement. The results indicated to the researcher that the majority of the respondents regarded change communication sessions and the attendance thereof as important.

The next graph contains the results on the statement “Change is communicated to all staff in the company”.

Figure 5.45: Change communicated to all staff in the organisation



(Source: Field work)

On this statement, 71% of the respondents in the 18-25 years age group agreed and 29% disagreed that change was communicated to all staff. However, 94% of the 26-35 year old respondents agreed that change was communicated to all staff, whilst 6% of the same group, disagreed. 90% of the 36-45 years age group agreed with change being communicated to all staff in the organisation, compared to the 10% who disagreed. The 46 years or older groups’ responses were 95% agreed and 5% disagreed with the statement.

In the following table the researcher presents responses to the statement about change communication being clear and understandable to employees.

Table 5.18: Clear and understandable change communication

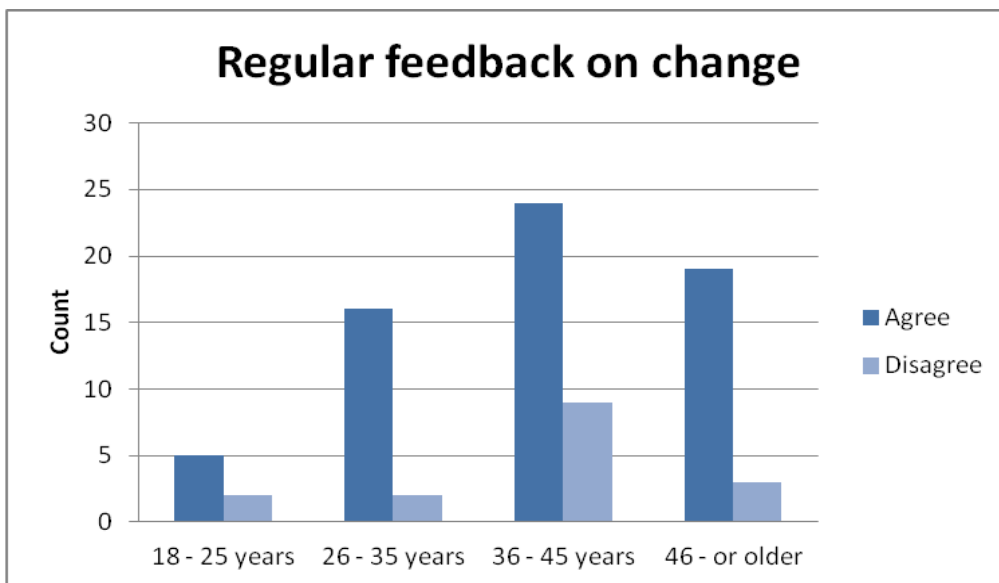
		Age group				Total
		18 - 25 years	26 - 35 years	36 - 45 years	46 - or older	
The communication of change is clear and understandable	Agree	7	14	27	21	69
	Disagree	0	2	5	1	8
Total		7	16	32	22	77

(Source: Field work)

In the table above, 100% of the respondents in the 18-25 year category agreed with the statement. In the 26-35 year old category, 87% of the respondents agreed with the statement. The responses in the 36-45 year category were 84% being in agreement with the statement. Of the respondents in the 46 or older category 95% agreed that the communication of change was clear and understandable.

The table below depicts the results on the statement “Regular feedback is given when changes take place in the company”.

Figure 5.46: Regular feedback on changes in the organisation

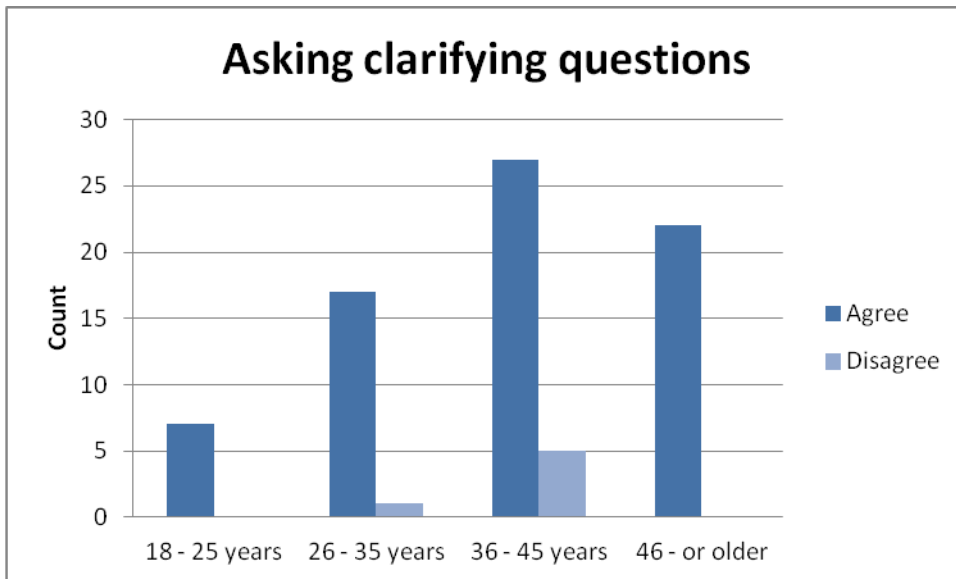


(Source: Field work)

71% of the 18-25 year category respondents agreed with the statement on regular feedback being given to employees in the organisation. In the 26-35 years category, 88% of the respondents agreed. Of the 36-45 years old respondents 87% agreed with the statement and in the 46 or older category 86% were in agreement. The researcher can conclude that not all respondents received feedback from their managers.

The graph below contains the results on the statement “I ask questions if something is unclear to me”.

Figure 5.47: Employees clarifying unclear communication



(Source: Field work)

All (100%) respondents from both the 18-25 and 46 or older categories agreed with the statement. 94% of the 26-35 year old respondents agreed with the statement and 84% in the 36-45 year old category. This behavior can lead to resistance to change as employees do not understand what the change is about and thus resist the uncertainty of change (Wadell & Sohal, 1998).

The table below depicts the results on the statement of whether respondents understand change communication due to their level of education.

Table 5.19: Understanding change communication due to education levels

		Age group				Total
		18 - 25 years	26 - 35 years	36 - 45 years	46 - or older	
I understand change communication due to my education level	Agree	6	17	25	17	65
	Disagree	1	1	6	5	13
Total		7	18	31	22	78

(Source: Field work)

85% of the respondents in the 18-25 year age group agreed with the statement, whilst 15% disagreed. In the 26-35 year age group 94% of the respondents agreed with the statement. Of the 36-45 year old respondents, 80% agreed with the statement. 77% of the respondents in the 46 or older age group agreed with

the statement, whilst 23% indicated that they disagreed and probably did not think that their level of education influenced their understanding of change communication.

In the next table, the researcher presents the results on the statement of whether respondents understand change communication due to their years of experience.

Table 5.20: Understanding change communication due to experience

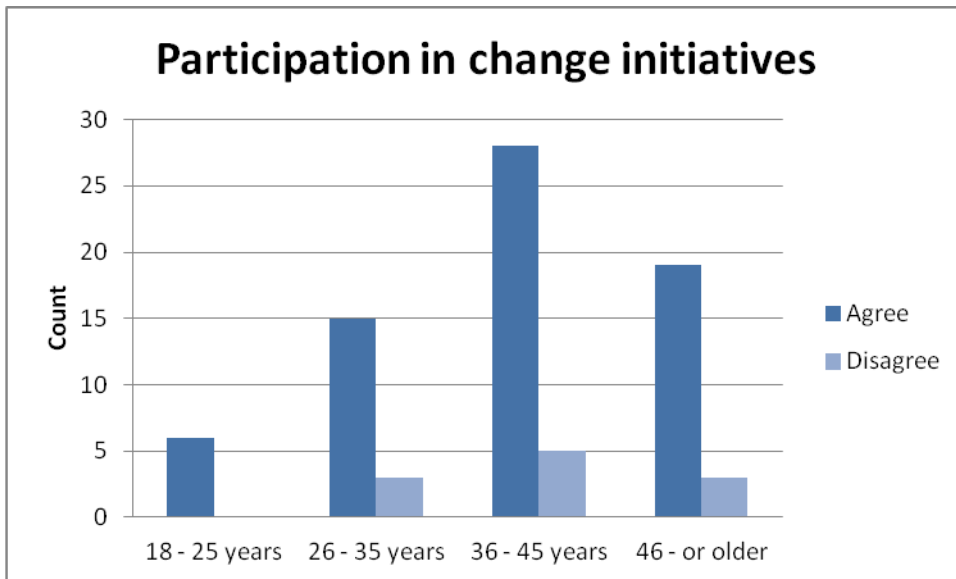
		Age group				Total
		18 - 25 years	26 - 35 years	36 - 45 years	46 - or older	
I understand change communication due to my years of experience	Agree	7	15	24	19	65
	Disagree	0	3	8	3	14
Total		7	18	32	22	79

(Source: Field work)

100% of the respondents in the 18-25 year age group agreed with the statement. Contrary to this, 83% of the respondents in the 26-35 year age group agreed and in the 36-45 year age group 75% agreed. 86% of the responses in the 46 or older age group were in agreement with the statement. More of the respondents in the 36-45 years age group disagreed with the statement that years of experience had an influence on how they understood change communication.

The following graph depicts responses to the statement: *“I participate in change initiatives of the company”*.

Figure 5.48: Employee participation in change initiatives



(Source: Field work)

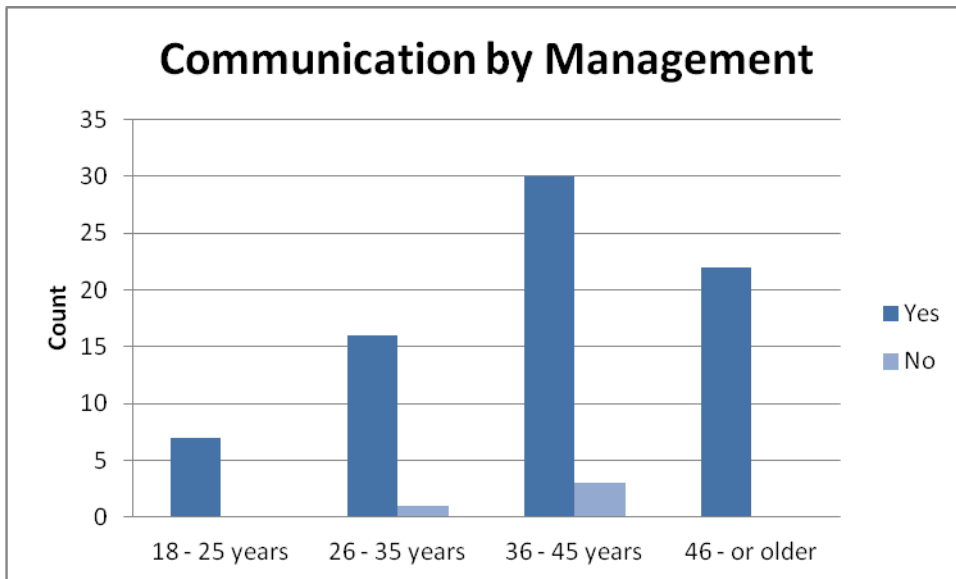
Employee participation in change initiatives is very important for the success of organisational change (Ford et al., 2008). 100% of the respondents in the 18-25 age category agreed with the above mentioned statement. In the 26-35 year age group, 83% of the respondents agreed with the statement and in the 36-45 years age group the results were 84% agreeing. Of the 46 or older age group, 86% of the respondents agreed with the statement.

5.5.4.4 Results of the yes or no questions

The next section of the questionnaire required of the respondents to answer either 'yes' or 'no'.

The graph below has the results of the answers on the question *“Does your manager/ supervisor communicate change?”*

Figure 5.49: Supervisor/ manager communicating change to staff

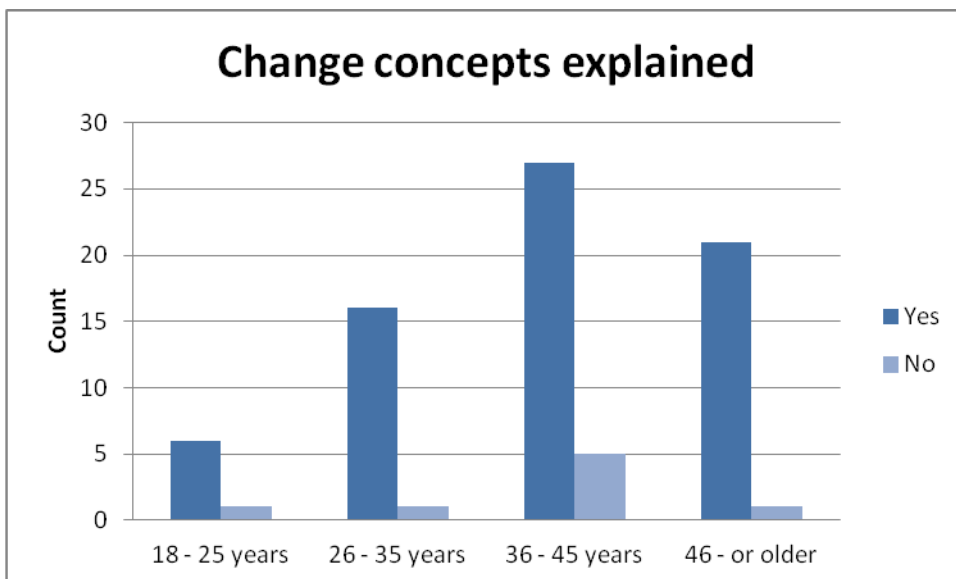


(Source: Field work)

All (100%) respondents in the 18-25 years and 46 or older age groups answered yes to the question. 94% of the 26-35 year old respondents answered 'yes' to the question. Of the 36-45 year old respondents 84% answered yes.

The next graph contains the results on the question "Are change concepts and terms used explained to staff members?"

Figure 5.50: Explanations of change terms and concepts

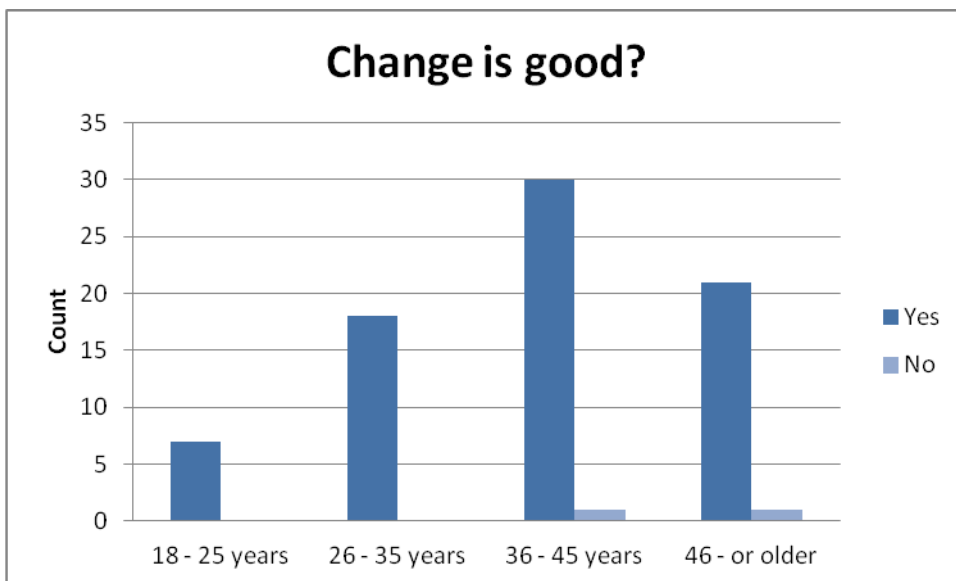


(Source: Field work)

The majority (89%) of all the respondents to this question answered 'yes'. Specifically, in the 18-25 years age category, 85% of the respondents answered 'yes' whilst responses in the 26-35 years age category were 94% 'yes' and 84% in the 36-45 years age category. The responses in the 46 or older age category were 95% 'yes'.

The next graph illustrates the result on the question “Do you think change is good for the company and staff members?”

Figure 5.51: Change is good for the organisation and employees

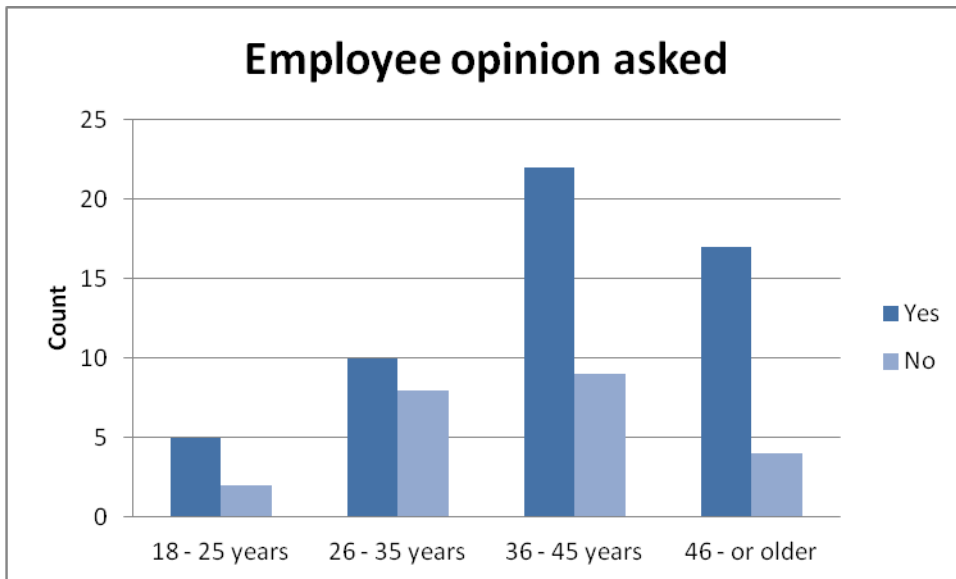


(Source: Field work)

To this question, all (100%) the respondents of both the 18-25 and 26-35 years age groups answered 'yes', change was good for the organisation and its staff members. Of the 36-45 years age group 96% of the respondents answered 'yes' whilst in the 46 or older age group 95% answered yes. These results show that most of the respondents, across all age groups, believe that change was good for the organisation and the employees, which is a positive discovery for the organisation.

The next graph illustrates the answers to the question “Is the opinion of staff members asked when change is communicated?”

Figure 5.52: Employee opinions asked during communication sessions



(Source: Field work)

71% of the respondents in the 18-25 years age group answered ‘yes’ and of the 26-35 years age group, 55% answered “yes”. 70% of the respondents in the 36-45 years age group answered ‘yes’ and in the 46 or older age group, 80% of the respondents answered “yes”.

In the next table, the results on the question of feeling informed on change initiatives in the organisation are illustrated.

Table 5.21: Employees feeling informed on change initiatives.

		Age group				Total
		18 - 25 years	26 - 35 years	36 - 45 years	46 - or older	
Do you feel informed on change initiatives in the company/ department?	Yes	7	16	25	22	70
	No	0	2	6	0	8
Total		7	18	31	22	78

(Source: Field work)

Table 5.21.1: Chi-square test on employees feeling informed about change initiatives.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	6.117 ^a	3	.106	.094		
Likelihood Ratio	8.566	3	.036	.048		
Fisher's Exact Test	5.315			.105		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.153 ^b	1	.696	.843	.417	.143
N of Valid Cases	78					

(Source: Field work)

The majority (89%) of all the respondents to this question indicated that they felt they were informed on organisational change initiatives by answering 'yes'. All (100%) the respondents in the 18-25 years and 46 or older age categories answered 'yes'. Of the respondents in the 26-35 years age group, 88% answered in the affirmative as did 80% of the 36-45 year old respondents.

5.5.4.5 Conclusion

The researcher can conclude that employees from different age groups had different views on the communication of change in organisations. They perceived the communication of change differently and had various preferences of how it should be communicated to them. From the above results in this section, it is evident to the researcher that respondents from younger age groups agreed more that change was good for the organisation and employees, compared to the respondents from older age groups, and they were therefore more keen to participate in organisational change initiatives. The 18-25 year olds and 46 or older age groups regarded it as important to attend change communication sessions and clarify issues they did not understand. They believed it was important for management to communicate change plans to them. The researcher makes the inference that these two groups were more interested in knowing about changes and therefore took note of the communication.

5.6 DISCUSSION

The results from all the respondents to the questionnaire show that change was mostly communicated in the MIM Ltd organisation by means of verbal communication, e-mail and auditorium sessions. From the results, it seems that newsletters were not so frequently used or employees did not read them. The respondents with different education levels, pre-matric to b-degree or higher, in the organisation indicated that they preferred change to be communicated to them either verbally or by means of e-mail, rather than auditorium sessions and newsletters. The researcher assumes that these respondents preferred to have either personal interaction with verbal communication, or to read the e-mail on change in their own time and milieu, in order to make sense of it and assimilate the information provided.

The respondents in different positions, unskilled labour to middle management, preferred to receive change communication verbally and by attending auditorium sessions, but not the use of newsletters and e-mails. The results from respondents in different age groups show that they preferred verbal communication of change and the use of e-mails, rather than auditorium sessions and newsletters. The researcher concludes that all respondents from all the groups preferred verbal communication, e-mails and attending auditorium sessions, whereas newsletters were not a preference. Most of the respondents agreed that change was good for the organisation and its employees, and this can be used as a good starting point for change initiatives by the management. Another advantage to the organisation was that respondents clarified issues and asked questions to confirm their understanding during the communication of change. This means that they actively participated in discussions and showed interest in the matter of change, in order to enhance or grow themselves and the organisation.

The next chapter is a presentation and discussion of the qualitative results of both the interviews and questionnaire conducted by the researcher.

CHAPTER SIX

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF QUALITATIVE METHODS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a presentation and discussion of qualitative data which was collected from executive managers in a division of MIM Ltd. The responses to the last question of the questionnaire are presented and discussed, because it was an open-ended question. The research method used to obtain the qualitative data from executive managers was interviews. The reason the researcher decided on the interviews was to compare the responses with those to the questionnaire. The main purpose for using interviews in this study was for the purpose of triangulation.

The researcher wished to obtain more robust and honest responses during the interviews with members of the executive level of management in the organisation. The researcher believed that executive managers did not have the time for completing a questionnaire and would not enjoy priority from executive management. The interviews were scheduled with each of the executive managers. The answers to questions in the interviews contributed to meeting the research objectives and answering research questions set out in Chapter 4. The results are presented in this chapter by forming themes from responses and discussing interview responses.

6.2 PROCEDURE

Before the field work could take place, the researcher wrote a letter to the head of the division at the organisation. The purpose of the letter was to obtain permission to perform such research in the workplace. After receiving written permission from the head of the division, the researcher asked the Human Resources department for the geographic information of the executive managers in the division. The researcher then sent an e-mail to the executive managers, giving them some background of the study and asking them to participate in the research process. As the executive managers replied and agreed to participate, the researcher arranged for a suitable time for the interviews to take place, with the personal assistants of the respective executive managers. The interviews were confirmed

when the researcher received an acceptance response of the scheduled time slots from the executive managers or their personal assistants on their behalf.

6.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data is presented in this section.

6.3.1 Interviews

Saunders et al. (2009) state that interviews enable the interviewer to obtain a rich and detailed set of data, providing the interviewer with more detailed information than does a questionnaire. Qualitative research methods assist in obtaining answers to the when, how and what questions (Yin, 2003). The interview schedule consisted of five questions, structured to provide answers to meet the research objectives and answer the research questions. The interviews were semi-structured and conducted face-to-face with interviewees. An advantage of interviews is the researcher has the opportunity to ask follow-up questions if the situation arises and probe for more information. Also, as stated by Onwuegbuzie et al. (2010), the interviewer can pick up on non-verbal communication from interviewees.

6.3.2. Sampling

The researcher conducted interviews with eight executive managers of the ITS division of the organisation, because due to time constraints they did not have time to complete a questionnaire. The researcher wished to obtain answers to similar questions used in the questionnaire from senior management and see if there were any correlations or not between the answers using two different research methods. The researcher used non-probability sampling as the sampling strategy to select the sample for the interviews. The selected sample for the qualitative part of the study, the interviews, was relatively small in comparison to the quantitative part of the study, which involved the completion of questionnaires.

6.3.3. Statistics

Eight executive managers were interviewed by the researcher and all gave their consent for the interviews to be recorded. Four of the managers were based in Cape Town and the other four at the MIM Ltd offices in Centurion. The researcher

used a Dictaphone to record the content of the interviews, with the permission of the interviewees. The batteries ran flat whilst interviewing Respondent 5, which resulted in no audio recording, but the researcher made hand-written notes during the interview. After the interviews the researcher transcribed the content from the recordings, in order to form themes. Data collected during the interviews was analysed qualitatively.

6.4 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTED

In this section, the researcher presents the questions asked and discusses the themes resulting from the interviewees' responses.

6.4.1 Question 1 – Recent changes in the organisation

The first question was *“What kind of change have the organisation been experiencing recently?”*

The reason this question was asked was to establish the type of changes happening in the organisation and to gain an understanding of what employees might be experiencing. Knowing what changes are happening in the organisation will assist the researcher to have an objective view of the results of the questionnaire. The interviewees responded to this question referring to the merger as a significant change, as well as post-merger changes that are currently happening. Interviewees specifically referred to system changes and culture changes currently underway in the organisation. Respondent 1 (executive manager) named the following changes in his response: *“Corporate change – the merger, i.e., change of ownership, culture change – where North and South are brought together, people change – staff members leaving etc., infrastructure change – location of work and lastly technology changes – financial systems, decommission of IT systems”*.

Respondent 2 (executive manager) said *“We had two sets or types of change, one being a merger and secondly the integration – the integration of different cultures. With the merger we had the challenges of reducing cost, reducing costs, more than one person having to apply for the same job.”*

The theme that arose from the responses to this question was a “merger” which was first announced in the organisation during November 2010. Mergers differ in terms of scope and size as organisations are different in nature and size (Lawlor, 2013). She writes that mergers have an influence on the financial and organisational aspects of a company, also having a human impact on the emotions and behaviours of employees.

The following question during the interview was about the means of communication utilised in the organisation.

6.4.2 Question 2 – Means of change communication

The second question asked during the interview was *“What means are used in the organisation to communicate change to the employees?”*

The interviewer asked this question to contribute to the triangulation of the responses to the questionnaire and the information received during the interviews. The responses of interviewees corresponded with the responses to the questionnaire, in terms of the means of communication used in the organisation, which were e-mails, auditorium sessions and verbal communication from management. One specific response from Respondent 4 (executive manager) was *“We have e-mail, auditorium session by the CEO, face to face sessions between Manco members themselves and staff in their specific areas and we use HR to give feedback on where we are with integration processes and they have national feedback session to smaller groups, where there is question and answer sessions.”*

The response from Respondent 7 (executive manager) was *“MMI wide, we have the CEO who communicates on a monthly basis, sending out written communication, that everyone has to read. So it is up to each individual to read what he says. How effective it is, I don’t know, because not everybody is prepared to read. So we as executives make it a point to read the communication and filter information down to our teams. Not necessarily forwarding the e-mail to the team, but for example if the communication comes with a promise to business which impacts my team, I must make sure that I sit with my team and explain”* (Appendix B). None of the interviewees mentioned the use of newsletters as a means of

communicating change in the organisation, which reflects the majority of responses to the questionnaire.

The theme that emerged from the responses to this question was that e-mails, auditorium sessions, discussions with staff and feedback from managers were used to communicate change in the organisation. From the responses it was evident that the communication of change did take place within *MIM Ltd*. This phenomenon relates to the statement of Jabri et al. (2008), that conversations and communication within organisations drove change initiatives. The interviewees made it clear that change was regularly communicated by e-mail updates from the organisation's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Auditorium sessions were held by the business unit heads and managers held conversations and personal interactions with the staff reporting to them. The managers took on the role of change agents and the HR department was also involved in such feedback sessions.

The next question during the interview deals with the research objective around age of employees and the communication of change.

6.4.3 Question 3 – Change communication and age

The third question posed to all interviewees was *“Do you find that change is communicated differently to people from diverse age groups?”*

This question had a direct link with the third research objective stated in Chapter 4, in which the researcher sought to establish if change should be communicated differently to employees of different age groups.

The theme of this question's responses is non-differentiation between age groups. Seven of the eight managers responded that they did not take age into consideration when communicating change, but that it should be. The eighth manager responded that he did consider age groups when communicating to his team and gave some examples of how he did this. The question made the interviewees think about the matter of age and, from the responses, the researcher can deduce that they did think age should be considered when communicating change. An example of this was from Respondent 7 (executive manager) saying: *“I think it should be, but it's not. The CEO sends out a*

communication which is very high level, for which you need a proper level of education and age maturity to understand the context of what he is saying in correlation to the bigger picture. Now if a 20 year old comes into the company and read that e-mail, he deletes it and goes on with his life. He is so detached to what this Group CEO is saying, so I do believe that different communication methodologies or messages must be used for people from the younger generation and people from the older generation. For example, the younger people are bored by e-mails from the CEO, they don't understand the significance of those e-mails and that is why I think it is important to communicate differently to them. It is also up to management on the different levels to explain and filter the message down to the people on the floor and make sure everyone understand what is being said" (Appendix B).

The reactions were that younger employees might find the e-mails from the CEO boring and not read it, while they might be more interested in social media and personal interactions with managers. On the other hand, older employees might prefer e-mails and be comfortable with auditorium sessions.

The next question deals with the communication of change to employees with different educational qualifications.

6.4.4 Question 4 – Change communication and education

The interviewer asked the following as the fifth question during the interview: *"In your experience, do you communicate change differently to people with higher education levels, compared to people with lower education levels?"*

The researcher asked this question because it relates to the first research objective of this study. The researcher wished to know if executive management considered employees' levels of education when communicating change to them. This also assisted in the triangulation between responses to the questionnaire and interviews.

The theme that emerged from the responses to this question is differentiation between education levels. Some of the managers did differentiate when they communicated to employees, some did not, and others had to do so because all the employees in their areas were more or less on the same educational level. Respondent 6 (executive manager) responded to the question as follows: *"In my*

specific area the education levels are not that different, there's a band of education and I can have the same discussion with all my people. The challenge comes in with the level of understanding and maturity and how street wise the people are" (Appendix B)

6.4.5 Question 5 – Change communication and position in the organisation

The fifth and final question during the interview was *"Do you agree that change is communicated differently to people in higher positions within the organisation?"*

This question refers to the second research objective stated in Chapter 4 of this study. The researcher asked it to obtain responses from executive managers and compare them to those obtained from the questionnaire completed by employees up to middle management level.

The theme that emerged from the responses to this question was different communication to employees in senior positions in the organisation. All the managers interviewed indicated that change was communicated differently to employees in higher positions and especially at executive level. The interviewees responded more to how the communication between the managers and the head of the division was, and the way the message of changes was relayed from the divisional head to the executive managers and how they must then interpret the same message before communicating to reporting staff members. The main idea was that when employees were in higher positions in the organisation, the communication tended to be more strategic and communication to employees in lower positions tended to be more operational.

6.5 RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The last question on the questionnaire was an open-ended question to which the respondents could respond in free text. The question was *"How else would you want change to be communicated to you?"* Most of the respondents indicated that they wanted individual sessions, discussions in smaller groups or small workshops on change plans. One of the respondents recommended social media whilst another suggested change to be communicated by using short message service (SMS) or telephone. Regular feedback was also a request from respondents; they

indicated that they did get feedback from managers, but not as regularly as they would like.

6.6 DISCUSSION

The main themes that emerged from the interview data collected are discussed in this section.

6.6.1 Merger

The interviews with the executive managers of the one division in the organisation informed the researcher of the recent changes and said that the communication of change did take place in the organisation. It emerged from the interview responses that the greatest change the organisation and its employees experienced was a merger three years previously, and they were currently dealing with the post-merger changes. The merger was experienced as very stressful and thus it was important for the management to ensure that employees were kept informed at all times and participated. That the management communicated change to their employees confirms findings of Johansson and Heide (2008) and Vazirani and Mohapatra's (2012), that communication reduces resistance to change from employees, and Van Tonder's (2004) finding that it reduces employees' fear of the unknown. The latter agrees with Vazirani and Mohapatra's (2012) argument that dealing with the employees' levels of uncertainty is one of the greatest challenges employers face during the time of a merger and acquisition. Hence, management and change agents in organisations must ensure that they keep employees informed on developments around the merger and how these developments will affect the employees, if at all.

Employees are more likely to cooperate and participate in merger-related changes if they are informed and understand the impact of the changes on themselves and the organisation. These arguments relate to the theory which refers to how organisations operate and the external influences on its operations. The theory of organisational communication also emphasise that organisations must communicate and inform employees with reference to public opinion and define concepts as they apply to organisations. Reference can be made to Vazirani and Mohapatra's (2012:33) statement that "Good communication is essential to any

successful merger and acquisition". It is thus the opinion of the researcher that external influences and the environment in which an organisation operates may force organisations to plan and execute organisational changes. These changes, in most cases, affect employees and the operations within an organisation, which must be communicated clearly and honestly by management. It is the responsibility of the change communicators that change concepts and terms are explained in such a way that employees understand and can relate to them.

6.6.2 Cultural change

Post-merger changes occurred in the organisation, and cultural change is one of the most prominent changes taking place at present. Corporate culture is defined as the way things are done in an organisation by Miller (in Vazirani & Mohapatra, 2012), whilst organisational culture refers to the set of shared values and norms controlling members of the organisation (Jones, 2010). Vazirani and Mohapatra (2012) describe organisational cultural change as a traumatic experience for employees, after a merger and acquisition.

In the case of this study, the management of MIM Ltd (the newly formed organisation after the merger) wishes to create one culture between the two merged organisations, and this requires a culture change to all employees of MIM Ltd. The two organisations who merged have widely different cultures and "ways of work", which management is trying to merge to form one culture for the newly formed organisation. For example, developing one way of work in the whole organisation is a very important goal set by the top management of MIM Ltd. This in itself requires the buy-in and cooperation of the employees, to ensure a successful change of culture in the organisation. Hence, the management of MIM Ltd will have to apply the organisational change management strategies and, using the literature review as reference, communication of planned changes can be regarded as the most important factor in the change process.

In Chapter 3 of this paper, the researcher referred to Hayes (2007) on the quality of the communications of change and the importance of communication strategies as contributors to the success of change projects in an organisation. The quality referred to, in the researcher's opinion, must be the meticulousness with which change is communicated and explained to employees; the quality of sound during

auditorium sessions to ensure that everyone in attendance can hear the communicator; the completeness of e-mails sent to employees; and the language used during communication sessions and face-to-face interactions with staff members. If these quality checks are performed by management or change agents before change is communicated, the message will reach recipients in a clear and understandable manner.

6.6.3 Change communication

The communication of change and the means used have been shown in this study to be very important aspects of change within organisations. In Chapter 2 the researcher discussed the organisational communication theory which concerns itself with using communication to solve practical and efficiency problems within organisations. The theory advises organisational management to communicate terms and concepts in the context as they apply to the organisation. It is evident from the responses to the interviews that it is the responsibility of change agents and organisational managers to ensure that employees understand the message communicated to them. From the interview responses the researcher found managers relying on individual or smaller group discussions to simplify change communication messages and explaining to employees the message on operational level. This may be because they know the general communication emanating from the CEO is not understandable to employees of all ages, education levels and/or positions in the organisation. On the other hand, it can be to ensure, as a matter of caution, that everybody in the department or organisation understands what was said and what the general expectations are of employees, from the organisational management's side.

It is the researcher's opinion that communication of change has an empowering effect on employees, as it enables the latter to make informed decisions on whether or not they wish to participate in change initiatives. This is relevant to the social theory discussed in Chapter 2, with reference to the development of employees' social behaviours, such as using resistance to change as a form of power. The connection the researcher makes between the social and organisational communication theory is that if employees are informed about change initiatives and they understand terms and concepts used in the communication, the resistance to change will be overcome. Resistance to change

can occur in organisational change situations for several reasons, and therefore all aspects of the employee and the organisation must be taken into account and planned for before communicating change.

6.6.4 Age

The third research objective of this study is to identify how employees of different age groups perceive change and how change should be communicated to them. The responses to Question 3 of the interview schedule made it clear that the change communication strategy used in the organisation, MIM Ltd, did not cater for different age groups. Although most of the respondents to the interviews were of the opinion that it should be done, this is something the people responsible for the communication strategy within the organisation neglected to do. Respondent 6 used the example of the generation gaps and said “...*there might be a need for different means of communicating, for example youngsters sitting in the same room and texting each other, while older people will rather speak to each other*” (Appendix B).

The researcher’s opinion is that differentiation between age groups should definitely be considered as employees of different ages perceive change differently. Younger employees may be keener on change because they are willing to take risks and do not want to have the same routines for years, whereas older employees may be less keen on changes as they are more rigid and not willing to learn and adapt to new ways of work. In the organisation one finds that younger employees are comfortable with receiving an e-mail on change, but older employees will prefer that management interact with them personally to discuss the planned changes and the consequences thereof.

Social theory refers to the way people are socialised and influenced on how they behave in the workplace and adapt to change. If older people are socialised not to follow orders from younger people they will not accept such behaviour and resistance will be the end result. Social theory is applicable to the communication of change between different age groups, in the sense that younger females, for example, should not be the communicator of change to older male employees, otherwise it will not be accepted or considered as a possibility.

The researcher’s thoughts are in the case where change has to be communicated to different age groups, the storytelling communication style can be applied. As

Dawson and McLean (2013) pointed out, storytelling is becoming very popular in organisations. Dawson and McLean (2013) and Hope (2010) found that it is through these stories that employees decide whether they are going to buy into the change or whether they will oppose the change initiatives. People in general are eager to listen to and remember a story, which means they will take note of what is being said if told in the form of a story. The researcher's opinion is that change communicators and management must be trained more specifically on how change is communicated to different age groups. This will assist in preparing and executing change communication strategies relating to the needs of the organisation and employees affected by change.

6.6.5 Education levels

The theme which came from the fourth question of the questionnaire is the education levels of employees and how they relate to change communication. The question was whether change should be communicated differently to employees with different education levels. The responses to the question were diverse, in terms of some managers considering communication according to education levels necessary and others not. The education levels of employees in some areas were more or less the same, whilst there were areas in which education levels ranged from pre-matric to b-degrees or higher in the same area.

Education was mentioned by Lurigio and Skogan (1994) and Skogan & Harnett (1997) in Cochran et al. (2002) as one of the socio-demographic and work experience characteristics associated with employees' receptivity to change. Employees with higher educational qualifications are more inclined to grasp and understand terms and concepts than employees with pre-matric. However, Respondent 2's response to Question 4 on the interview schedule was "*Yes, it should be done. But for me it is not so much the education levels, but more the level of maturity.*" This response implies that education may not be the most important factor, but rather how mature people accept and understand communication about change. The education levels of employees contribute to the social capital of an organisation.

In Chapter 2 the researcher referred to Mahajan and Benson's (2013) argument that social capital is an important base for the development of relationships, including human and intellectual capital, within an organisation and should be

used wisely by management. The social capital of an organisation is thus determined by the intellectual capital of its employees, which includes their educational qualifications.

The researcher's opinion is some of the terms and concepts used in change communication sessions are not understandable to everyone. It is also the experience of the researcher that some of the concepts and terms used can be misinterpreted or vague, even if one has a tertiary qualification. The jargon used can also be confusing to people who do not have a tertiary qualification and therefore change communicators must simplify the jargon for those employees. Making sure that all employees understand communication on change is important for organisations, especially in relation to the knowledge creation theory which emphasises the creation and sharing of knowledge with employees to ensure improvement in competitive advantage and organisational performance. In doing so, employees can prepare themselves for the changes and plan how they can use them to their career advantage.

6.6.6 Position in the organisation

The last theme which stems from the interview responses was different communication to employees in senior positions in the organisation. The reason for this was all respondents to the interviews indicated that communication from the top structures on change was much more abrupt and conducted with less tact. Change plans are communicated from a strategic perspective and it is the managers' responsibility to communicate the same message in terms of operational tasks to reporting staff. The possibility exists that with this passing on of the change message some distortion can occur, posing a risk to top management of the organisation. It is also such distortion that can lead to misunderstanding of the change communication and resistance to change.

Proctor and Doukakis (2003) identified several sources of resistance to change, such as fear of the unknown, lack of information, threats to status, fear of failure and lack of perceived benefits. The threat of status is an important point relating to employees' positions in the organisation and how they receive and understand change communication. As Proctor and Doukakis (2003) argue, resistance to

change is usually raised with those people in the organisation that has the most to lose because of the envisaged change. When employees in more senior positions hear of changes in the organisation, such as a merger, their position, power or status, and how the change will affect them, will usually be their main concern. However, the same thoughts will enter the minds of employees in junior or lower positions in the organisation. Thus, the researcher agrees with Grobler and Puth (2002) that communication to employees should be more explanatory and comforting, than the communication to managers.

In the researcher's opinion, the social theory discussed in Chapter 2 of this paper is applicable when looking at how change is communicated to employees in different positions in the organisation. In referring to how societies develop and the development of social behaviours such as power, gender, social structure and classes (Harrington, 2005), the class of employees is influenced by the positions they hold in their organisations, thus the importance of being in a senior position at work. This accounts for the difference in communication at senior level in an organisation, compared to the communication used at middle and junior levels.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The researcher found, while conducting the interviews, that the change experience of employees and management was not problematic. All workers experienced it as stressful, no matter the outcome. However, it was evident that the organisational management of MIM Ltd communicated to employees throughout the process and this encouraged them to cooperate. The themes arising from the interviews related to the biggest change in the organisation, which was the merger three years before and the post-merger changes relating to it. The aim of the interview questions was to answer the research questions and objectives set out in Chapter 4, which focuses on the communication of change to employees of different ages, employees with different education levels and employees in various positions in the organisation.

The responses to the interview questions gave the researcher insight into how these three variables were being handled in the organisation. All of the respondents were in agreement that the organisation and themselves did not differentiate or use different communication strategies when conversing with

employees of different ages, even though they thought they should. Some of the respondents did not have diverse education levels in their departments and therefore did not have to consider these when communicating change, whereas others did, and so had processes in place to ensure that all employees understand the change communications.

In the case of different positions in the organisations, respondents were in agreement that change was communicated differently from the top, in comparison to how they, as executive managers, communicate the same message to employees in lower or more junior positions. The next chapter presents the findings and makes recommendations based on them.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the results and analysis of the qualitative research results. In this chapter the researcher links the results of the questionnaire and the interview, discusses the findings and makes recommendations based on the study performed. The researcher analyses whether research objectives have been met and the limitations pertaining to the study are listed.

7.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS REVISITED

Stated in chapter one and three of this paper, the main research question of this study is as follows:

- How does the diversity in terms of levels of education, position in the organisation and age influence the communication of change?

This research question is further broken down into the following investigative research questions:

1. Do the levels of education of employees influence their perception of change and how change is communicated to them?
2. Do the positions of employees influence their perception of change and how change is communicated to them?
3. Does the age of employees influence their perception of change and how change is communicated to them?

The researcher, in this chapter, evaluates whether the results of the research methods used in the study, answer the research questions and meet the research objectives of the study.

7.3 FINDINGS

The table (below) summarises the findings of the quantitative and qualitative research conducted in the form of a questionnaire and interviews. The researcher asked 90 employees to complete the research questionnaire, of which 80 responded with completed questionnaires. The questionnaire is attached to this paper as Appendix A. For the interviews, all of the eight divisional executive

managers were asked to participate and all agreed to be interviewed at a scheduled date, time and place. The interview schedule used for the interviews can be found as Appendix B.

Table 7.1: Summary of research findings

Research objectives	Summary from questionnaire	Summary from interviews
Identify how employees with different education levels perceive change and the different ways in which change is communicated to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The perception is change communicated verbally, by means of e-mail and auditorium sessions. • The same respondents prefer change to be communicated to them verbally and by e-mail. • Respondents request more regular feedback from management on change initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change is in most cases communicated differently to staff with different education levels. • The means used for change communication in the organisation is e-mails, verbal communication and auditorium sessions. • The level of maturity of employees, in addition to education levels, is important when communicating change.
Describe how employees in different positions perceive change and the different ways in which change is communicated to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change communication perceived to take place verbally, e-mail and auditorium sessions. • Respondents in all positions prefer verbal communication and to attend sessions. • Change is not really communicated by use of newsletters. • Individual discussions or small workshops are required on a more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is definitely a difference in how change communication is done to people in different positions in the organisation. • Communication to employees in higher positions is normally at a strategic level. • Communication on change to employees in lower positions is more on an operational level.

	regular basis.	
Identify how employees of different age groups perceive change and how change is communicated to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents from younger age groups agree more that change is good for the organisation and employees, compared to the respondents from older age groups. • The respondents of different age groups prefer verbal communication of change and the use of e-mails, rather than auditorium sessions and newsletters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management doesn't differentiate between age groups when communicating change to employees. • Change communication to younger employees should be done in person or verbally, whilst older employees are comfortable with e-mails and auditorium sessions. • It is important to have individual talks with all employees. • Generation gaps must be considered and serious matters must be discussed personally irrespective of age.

Source: Field work

The summary of the findings gives the researcher an indication of the types of change communication taking place in MIM Ltd. The research variables, i.e., age, education level and position in the organisation play a role when management communicates change to employees.

7.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ONE

The results of the study show that employees with different education levels had diverse perceptions and preferences of how change is communicated within the organization. For example the questionnaire results showed 83% of the respondents with tertiary education qualifications preferred to have change communicated to them verbally, whilst 54% of the respondents with a pre-matric or matric qualification did not prefer verbal communication. The feedback from the

interviews indicated that managers did explain change in a diverse manner to employees with different education levels, i.e., change terms and concepts used in change communication feedback would be explained in simpler terms to employees with a pre-matric or matric qualification, while there was an expectation that employees with a tertiary education required less explanation or fewer details. Respondent 1, the manager of a department in which employee qualifications ranged from pre-matric to b-degree or higher responded during the interview that he has personal interaction sessions after the CEO had sent an e-mail or auditorium sessions, to ensure that the staff members understood the communication.

Respondent 5 to the interviews indicated that all employees in his department had more or less the same qualifications and for this reason there was no real differentiation in how change was communicated or concepts and terms explained. The researcher's conclusion on how change is communicated to employees of different education levels is that the formal communication strategy of the organisation does not cater for differentiation, but that managers in the division apply their own strategies to ensure the employees in their departments understand or comprehend the change message.

7.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE TWO

Employees in different positions within the organisation have their own preferences of the means used for change communication. The results of the questionnaire showed that employees from all positions preferred verbal and e-mail communication to auditorium sessions and the use of newsletters. This result can be further broken down to show that 80% of the respondents in unskilled labour positions preferred verbal change communication, 61% in skilled labour positions indicated they preferred change to be communicated verbally, 60% of the respondents in junior management positions showed preferred verbal change communication and 83% of the respondents in middle management positions preferred verbal communication of change.

In terms of e-mail as preference, 60% of the unskilled labour group, 63% of the employees in skilled labour positions, 60% of the junior management respondents and 75% of the respondents in middle management positions were in favour of e-mail as preferred method for change communication. In addition, respondents to

the interviews referred to the different ways in which change was communicated from the top management to managers on executive level, saying that they received the message in a harsh, sometime abrupt manner, then it is their responsibility to refine and “soften” the message before communicating it to their subordinates.

Hence, the researcher concludes that change is generally communicated in the same format to all employees. The onus is on individual managers to ensure that the change message is understood by all employees in all positions in the organisation.

7.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE THREE

The research results shows the age of employees are not considered when change is communicated. The research also showed employees from younger age groups prefer verbal communication, compared to e-mails. This can be because younger employees are not interested in reading long e-mails from the CEO, as Respondent 7 to the interview indicated; *“Now if a twenty-year old comes into the company and read that e-mail, he deletes it and goes on with his life. He is so detached to what this Group CEO is saying, so I do believe that different communication methodologies or messages must be used for people from the younger generation and people from the older generation. For example, the younger people are bored by e-mails from the CEO, they don’t understand the significance of those e-mails and that is why I think it is important to communicate differently to them.”*

Most of the interview respondents were in agreement that age or generation gaps should be considered when communicating change to employees. Respondent 2 said: *“Younger people accept change better/ easier because they have less to lose, whereas the older and more senior people are, they have much more to lose.”*

The questionnaire results showed 100% of the employees in the 18-25 and 26-35 age groups agreed that change was good for the organisation, compared to the 9% of older respondents who did not. This should be a valuable finding for the organisation, as this is an indicator of where resistance versus cooperation to change initiatives can be expected. Overall, the finding is that change is currently

not communicated differently to employees of various age groups, but in retrospect it should be.

7.7 CONCLUSION

To conclude the findings of this study, the researcher can confirm change is communicated in the organisation, MIM Ltd. The organisational management of the organisation communicates change in the form of e-mails from the CEO, feedback sessions in the auditorium and verbal communication with management. The organisation is definitely not in a state of organisational inertia, where management is silent on changes taking place in it. The greatest change they have experienced was a merger three years previously, and currently they are dealing with post-merger changes. These changes include cultural changes, changes to systems and organisational change.

The executive managers of the division in which the study was performed are aware that the change process was stressful to employees and management, but are confident that the organisation availed processes and measures to relieve stress and reassure employees. Newsletters are used to communicate change initiatives in the organisation, but not read by employees and are not preferred as a means of communication by employees. The respondents from all positions in the organisation did not prefer to read about change in newsletters. Employees generally thought change was good for the organisation and its employees and they felt informed on change initiatives taking place. The questionnaire results shows the 18-25 year old and 46 or older age groups thought it important to attend change communication sessions and clarify things they did not understand. The research shows that employees were not against changes in the organisation, but they must be communicated clearly and on a regular basis, to ensure the buy-in of employees and reduce resistance or non-cooperation to change plans.

7.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study strongly indicate that communication management is an extremely important function to be controlled in an organisation, when experiencing change. As explained by Nothhaft (2010), communication management is a second-order management function, meaning the function not only coordinates organisational performance but also institutionalises concerns of

employees or business in the organisation. It is the opinion of the researcher that in a similar way the communication of change must be managed in an organisation. It is important for organisations to manage change communication to ensure that the correct message reaches the employees and they are not influenced by hearing rumours through the grapevine. The management of communication has a direct link with the management of change as these two strategies should be applied at the same time when an organisation is going through a transition period.

Based on deductions made from the results of the study and personal observations in the organisation, the researcher makes the following recommendations to improve the communication of change in the workplace:

- The management of the organisation can institute measures to ensure that all forms of communication on change reach all employees in the organisation.
- There are still employees who do not have access to personal computers or e-mail facilities. The manager or supervisor of these employees must print and distribute the e-mail to employees without e-mail facilities, to ensure that they receive the same communication as the rest of the employees.
- Most of the employees own a cellular phone and using short message services (SMS) to distribute information can also help in ensuring all employees receive change information. This will have no cost implication for the employees as no airtime is required to receive an SMS, which eliminates the resistance factor.
- The provision of training to managers and superiors on how and when to communicate change to employees is of vital importance for the successful implementation of change plans and therefore this should be a top priority for the board and management of the organisation.
- The use of social media to communicate change will definitely interest the younger employees in the organisation, as they tend to be very active on social media sites. Some older people however also tend to be active on social media and they will then also be reached. Implementing such a

communication strategy will address the communication of change to employees of different age groups.

- The change communication strategy of the organisation must include providing employees with explanations or definitions of complex change terms and concepts used during change communication sessions or documentation, for example a shortened glossary.
- Organisational management should work towards creating a culture of change in the organisation, by use of competitions with prizes about communications and making change fun. This will contribute to employees wanting to participate and reading information on changes.
- Involving employees, management and shareholders from the start of the change process helps in not having feelings of exclusion. Involving all stakeholders assists the organisational management to gain a view of all the perspectives existing and align these multiple perspectives.
- The information on change should also be readily available to employees to refer to and not be in a state of “not knowing”.
- The organisation must ensure that proper support structures or services are in place when communicating large changes, such as a merger. Employees are faced with extreme emotions influenced by fear, insecurity, stress and anxiety and should therefore know the organisation has support available to them.

7.9 FUTURE RESEARCH

The research findings answered the research questions set out in Chapter 1 and again at the start of this chapter. The factors influencing change communication range from training of change communicators to the receptivity to change by employees. The independent variables, namely age, education and position in the organisation were investigated and research results have shown that these were not taken into consideration when formulating the organisation’s formal change communication strategy. However, executive managers use their own initiative by returning to the staff and explaining complex terms in simpler and more understandable terms. By so doing they are encouraging interaction between themselves and the staff reporting to them. By doing this staff members feel their

interests are being taken into consideration and they feel more positive to cooperate with the planned changes in the organisation and/or department.

The training of employees and managers in communicating change and having small workshops on planned changes in the organisation will broaden the horizons of employees and develop their knowledge on the subject. Such training and development of employee knowledge is in agreement with the principles of both the knowledge creation and social capital theories. The organisation will build on the intellectual capital in the organisation and increase its competitive advantage and profitability.

The research findings included requests for regular feedback on change initiatives from management, despite 93% of all respondents to the questionnaire having indicated that their manager or supervisor communicated change. The researcher concludes that the employees requesting more regular feedback were in the minority and their superiors might have neglected to communicate information on change occasionally. The researcher suggests that the management of MIM Ltd take cognisance of this request and strive to meet the needs of employees, by implementing the recommended processes or policies.

The implications of not having a sound change management and communication strategy in place may result in failed change initiatives. The management of organisations lose their credibility with employees when the latter feel information is being kept from them. Having trained employees and change agents in the organisation will help to reduce resistance to change and encourage cooperation with change initiatives. It is useful and to the advantage of the organisation's culture and work environment to share information and keep staff informed. The recommendations will assist the organisation to achieving successful implementation of change initiatives.

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Appendix A – Research Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to respond to the attached questionnaire. Completing the questionnaire should take approximately 15 minutes.

As part of my Research Report [**CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION: FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION OF CHANGE AT A WORKPLACE**], I am required to conduct a survey of individuals with knowledge and experience of change happening in the workplace and the communication thereof.

There are no right or wrong answers, so when answering questions, please focus on your own experiences. **Your participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept completely confidential.** The results of the study will be used as part of my thesis, but any information obtained during the survey that may be identified with you, will remain confidential and will not be disclosed.

The research is conducted under the supervision of Dr. Henrie Benedict, Senior Lecturer in the Business Faculty at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).

Thank you for your participation. Your answers are of great importance to the success of this study. I look forward to your responses as soon as possible.

With appreciation,

Ronalda Packery

Student Number: 202111288

MTech: Business Administration

Faculty of Business

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Questionnaire Questions:

1. My highest level of education is:

- Pre-matric
- Matric
- Diploma
- B degree
- M degree
- D degree

2. I fall in the following age group:

- 18-25 years
- 26-35 years
- 36-45 years
- 46-55 years
- 56-65 years

3. My position in the company can be categorised as:

- Unskilled Labour
- Skilled Labour
- Junior Management
- Middle Management
- Senior Management

4. Change is communicated by means of:

- Verbal Communication
- E-mail
- Auditorium Sessions
- Newsletters

5. I prefer change to be communicated via:

- Verbal Communication
- E-mail
- Auditorium Sessions
- Newsletters

- 6. Change is important for the progress/ growth of the company
- 7. Plans for change is communicated to staff before it takes place
- 8. Attendance to change communication sessions is important
- 9. Change is communicated to all staff in the company
- 10. The communication of change is clear and understandable
- 11. The communication of change contributes to positive staff morale
- 12. I ask questions if something is unclear to me
- 13. I understand change communication due to my education level
- 14. I understand change communication due to my years of experience
- 15. I participate in change initiatives of the company

The following questions require Yes/ No answers - Tick the appropriate box

- 16. Do your manager/ supervisor communicate change?
- 17. Are change concepts and terms used explained to staff members?
- 18. Do you think change is good for the company and staff members?
- 19. Is the opinion of staff members asked when change is communicated?
- 20. Are you involved in change initiatives in the company/ department?

21. How else would you want change to be communicated to you?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Yes	No
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Appendix B - Interview Schedule



The researcher will interview 08 executive managers within the organisation and pose the following questions:

1. What kind of change has the organisation been experiencing recently?
2. What means are used in the organisation to communicate change to the employees?
3. Do you find that change is communicated differently to people from diverse age groups?
4. In your experience, do you communicate change differently to people with higher education levels, compared to people with lower education levels?
5. Do you agree that change is communicated differently to people in higher positions within the organisation?

With appreciation,

Ronalda Packery

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