

**Influencing innovation:
How do strategic leaders in financial services influence innovation
implementation**

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A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science,
University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Philosophy Corporate Strategy.

28 November 2022

Abstract

These are unprecedented times for the financial services sector in South Africa. This is a time when financial technology companies or fintech's have aggressively penetrated the financial services sector in South Africa with attractive innovative propositions for customers from a product and service perspective. Traditional financial services organisations are not responding commensurately to the innovative value propositions taken to market by their new entrant competitors. This is the business problem.

The business community is turning to strategic leaders in traditional financial services organisations to understand the sluggish response to fintech innovations entering the market. This research study brought strategic leaders in traditional financial services organisations to the fore with the objective of understanding how innovation implementation is influenced within their organisations. The purpose of this research study was to explore industry knowledge on challenges confronting strategic leaders in influencing innovation implementation collate insights, methods, techniques and strategies on how leaders can influence innovation implementation and be used a guide for leaders battling to break barriers underpinned by non-progressive cultures and norms within their organizations.

The research was a qualitative study that deployed semi-structured interviews to a sample of 13 strategic leaders across a spread of executive positions that were purposefully sampled according to qualitative research methods. An additional two industry experts formed part of the research participants, bringing the total to 15 interviews. An extensive desktop literature review formed part of the research process including a thematic analysis to arrive to research findings and outcomes. It was found that strategic leaders influence innovation implementation mainly through persuasion, negotiation and through building resilience in their approaches to influence, coupled with two key mechanisms which include effective engagements and positive enabling behaviours.

Based on the analysis of the findings and the outcomes from the research, five key recommendations were provided in the study for management. The recommendations focused on strengthening current approaches to influencing innovation implementation and suggestions on strategic considerations and tactics they can utilize. One of the aims of this study was to position a research report that documents a comprehensive strategic guideline based on theoretical principles of how strategic leaders in financial services can practically influence and drive the innovation implementation agenda successfully.

Keywords

Influence, influence methods, influence mechanisms

Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy Corporate Strategy at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

28 November 2022

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Section 1.1 Contextual background

Financial technology companies, commonly known as fintech's are relatively new entrants to the broader financial services sector and have become a disruptive threat for traditional financial services institutions in South Africa (Graham, 2021).

The nature of this disruptive threat is viewed by some financial services sector experts as being a 'movement' with an objective to unbundle the suite of services offered by traditional financial service providers (Everfi, 2022).

In pursuit of unbundling the services which have been provided by traditional financial services institutions, fintech's are doing this through rapid innovation advancements (Graham, 2021).

While fintech's are typically smaller compared to traditional financial services institutions, they are innovating at a very rapid pace, introducing new technologies and new ways of providing some of the suite of services originally only offered by traditional institutions (Everfi, 2022).

Fintech's are viewed by some industry experts to be disrupting the financial services sector by developing products and service offerings particularly on virtual customer front-end systems (Everfi, 2022). These virtual platform-based products and services are viewed to have improved overall customer convenience and experience in comparison to face-to-face products and services typically offered by traditional financial services institutions (Everfi, 2022).

A key concern that was identified is that innovation advances being made by fintech's within the financial services sector are reported to have been met by sluggish responses from traditional financial services institutions (Graham 2022).

As leaders are perceived to be the catalysts for innovation within their firms, this has led to questions being asked about the role of innovation leaders in traditional financial services institutions and the need for them to change their tact to respond better to innovation advancements reportedly taking place in the sector (Graham, 2021).

Section 1.2: Relevance of the research from a business perspective

As an emerging facet of business success and sustainability, innovation leaders are seen as strategically significant in influencing on a firm's innovation (Amyx, 2019), but now more than ever, as can be observed in terms of how fintech's are challenging traditional financial services institutions, the influence of leaders on innovation is deemed critical for traditional financial services firms to adapt to rapid market changes, demands as well as new technologies (Everfi, 2022).

According to views obtained from slightly older non-academic business literature, it used to be perceived that the role of leaders as catalysts for innovation demanded the ability to influence innovation implementation by being able to galvanizing support, commitment, resources and ultimately cultivating a culture that embraces an innovative mindset within a firm (Llopis, 2014).

However, a later study done in 2019 by Forbes Magazine revealed that influencing innovation implementation is not always achieved. It was found that there are instances where a leader's influence will be negative in the form of being non-responsive to internal and or external stimuli that demands innovative responses (Amyx, 2019).

Instead of commensurate or aggressive counter responses to innovation advancements taking place external to their firms, it was learnt that there are some leaders that favour being more reactive to the pressures of achieving other short-term results at the expense of long-term innovation outcomes (Amyx, 2019). This negative view triggered the researcher's interest to explore reasons for this behaviour.

According to Amyx (2019), "Over time, firms cement cultures, norms, values and become increasingly locked in and difficult to change" (pg.1).

Situating this view in the context of innovation, a proposition emerges that the older the firm, the greater the level of difficulty to innovate where the norm is that leaders are less responsive to both internal and external stimuli. Consequently, this means achieving firm-level innovation outcomes can become a pertinent problem in such organizations.

The business problem mentioned above built further curiosity towards better understanding the types of challenges confronting leaders within financial services from influencing innovation implementation generally within their organisations.

Furthermore, it triggered interest to explore how some leaders overcome this business problem in such a way that is evident of them managing to successfully influence, drive, and break through blockers of innovation implementation underpinned by behaviours, culture, norms and values ingrained within an organisation over time.

As Barsh et.al (2008) view innovation as “a core driver of growth, performance and valuation” (p.1) it was evident from the business material engaged in the discussion above that understanding how leaders influence innovation implementation is relevant and warranted at a time when traditional financial services organisations are not innovating fast enough compared to the new entrants.

Thus, a research study that would collate insights, methods, techniques and strategies on how leaders can influence innovation implementation and be used a guide for leaders battling to break barriers underpinned by non-progressive cultures and norms within organizations was warranted. In particular traditional financial services organizations that need to focus on the innovation agenda to compete with fintechs for market share.

Section 1.3: Grounding of the research from a theoretical perspective

While a business need for the research was positively identified and discussed in Section 1.1 and 1.2 above, a theoretical need for the research was also identified.

Academic scholars Samimi et al. (2020) invited researchers to investigate a specific theoretical problem. These scholars challenged future researchers to “Consider the influence of strategic leaders on multiple stages of innovation (e.g. how strategic leaders influence generation or implementation of innovative ideas)” (p.14).

Similarly, Cortes & Herrmann (2021) call for future researchers to “extend knowledge on how strategic leaders affect specific stages of the innovation process through different types of influence” (p.226).

In their critique of previous academic studies undertaken on this subject, Cortes & Herrmann (2021) posited that “studies relating strategic leaders to innovation tend to use broad conceptualizations and measurements of the entire innovation process” (p.226).

Evidently, it was identified that the challenge of taking a broad approach noted in 2021 by Cortes & Herrmann (2021) was apparent in Samimi et al. (2020)’s initial recommendation for future researchers to investigate “the influence of strategic leaders

on multiple stages of innovation” (p.14). However, Samimi et al. (2020) proceeded to be more specific and guide future researchers to conduct this research at only one specific stage of the innovation process.

Accordingly, in pursuit of first identifying the multiples stages of innovation alluded by Samimi et al. (2020) and then focus on one specific stage for the intended research, four specific stages of innovation were identified. These were “innovation generation, elaboration, championing and lastly implementation” (p.7) (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017). It was also discovered that Cortes & Herrmann (2021) acknowledged Perry-Smith & Mannucci (2017)’s “four stages of innovation” (p.226) mentioned above in the study they published in 2021.

On the basis that precedent on the use of the four innovation stages mentioned above had been set, these four stages were used as a basis to narrow and single out one stage for the current research study.

Given the merits of the discussion above, a favourable opportunity to extend knowledge was positively located in the existing body of academic literature where an invite by academic scholars was accepted to conduct research on strategic leaders influence innovation (Samimi et al.,2020). Based on a nudge by another group of academic scholars, the study took a more focused direction towards concentrating on the implementation stage of innovation (Cortes & Herrmann (2021)).

To this end, the study was inspired by three groups of academic scholars whose insights resulted in the current study being focused on exploring how strategic leaders influence the implementation of innovation. Duly acknowledging that innovation implementation a specific stage or rather an academic construct initially identified by Perry-Smith & Mannucci (2017) a few years prior to Sammimi et al., (2020) and Cortes & Herrmann (2021) publishing their studies.

Section 1.4: Research questions

This section briefly outlines the research questions that informed the overall direction and scope of the research conducted.

The main research question for the current study was how do strategic leaders influence innovation implementation? This research question was derived from the broader theoretical problem identified by Samimi et al. (2020) discussed above in Section 1.3.

The sub-research question was what are the mechanisms used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation? This sub-question was derived from Simsek et al., (2018) who identified that there are strategies or mechanisms of influencing, coupled with the need to identify practical ways in which strategic leaders can exert influence within their organisations and respond competitively to advances made by fintech's as discussed in Section 1.2.

The research questions are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3. However, at this juncture, this report draws attention to the overall objectives of the research study which are discussed in Section 1.5 below.

Section 1.5: Research objectives

The research work performed required direction and a tight scope in its attempt to answer the research question and the sub-question presented in Section 1.4 above. To this end specific research objectives were established.

The first objective of the research was to understand the notion of 'influence' as an attribute of strategic leadership (Samimi et al., 2020). The aim was to understand this construct from a theoretical perspective by means of an initial literature review. Thereafter explore how mechanisms of influence are currently being used practically in the world of business through obtaining insights from research participants. Lastly, to derive possible conclusions that respond to the research questions by analysing the understanding from the initial literature review against insights obtained from research participants then against an additional extensive desktop literature review.

The second objective of the research was to explore real life experiences of strategic leaders in terms of mechanisms they use to influence the implementation of innovation within their organisations (Simsek et al., 2018), against the backdrop of the threat of fintech's rapidly gaining market share (Amyx, 2019). More specifically, the study aimed to understand the reasons behind the use of such mechanisms, the challenges that confronted using them and understanding the techniques and factors that contributed to each mechanisms yielding success in driving their innovation aspirations and ambitions to the stage of being implemented.

Acknowledging that it was mentioned earlier that implementing innovation in an organization can be extremely difficult if there have been negative norms and cultures

that may have cemented over time (Amyx, 2019). It was warranted and appropriate that the third objective of the study was to explore the barriers, blockers and challenges that confront and hinder strategic leaders from successfully converting their innovation aspirations and ambitions into implementation and how they are mitigated or removed (Barsh et al., 2008).

Based on the propositions derived through the end-to-end research process, the fourth and final objective was to provide strategic leaders in the traditional financial services business community with proposed recommendations. These recommendations were the top four mechanisms deemed to possibly yield success in terms of influencing innovation implementation (Samimi et al., 2020) (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

Section 1.6: Overall research purpose statement

Given the theoretical and business needs for the research discussed, the overarching purpose of the research study was to explore how strategic leaders influence innovation implementation (Barsh et al., 2008) (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017) (Samimi et al., 2020) (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021). Furthermore, the research set out to explore “the mechanisms through which” strategic leaders “influence the implementation of innovation” [pg.295] (Simsek et al., 2018) and culminate with the presentation of top four mechanisms identified as possible recommendations to assist strategic leaders improve their ability to influence innovation implementation in their organisations. This research study comes at a time when there has been a call for action for traditional financial services organisations to bring competitive innovation responses to fintech’s as opposed to sluggish responses recently observed (Graham 2022).

Section 1.7: Chapter conclusion

In closing Chapter 1, attention is brought to the reader that the research conducted was motivated by three main drivers.

First, the specific need identified for this type of research to be done in the traditional financial services sector (Amyx, 2019). Second, the need to answer a specific theoretical problem anchored in academic literature (Sammi et al., 2020), Third, an opportunity identified where conducting the research could possibly contribute to the academic field of strategic leadership by extending knowledge on how strategic leaders affect the implementation stage of the innovation process through different types of influence. In conclusion, these drivers propelled the curiosity, desire and intent of this research study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

By way of introduction, this chapter provides a literature review on three key constructs that underpin the research. The research report focuses on 'strategic leaders' as the first construct, followed by 'influence of strategic leaders in innovation' and concludes with 'innovation'.

Section 2.1: Defining the construct 'Strategic Leaders'

The first objective of the literature review was defining 'strategic leaders' as an academic construct and the role they play in terms of innovation in organisations.

The literature review succeeded in situating strategic leaders as individuals within an organization that are responsible for the overall direction (Kiss et al., 2021), as well as its performance (Simsek et al., 2018). The understanding from the literature was that these individuals carry specific responsibilities, risk and decision making that governs the gathering and allocation of a firm's resources (Cortes & Herrman, 2021).

Section 2.2: Identifying strategic leaders in the context of organisations

The literature engaged identified chief executive officers (Cortes & Herrman, 2021), members of the board of directors (Withers & Fitza, 2017), members of top management teams (Heavy et al., 2020) and middle-level executives (Samimi et al., 2020) as the strategic leaders within organisations.

The specific identification of this category of business professionals is of great importance as it assisted the research to focus on the correct level of leaders in organizations aligned with the research questions that underpinned the study.

The identification of strategic leaders within the context of organisations provided evidence that the research study did not simply assume that all executives fall in the category of strategic leaders.

Section 2.3: Associated roles of strategic leaders in the context of innovation

The literature review revealed that there are several scholars that have contributed to the field of strategic leadership. Some key roles associated with strategic leadership in the context of innovation were identified.

One of these roles is for strategic leaders to be constantly anticipating threats and opportunities within the industry or sector in which they are operating (Schoemaker et al., 2013). Based on the literature this role of a strategic leader entails a leader being alert to the changes within the periphery of their business operations and being vigilant to changes happening around their organisation as well as within their organisations (Teece et al., 2020). The ability to pick up signals on both internal and external appeared to be central to this role but most importantly for strategic leaders to achieve success the literature pointed towards better engagements with both internal and external stakeholders to understand the challenges they experience as well as seeking to understand actions being taken by rival competitors (Wilson & Wu, 2017).

According to Simsek et al., (2018) a key role of a strategic leader relevant to the current study is “to serve as a channel of communication” (p.281). Within the context of the current study, the importance of communication is that it helps strategic leaders to steer firms in the desired direction particularly with regards to matters concerning innovation (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

In addition, a key insight that emerged from the literature was that communication plays a critical role in how strategic leaders influence the firm (Simsek et al., 2018) (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

The view above, which has maintained some level of consistency over a few years between the two publications was recently challenged by Kiss et al., (2021) who argued that it is in fact the decision-making done by strategic leaders that influences the organisation to innovate.

The shift highlighted above is one that presents an argument to explore whether the two (communication versus decision making) are mutually exclusive drivers of influencing innovation implementation in organisations. Or if there are synergies in terms of both working together or being used together by strategic leaders in terms of influencing innovation implementation within their organisations as per the research questions.

An interesting observation on the role of decision making made was that the literature highlighted the importance of strategic leaders' ability to make decisions or tough calls in some instances when they do not have all the information. It was understood that they are also required to do so quite quickly. In such instances, the literature recommended that a key enabler to do so is requesting for multiple options rather than falling into what was termed 'the binary trap of go or no-go choices' (Slaughter & Ahn, 2021). It was

gathered from the literature that a leader needs to be disciplined and follow a process that involves looks at long and short term goals, assesses trade-offs and has a careful balance between speed of delivering decisions measured against rigour of the due considerations mentioned above (Wolff, 2019).

Another key role of strategic leaders identified in the literature is to challenge the status quo (Slaughter & Ahn, 2021). According to scholars, a strategic leader should constantly be questioning the way things are done, challenging their own ideas they may have implemented in the past as well as encouraging diverse thinking and assumptions to influence their thinking for future solutions (Wolff, 2019). An interesting observation from the key learning derives about this role is that it appeared that if a strategic leader were to keep doing the same things against the backdrop of changes taking place in the periphery of the organisation, solutions become predictable and lack innovation. Nevertheless, to avoid the above, it was found that it would benefit strategic leaders to invite a diversity of views as well as even challenging views from their own in thinking about approaches to finding solutions for the future (Slaughter & Ahn, 2021).

Section 2.4: Defining the construct 'Innovation'

A focused literature review to understand the construct 'innovation' in the context of strategic leadership studies was conducted.

The first observation that emerged from the review conducted was that innovation is defined or is understood to be an output. Based on the scholarly articles examined it appeared that there was a common understanding amongst several scholars that achieving innovation is a result of either processes or interactions that take place within an organisation.

For example, on the one hand some scholars strongly positioned innovation as an organisation-level output that stems from the decisions and actions of its strategic leaders (Samimi et al, 2020). On the other hand, some scholars positioned innovation as an output of transformation within organizations (Luciano et al, 2020). It was also revealed that some scholars position innovation as a cultural output of a firm (Cummings & Knott, 2018).

While Samimi et al., (2020)'s article has a strong focus on innovation in the broader theme of strategic leadership, it was evident that Perry-Smith and Mannucci (2017)'s work focused on innovation as a process while Samimi et al. (2020) focused more on

innovation as an output of strategic leadership. The literature review conducted also identified that Samimi et al. (2020) placed some level of reliance on Perry-Smith and Mannucci (2017)'s preceding work in referring to aspects of strategic leadership that are linked to innovation.

Likewise, Hoang Giang and Elisabeth Wilson-Evered have also co-published on innovation on a few occasions, including 2017 and more recently in 2021. For example, Giang et al. (2017) a few years before Samimi et al. (2020) in their article discuss a qualitative study they conducted that explored the role of leadership in the roll out of tourism innovation initiatives in Vietnam. A common theme that both articles shared is that innovation in firms is enhanced through the influence of leadership (Hoang et al., 2017) (Samimi et al., 2020). These two articles positioned that the influence of strategic leaders is an antecedent of innovation. This was similar to the findings identified by Cortes & Herrmann (2021) who claimed that strategic leaders have an important part to play in creating the right environment or climate to enhance innovation.

Given the insights obtained from the literature review above, a proposition was derived that it appeared that innovation in the organisational context is an output that is achieved through the decisions and actions of strategic leaders as opposed to processes such as transformation.

Furthermore, based on the review insights obtained in this section, an opportunity to extend knowledge was identified based on the opposing views of Samimi et al., (2020) and Perry-Smith and Mannucci (2017) in terms of providing insights on whether innovation in the organisations duly represented by the interview participants resulted more from processes such as transformation or from the leadership qualities of their strategic leaders. These insights are presented later in Chapter 7.

Section 2.4.1: Stages of innovation

Reflecting on the second objective of the study mentioned in Section 1.5, it called upon the research to explore how strategic leaders influence the implementation of innovation within their organisations (Simsek et al., 2018). Considering the above, it was acknowledged that researching and discussing the implementation stage of innovation without presenting an understanding of the preceding stages would not be prudent.

In the context of executing the research, in terms of challenging its own *modus operandi*, if the aim of the research is truly to understand the research problem holistically, then at minimum, high-level knowledge of the innovation value chain was important.

To this end, on perusal of academic literature, it emerged that the process of innovation has four specific stages. This discovery was of critical importance in the context of the research question.

It was found that the four key stages of an innovation process are “idea generation, idea elaboration, idea championing and lastly idea implementation” [pg.7] (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017).

Idea-generation as defined by Perry-Smith & Mannucci (2019) is “the process of generating a novel and useful idea” [p.7] (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017). It was understood from Perry-Smith & Mannucci, (2017)’s article that the idea-generation process is deliberate about original ideas that have usefulness and have potential to generate value.

However, it was argued by earlier scholars that ideas generated are susceptible to influence by a variety of stimuli and as a result, the idea creator would need to have what creativity theorists have coined “cognitive flexibility” (Wang & Cuervo-Cazurra, 2017).

The understanding was that cognitive flexibility is an idea creator’s ability to receive and incorporate new knowledge or approaches into their idea. In other words, when a useful and valuable idea is generated, there is an opportunity for the idea creator to be influenced by various factors or stimuli. It is important to highlight that idea-generation and aspects discussed above are in the context of the idea creator not having shared the idea to any other person at this stage.

The idea-elaboration stage is the subsequent stage formally defined as “the process of systemically evaluating a novel idea’s potential and further clarifying it and developing it.”[pg.8] (Perry-Smith & Mannucci (2019).

Earlier scholars that investigated the self-evaluation check and challenge process like that mentioned above observed that survival of an idea is at risk of abandonment by the creator and success at this stage would be the actual pitching of the idea to stakeholders (Manning et al, 2017).

To mitigate the risk mentioned above, it was suggested that idea creators require emotional support, constructive feedback and not criticism to overcome fear that their idea will be rejected as well as to motivate them not to abandon their idea (Randle & Pisano, 2021).

Given the above, it was gathered that at idea-elaboration stage there is an opportunity for influencing to take place. It was also gathered that for the idea creator, this is a stage where a considerable degree of uncertainty, anxiety and insecurity would be present.

It was also deduced that the idea creator would require some level of influence such as the necessary backing from leaders to support and encourage them to share their ideas and not abandon them. Although not the focus area of the semi-structured research interviews that were conducted, it was fascinating to identify how strategic leaders practically play a part in either contributing positively or negatively in the elaboration stage.

The next stage of the innovation process is championing the idea which was defined as “the active promotion of a novel idea, aimed at obtaining the approval to push the idea forward and consequently also obtaining money, talent, time or resources.” [pg.10] (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2019).

On further perusal of the literature, it was deduced that this is the stage where the creator pitches, persuades and sells the idea to decision makers within the organisation for approval. Approval at this stage strategically positions the idea to receive both resources and priority for implementation.

According to the literature review, idea-implementation is the final stage within which scholars identified “two sub-phases called production and impact” [p.9] (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017).

On the one hand, from a production perspective, some scholars mentioned this is when the idea gets transformed into a tangible deliverable which can either be a product, a service or process (Kannothra et al, 2018). On the other hand, it surfaced that in terms of impact, “the innovation is accepted, recognized and used.” [p.12] (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017).

Based on the literature, it appeared that this was the stage the idea would come to fruition and delivered either in the form of a product, process, service that is accepted and recognized in the organisation.

The literature cautioned future researchers that the implementation journey of an innovative idea is not simplistic as there are forces that support the innovation process as well as forces that threaten an idea from being borne into an implementable innovation (Kannothra et al, 2018).

Notwithstanding the above, the research was well positioned to explore the challenges that would impact successful delivery of innovation outputs within traditional financial services organisations.

Section 2.4.2: Categories of innovation

On further perusal of the literature to delineate the construct of innovation, an interesting revelation that emerged was that in earlier literature, innovation was classified into an overwhelming number of categories (Rosenkopf & Nerkar, 2001). Over fifty categories were identified (Rosenkopf & Nerkar, 2001).

In contrast, more recent literature revealed these categories have been clustered into more refined thematic groupings. The review conducted made the observation that innovation categories were further classified in recent literature to specifically include “technological and administrative innovation, radical exploratory innovation, incremental exploitative innovation, product innovation, service innovation, process innovation and business model innovation” (p.12) (Giang, 2019).

During the review, it was observed that two specific categories identified in 2001 carried over into much recent literature. From a chronological assessment perspective, it was observed that ‘exploratory innovation’ and ‘exploitative innovation’ appeared in 2001 as mentioned above. These categories subsequently emerged in 2017 literature (Barasa et al., 2017). In addition, further perusal verified the use of these two categories in a study conducted in a 2018 study by Zang (2018) and in 2020 by Oluwafemi et al. (2020).

On the one hand, according to the academic articles reviewed, it was found that exploratory innovation relates to the pursuit of new knowledge to inform the designing and development of new products and or services (Barasa et al., 2017) (Zang, 2018)

(Oluwafeni et al., 2020). The new products and services are introduced are meant to cater for the emerging needs of customers within the market.

On the other hand, it was found that exploitative innovation pertains to taking an existing product or service and changing part of whole of it by either extending or removing some elements (Barasa et al., 2017) (Zang, 2018) (Oluwafeni et al., 2020). Similar to exploratory innovation, it was understood from all three scholarly work reviewed that exploitative innovation is also pursued in order to meet evolving needs of customers and the market in which an organisation is operating (Zang, 2018). More specifically, from a benefits perspective, it was understood that exploratory innovation creates new demand in the market for a product or service that was not previously there as compared to exploitative innovation which improves on existing designs and customer experiences (Oluwafeni et al., 2020). Furthermore, exploitative innovation outputs are centred around expanding and enhancing product or service efficiencies and introducing marked changes, while exploratory innovation output create hype in the market by introducing demand for a service or product was previously unrecognised by customers (Zang, 2018).

Based on the further engagement with the literature it emerged that both innovation categories carry the risk of consumer or market uncertainty in the sense that there is no certainty whether the market will respond positively or negatively. The investment and use of resources in the innovation value chain and taking the product or service to market are at risk if the market responds poorly and the losses are realised. Thus, a proposition emerged that the element of risk taking surfaced as a key consideration for leaders when they influence innovation implementation. It was acknowledged that insights on risk and how it would affect strategic leaders needed to be explored further in the interviews with research participants.

Section 2.5: Defining the construct 'influence'

The literature review conducted revealed that influence can be defined from different viewpoints and that there are various strategies that strategic leaders can use to influence innovation within an organisation (Wowak et al., 2017). What this insight brought to light is the proposition that strategic leaders play a part in providing steer or directing innovation within organisations.

However, comparing with views of other scholars, what has been criticized is that strategic leaders are sometimes not transparent in their attempts to influence innovation

for their personal agenda. This problem was identified to have reached the extent that some scholars consider people's ability to identify and understand concealed influence as a critical skill for successful innovation project management (Zhang et al., 2017).

What was understood from the discussions in the literature reviewed mentioned above was that strategic leaders may have personal motivations which they may feel they need not make obvious to the people they are influencing. This lack of transparency raised questions about the integrity of leaders that behave in this manner as well as whether negative behaviors such as lack of transparency and self-interest are effective for influencing innovation implementation within an organisation in instances where people know the leader is not authentic.

Nevertheless, an important outcome of the review performed was that it was possible to locate and ringence 'influence of strategic leaders on innovation' as an actual construct in the Cortes & Herrmann (2021) article where they stated that they scanned and identified articles "whose theories focused specifically on the influence of strategic leaders on innovation" [p.227] (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021). This discovery was of critical importance as it assisted in situating and clarifying that influence of strategic leaders on innovation is a stand-alone construct. Consequently, an improved level of confidence to discuss this construct was gained.

Section 2.5.1: Influence of strategic leaders on innovation 'vs' Influence mechanisms

Although having situated the stand-alone construct above in recent literature, in contrast, earlier literature positioned a construct called "influence mechanisms" (p.295) (Simsek et al., 2018).

In comparison to 'influence of strategic leaders on innovation', the 'influence mechanisms' construct was deliberate in defining the parameters of influence while the former focuses more on the application of influence (Simsek et al., 2018) (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

The earlier literature stated that in defining mechanisms of influence three specific aspects to consider were "the influence type, the direction of influence and lastly the pattern of that influence" [p.295] (Simsek et al., 2018).

Whereby influence type is “the basis and nature of that influence” [p.296] (Simsek et al., 2018). For example, whether it is political or regulatory (Simsek et al., 2018). Influence direction being “whether the direction of influence is upward, downward or lateral” [p.296] (Simsek et al., 2018) within the organization’s structure and lastly influence pattern which refers to “whether the influence of leaders on others is enabling or constraining” [p.296] (Simsek et al.,2018).

At this juncture it is important to highlight that Simsek et al. (2018)’s delineation of influence has similar aspects to Cortes & Herrmann (2021)’s more recent positioning of the ‘influence of strategic leaders on innovation’ construct with reference to ‘influence pattern’ as both schools of thought appear to have consensus that the decisions, actions and behaviours of strategic leaders can create an environment that either enables or constrains innovation. Cortes & Herrmann (2021) coined this ‘architectural influence’. This will be discussed a few sections below.

Section 2.5.2: Discretionary influence ‘vs’ Interfaces of strategic leaders

Before discussing architectural influence it is important to reflect on ‘influence of strategic leaders on innovation’ momentarily and discuss that based on the literature review conducted, it emerged that one of fundamental components of the influence of strategic leaders on innovation is the responsibility and duty of strategic leaders to pursue innovative pathways by making conscious decisions and showcasing behaviours that influence innovation within an organisation (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021). This approach was coined ‘discretionary influence’ (Cortes & Herman, 2021).

In contrast, Simsek et al. (2018) had positioned a different approach as being fundamental to the ‘influence of strategic leaders’ construct under the auspices of a term they coined ‘interfaces of strategic leaders’ which they argued “occurs in the context of the roles, responsibilities, and activities of strategic leaders, which are consequential for firm behaviour, processes, actions and outcomes” [p.283] (Simsek et al, 2018).

In terms of this approach, these scholars emphasized the importance of how strategic leaders should conduct their interactions with people in the organisation (in terms of frequency, mode, and scope of the engagements) stating that such communication is fundamental for strategic leaders to influence on innovation outputs within their organizations (Simsek et al., 2018).

At this juncture, it is important to reiterate what was mentioned in Chapter 1 by highlighting that both anchoring academic articles for the current study, Perry-Smith and Mannucci (2017) as well as Samimi et al. (2020) agree that innovation is an organisational-level output. Thus, providing gravitas for the proposition that applying communication accordingly with the methods proposed by Simsek et al. (2018) can influence on innovation. To this end, the research study included within its scope, to explore whether communication is truly a mechanism strategic leaders should use to influence innovation implementation. Recommendations on whether it is or not are shared later in Chapter 7.

Based on the above, this research report submits the proposition that against the backdrop of discretionary influence discussions, decision making is fundamental to strategic leaders influencing on innovation within an organisation. However, based on the literature, there is an interesting link in the sense that communication of those decisions and how the engagement around those decisions happens is very significant to achieve influence (Simsek et al., 2018) (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

It seemed to appear that of the scholars referenced in the proposition above, the latter scholars supplemented the former scholars by emphasizing the importance of strategic leaders needing to communicate their decisions openly if they intend to influence on an intended organizational outcome such as innovation (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

Section 2.5.3: Architectural influence

In addition to discretionary influence, the literature revealed that strategic leaders also influence on innovation by creating an environment in their organisations that either enables innovation or constrains innovation (Simsek et al., 2018).

As stated earlier, Cortes & Herrmann, (2021) had similar views and coined this architectural influence. The term stems from the “premise that strategic leaders are architects of their organizational context” [p.228] (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

Similar to Simsek et al. (2018), the findings in Cortes & Herrman (2021) highlighted that a strategic leader can exert their influence on innovation by setting the tone in his or her work environment by means of actively creating opportunities across the innovation value chain and being purposeful about focusing at positively impacting innovation. In a positive scenario, strategic leaders positively shape or influence innovation by creating opportunities for employees of the organization to leverage. What was important to

understand was that the tone set at the top by the strategic leader and their actions creates an enabling environment to innovate.

Contrary to the positive scenario of enabling innovation discussed above, the other side of the coin discovered was that strategic leaders are also able to shape or create a negative environment that constrains innovation within an organization (Cortes & Herrman, 2021). Several ways in which strategic leaders may constrain innovation were identified in the academic articles reviewed.

What was pertinent to the counter position to shaping an enabling environment was that strategic leaders could potentially negatively influence innovation through behaviours and actions that discourage employees from participating in innovation efforts (Jiang & Chen, 2018).

Cases cited could be situated at various stages of the innovation process discussed in Section 2.3.1. Examples included instances where strategic leaders are not receptive to innovation ideas that emerge from employees, instances where criticism becomes the norm when innovation pitches are delivered as opposed to providing constructive feedback and where there is minimal tolerance for delays in financial results from those innovation ideas that are eventually funded (Wang & Cuervo-Cazurra, 2017).

Section 2.5.4: Resilience

Research studies positively identified the connection or link between resilience and influence. In a recent study concluded in 2020, it was found “resilience encompasses positive and negative aspects that shape, influence and foster positive outcomes within an individual, communities and considers factors such as life satisfaction, grit and perseverance and or thriving under challenging circumstances [pg.2](Liu et al.,2020).

The insight above confirms the close association of resilience to the notion of influence in that resilience is positioned as a characteristic that could be carried by individuals, companies or communities for example.

Further engagement with the literature revealed there is diversity in terms of how resilience is used that would result in different variables being research based on the context of its application (Liu et al, 2020). Notably resilience is acknowledged as a construct that continues to undergo what the literature has termed ‘transformative

discoveries' meaning resilience has been found to be present across different populations and settings (Joyce et al, 2018).

Whether resilience is a characteristic that is present in the context of strategic leaders influencing innovation implementation could be worth exploring in the context of this study.

Section 2.5.5: Positive enabling behaviours

The insight from resilience being associated with influence in terms of its positioning as a characteristic that can shape outcomes was a springboard for a review on whether there might be behaviors associated with influencing that might shape the outcomes of influencing innovation implementation. To this end, a literature review was conducted searching for a theoretical connection and grounding between behaviour and influence.

According to the literature review conducted, from a Choice Theory perspective it was found that all humans are different and have different views and values (Rouhollahi, 2016). However, without knowing this, humans resort to external psychology (force) in an attempt to make others do what they do not want to do (Rouhollahi, 2016). This insight had relevance to the current study as the act of force or any form of coercion would be counterintuitive to pursuing the task of influencing. Therefore, if Choice Theory was alluding to humans having the potential to subconsciously force others to enact or do something, a better understanding of behavior emerging from this perspective would be required.

Further engagement with the literature revealed that human behaviour is driven by five basic needs which include survival, love, belonging, power, freedom and fun (Rouhollahi, 2016). It was further understood that when attempting to influence people to change their behavior, one would need to attempt to meet the needs of people mentioned above, which is enabled by fully understanding what is quality for them (their 'quality world') first and then try to close that gap (Rouhollahi, 2016).

The literature also revealed that Choice Theory dictates that only after fully understanding the needs to people and what forms an ideal quality world for them from a needs basis is when one should one try to match to their quality world versus their perceived world (reality) as it were (Rouhollahi, 2016) to bring about the desired change.

An additional interesting insight that emerged from the literature was that Choice Theory posited that majority of people use things such as force or punishing which tends to ruin interpersonal relationships (Rouhollahi, 2016). Seven habits considered to ruin interpersonal relationships were identified from theory. These include criticizing, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing and bribing to control (Rouhollahi, 2016).

A commendable contribution made by the same theory is that it provided seven habits that can be deployed to foster the desired behaviour change. These habits are termed 'seven caring habits' in the literature, however a noticeable underlying theme is that they are positive habits geared at enabling desired change. These habits include supporting, encouraging, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting and negotiate differences (Rouhollahi, 2016).

At this juncture it is important to bring to the reader's attention that the literature has confirmed that behaviour change is a mechanism of influence. It was found in recent studies that scholars have termed these mechanisms 'behaviour change interventions' (Caudwell et al., 2019).

Further engagement with the literature revealed a myriad of behaviour theories. One theory that appeared fit for purpose for this study given the future looking approach of the study as opposed to an assessment of the problem, was the Theory of Planned Behaviour. This theory emphasizes that the intention of the individual is a predictor of future behaviour (Caudwell et al., 2019). However, it is important to note that earlier studies have shown the link between intention and motivation and explain that intention is the motivation that an individual has to participate in a future behaviour (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2009). The literature further explains that indicators can be used to evaluate the motivation towards engaging in future behaviour which include attitude, the social influence surrounding the behaviour at that time and behavioural control (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2009). To this end, the literature associated positive future behaviour with positive motivational attributes (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2009)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour also focusses greatly on the beliefs of individuals to influence their future behaviour (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2009). To elaborate its application an example of the beliefs about consequences will be used in the context of this study as an example. According to the principles of the Theory of Planned Behaviour this would entail changing the beliefs of employees emphasizing that there are real consequences associated with not innovating such as poor performance compared to fintech competitors, continued inefficiencies that do not enable frontline staff to perform

competitively and poor annual performance annually which negatively affects all employees. In essence, the literature states that consequences need to be pitched at an organisation level as opposed to individuals to drive the desired change in behaviour (Caudwell et al., 2019). Likewise, a similar approach might need to be implemented to influence innovation implementation by strategic leaders in financial services organisations which creates an opportunity to explore this insight in this research study.

Section 2.5.6: Effective engagements

Notwithstanding the myriad of roles discussed in Section 2.3, the review came across, the last role identified relevant for the current research study pertained to strategic leaders being able to find common ground and soliciting buy-in from different stakeholders within the organisation who may have different agendas (Wilson & Wu, 2017).

A key observation made was that most articles reviewed with a lens on assessing how 'buy-in' is achieved by strategic leaders agreed that leaders actively have to reach out to stakeholders to obtain it (Schoemaker et al., 2013) (Wolff, 2019) (Teece et al., 2020) (Slaughter & Ahn, 2021). It was also learnt that this outreach to obtain buy-in from stakeholders is usually successful if the leader managed to build trust with them, has frequent effective engagement and visibility as well as proactive communication (Schoemaker et al., 2013) (Slaughter & Ahn, 2021).

Similar to earlier views from Simsek et al., (2018), more recent views seemed to align in their recommendations for strategic leaders to have regular face-to-face meetings with stakeholders, sharing of detailed plans, allowing for stakeholders to participate and obtaining honest feedback including different points of view (Wolff, 2019).

Based on the discussion above, it was evident that effective engagement was regarded as a very important and critical role that is a pathway to generally achieving successful forms of interactions seeking different outcomes. This insight triggered the research study to explore whether effective engagements holds the same level of gravitas expressed above within financial services organisations where strategic leaders are influencing innovation implementation.

Section 2.5.7: Negotiation

In principle, negotiation engagements are viewed as engagements that require well thought out strategies and planning before engaging counterparts (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018). Negotiations have been identified as engagements that adequate preparations are required as they concern the pursuit of winning key interests (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018).

The literature revealed that negotiations require an understanding of the context and process of negotiations (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018). As such, this often requires skilled individuals that can pivot between various tactics and anticipation of counterpart moves in a bid to ensure the best value is obtained (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018).

The understanding from the literature is that some of the key tactics include researching on the counterparty's leverage, preplanning of concession terms, employing both positive and negative negotiated agreements as and when necessary (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018).

Based on the review of scholarship on this concept, a level of complexity is acknowledged by scholars to which intention has been strongly associated with these engagements (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018). It surfaced that the intentions are fueled by what scholars have termed 'a winning mindset (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018). It was also found that negotiation processes are dynamic and complex and subjected to well thought out strategies.

In addition to the above, from an influencing perspective, an investigation into negotiation strategies was performed to solicit a better understanding of this phenomenon. To this end, three key principles that underpin basic negotiation engagements were identified.

According to the literature, the fundamental basis or objective of negotiations is to influencing a counterparty to fulfil the objectives of the negotiator (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018). To achieve success, specific factors as considered such as approaching the right party that will assist to fulfil the objectives (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018). To this end, negotiations are direct in terms of pursuing desired outcomes.

The second principle identified was that negotiations consider how much leverage the counterparty has in the context of the discussion (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018).

According to the literature, this consists of factors possessed by the counterparty that influence their position, particularly concerning what they will and will not agree to (Weiss, 2017). It was noted that in considering the above mentioned factors, the aim is to make calculated decisions on how to influence the behaviour of the counterparty (Weiss, 2017).

Based on the review conducted, influence is an associated theme with negotiation as there is no use of force or coercion as the rights of the parties to the negotiation are kept intact. Instead, negotiation is about tact, controlling aspects such as the scope, timing and sources of leverage rather than controlling the counterparty (Weiss, 2017). Meaning that negotiations are engagements where parties acknowledge each other's rights and autonomy.

Lastly, an interesting insight emerged from the literature where some scholars believe that in principle, negotiations must end in an agreement (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018).

However, this view was challenged by other scholars that advocate that there is the alternative to walk away (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018). This school of thought places their argument on the premise that the best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA) encompasses the rights of parties to a negotiation to walk away when walking away appeals to be the best alternative when they feel they have no leverage, no power, or if they sense pressure tactics or when there are unwanted concessions that are simply unacceptable (Barchi, M., Greco, M., 2018).

Section 2.5.8: Persuasion

According to (Horton & Riggio, 2018), it was found that being able to influence others is a part of emotional intelligence where individuals apply their social skills to enable them to win others over to their viewpoint. This finding confirms that persuasion is a skill associated with the construct of 'influence'.

The literature highlights that interpersonal influencing interactions are constantly taking place and if one aims to sharpen their persuasion skills they should be willing to apply the following five key steps.

According to the literature, these steps include firstly being adequately prepared to engage based on having performed adequate research (Horton & Riggio, 2018). The literature also highlights that having a positive outlook and attitude gives the persona of

a great personality which assists an individual to be more persuasive and influential. (Horton & Riggio, 2018).

The second step identified in the literature consists of building relationships and rapport with stakeholders (Horton & Riggio, 2018). Scholars emphasized the importance of building rapport and subsequently maintaining that rapport (Horton & Riggio, 2018). It was also found that coupled with good listening skills, building good rapport helps to identify win-win opportunities that would emerge by partnering or working together with stakeholders to add value (Horton & Riggio, 2018).

Further to the above, it was found that persuasion leans more towards the 'soft' side or emotions of human interactions as the literature adds the insight that a leader should aim to understand the personality dynamics behind stakeholders and position themselves to inspire them (Horton & Riggio, 2018). This approach is recommended on the premise that people like people like themselves (Horton & Riggio, 2018).

The third stage that was identified in the literature is to identify the needs of stakeholders (Horton & Riggio, 2018). The literature recommends that leaders do less of talking and more of listening such that they focus on the needs of stakeholders. Furthermore, the literature encourages leaders to listen to refine differences, identify concerns and to clarify objectives (Horton & Riggio, 2018). This approach is believed to facilitate in later stages of persuasion, to nudge the client towards desired outcomes (Horton & Riggio, 2018).

On the notion of listening, there was a school of thought that advocated for leaders to listen in order to assess the values and beliefs of stakeholders which according to their study, increases the chances of persuading from a knowledgeable perspective.

According to the literature, the fourth stage of the persuasion process is to explore options (Horton & Riggio, 2018). For this stage, three key considerations are encouraged. The first requires that a leader is flexible, the second is to consider value for the client before reaching an agreement, the third is to assist the client or stakeholder to establish higher value linked to the service offering (Horton & Riggio, 2018).

The final step identified in the literature that enhances persuasion ability is to facilitate what scholars have termed 'an enabling agreement' (Horton & Riggio, 2018). In essence, this entails positioning a win-win agreement that caters for the needs of both parties (Horton & Riggio, 2018).

In contrast to the negotiation approach, the persuasion approach appears to be centered at a personal level, where there is a purposeful pursuit of human connection with the stakeholder. On the other hand, negotiations appear to be objective driven and centred on extracting the best value as opposed to persuasion which according to the literature seeks to extract the best possible solution for both parties.

Section 2.6: Chapter conclusion & Conceptual framework

To conclude this chapter this report highlights this chapter was the basis on which a conceptual framework was developed. In turn, this conceptual framework guided the research fieldwork which was done with strategic leaders carefully selected according to defined academic criteria outlined in Section 2.2. The conceptual framework helped to tighten the scope of the research and provided the parameters within which the research would adhere to. This included two key parameters which were anchored by the main research question as well as the sub-research question.

Accordingly, the research fieldwork centred on exploring how strategic leaders influence in general through making decisions as well as communication. This was in conjunction with obtaining insights on how interactions should be conducted to optimize success. This was the term academics coined 'interfaces' which includes frequency, mode and scope of engagements.

Based on the same conceptual framework inspired by the academic literature review conducted in this chapter, the study explored how the strategic leaders interviewed use discretionary influence. The research went on to extract insights on the decisions, actions and behaviours that influence innovation implementation.

In addition, different types of influence mechanisms used by strategic leaders were also explored. The direction of influence targeted by each type of mechanism as well as their patterns of influence were discovered and documented.

Furthermore, it is within the ambit of the same conceptual framework that the research study embarked on obtaining insights on 'architectural influence' or specific actions and behaviours of strategic leaders that shape an enabling working environment that either creates opportunities for innovation implementation or constrains innovation.

Figure 1 below depicts the conceptual framework discussed above.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK									
THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT	THEMES	THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT	THEMES	THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT	THEMES	THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT	THEMES	THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT	THEMES
Strategic Leader (S)	Decision makers & risk takers CEC's Executive board members TMT members Middle-level executives	Influence (in general) Changes in communications is a means of infuencing	How influence is exercised Frequency of engagements Mode of engagements Scope of engagements	Influence through persuasion Decisions that influence innovation	Agile thinking in real-time (N-D) Good leadership reputation (E-X) Soft people skills Win-win agreements Flexibility	Agilisation	How participants should be communicated Communication that gives direction (S) Respectful communication (S) Accommodation (N-D) Rethink scope rather than compromise (E-X) Responsible & ethical framing (E-X)	How participants should be communicated Communication that gives direction (S) Respectful communication (S) Accommodation (N-D) Rethink scope rather than compromise (E-X) Responsible & ethical framing (E-X)	How participants should be communicated Communication that gives direction (S) Respectful communication (S) Accommodation (N-D) Rethink scope rather than compromise (E-X) Responsible & ethical framing (E-X)
<p>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</p> <p>RQ 1: How do strategic leaders influence innovation (independent) (dependent)?</p> <p>RQ 2: What mechanisms do strategic leaders utilize to influence innovation (independent) (dependent)?</p>									
<p>MEANING</p> <p>N-D: Nuance or difference</p> <p>E-X: Extension of knowledge</p> <p>S: Strategic: remains possibly</p> <p>DISCOUNTED: Discarded</p>									

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Source: Author's own

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Thus far, the research report has positioned the business context in which the research problem was located as well as why the research study was relevant for the traditional financial services business community. In addition, the research report has also positioned the academic relevance of the study, stating its primary objective to explore and to develop new insights and understanding that would extend existing knowledge on the broader subject of strategic leadership.

At this stage the report has attempted to show the connection between the literature reviewed, the relevance of the research and the business need in both Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

Based on the discussions in the two chapters, the main research question remained consistent with what was initially presented in Section 1.4. This question was:

1. How do strategic leaders influence innovation implementation?

The key factors that inspired construction of the research question include the broader gap in academic literature identified by Samimi et al., (2020) which led them to invite future researchers to extend knowledge firstly on how strategic leaders' influence. In addition, the main research question was constructed in a such a way that its focus is specific to the implementation stage of innovation as opposed to other stages to align with the recommendations by Sammi et al., (2020) to narrow the scope of research to one specific stage of innovation.

Furthermore, academic literature revealed that influence can be defined from different viewpoints and that there must be various strategies that leaders can use to influence innovation within a firm (Simsek et al., 2018). These strategies were referred to as "mechanisms" [p.295] (Simsek et al., 2018) and the task at hand was uncover them. As a result, a sub-question research question was positioned to support the main research question. The sub-question was:

2. What are the mechanisms used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation?

Accordingly, the aim of the sub-question in the context of the current study was to explore various strategies used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Section 4.1: Population

Based on the principles of purposive sampling, the target population for the current study was informed by the research questions (Bell & Bryman, 2019). In particular, the main research question was specific in ringfencing business professionals that are strategic leaders in organisations. For this reason, people falling in the ambit of the definition of strategic leaders discussed in Chapter 1, Section 2.1 formed the population of the research as this selection had direct relevance to the research question (Bell & Bryman, 2019).

It was argued by scholars that qualitative research “should aim to gain access to a wide range of individuals relevant to the research question” [p.388] (Bell & Bryman, 2019). This research report submits that in addition to strategic leaders, experts were included in the population as it was envisioned that the experts would provide experienced and learned opinions and as well as corroborate or verify some insights obtained from the business professionals (ie strategic leaders).

Section 4.2: Research setting

In terms of the research setting, this study was specifically conducted within the South African financial services sector. Section 1.1 in Chapter 1 situated the need for the research to take place against the backdrop of the financial services sector in South Africa. More specifically, within traditional financial services organisations.

In alignment to the above, the research provided recommendations on changes that need to be made by strategic leaders to reinforce the role of being catalysts for innovation in traditional financial services institutions such that they can respond better to innovation advancements being made in the sector by fintech’s (Graham, 2021).

Section 4.3: Level of analysis

The level of analysis in the research was innovation implementation. In other words, the implementation stage of the innovation process denoted by Perry-Smith & Mannucci (2017).

As discussed in Section 2.4.1, Perry-Smith & Mannucci (2017) specifically identified and defined 'implementation' as one of four stages of the innovation phenomenon.

Thus, in alignment with the research question which focused specifically on how strategic leaders influence innovation implementation, it warranted that the study had to be deliberate on the implementation stage of innovation and not on the other three stages identified by Perry-Smith & Mannucci (2017). Doing so maintained a tight scope and prevented broadening the scope of the invitation for future research extended by Samimi et al. (2020) and Cortes & Herrmann (2021).

Section 4.4: Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis was experiences of interview research participants. The unit of analysis supported the approach to explore the subject and to develop new insights and understanding.

Section 4.5: Sampling method

Research interviews were conducted with purposefully recruited participants identified in Section 2.1 classified by academic scholars as strategic leaders in business. These participants included CEO's (Cortes & Herrman, 2021), C-Suite members, executive directors and non-executive directors serving on company boards (Withers & Fitz, 2017), as well as individuals serving in top management teams of companies (Samimi et al., 2020). The research participants interviewed were all business professionals working in traditional financial services organisations which included banks, insurance companies and micro-finance businesses.

Furthermore, the purposive sampling method was the best approach as it placed the research question at the heart of the selection criteria (Bell & Bryman, 2019). This was aligned with the focal population of the proposed study being individuals that fall in the ambit of the definition of strategic leaders mentioned above.

To compliment purposive sampling discussed above, the snowball sampling technique was also used. This technique was used to counter the challenges faced in obtaining access to some participants. As the participants were predominantly very senior individuals in high-ranking positions in their organisations, a few referrals and in some instances introductions that led to securing interviews took place. This approach narrowed the limitation of access to the calibre of participants that the research required

to meet the integrity of the scope of the research parameters defined in the literature. To this end, the research achieved some success through the snowball sampling technique that utilized professional networking (Saunders et al., 2019) (Bell & Bryman, 2019).

Section 4.6: Sample size

Based on the research methodology material engaged there was great difficulty in finding a source that was specific about a matrix, threshold or number of interviews deemed adequate for a master's level research project.

Instead, a recommendation was found that suggested an approach where research interviews are to be conducted until the point of 'saturation' is reached where no new insights appear to emerge from the research participants interviewed (Bell & Bryman, 2019). Accordingly, saturation was reached at 15 interviews as no new codes were referenced (Bell & Bryman, 2019). Please refer to Appendix 2 for the code book.

Section 4.7: Research instrument – interview protocols

Two interview protocols (one for business professionals and one for experts) were developed for the study. Please refer to Appendix 1 for the interview protocols. The interview protocols were developed by cross-referencing and deducing interview questions based on the business needs of the research, the theoretical problem, the objectives of the research as well as the literature review. In this way, a golden thread was maintained between these key research considerations and the in-depth information the research intended to collect.

Undoubtedly, semi-structured interviews were best suited for the study because they have a reasonable amount of flexibility to allow interview participants to explain or rationalize their responses in comparison to survey-type instruments (Josselson, 2013).

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews would create opportunities to further probe the interviewees to obtain the level of depth expected of the responses (Bell & Bryman, 2019). In addition, semi-structured interviews were found best suited because research literature alluded to them being more cost effective from an administration perspective and would allow to obtain rich and comprehensive data mainly because of the flexibility aspect discussed above (Josselson, 2013).

Following development of the research instruments, pilot testing was done prior to commencement of fieldwork. The instruments were tested on one business professional and one expert. The pilot was a success. Limited adjustments pertaining to the flow or order of three questions were done on the business professional's instrument. There were no adjustments required for the expert instrument. The research tools were finalised based on the feedback obtained in the pilot and contributed to the smooth execution of interviews during fieldwork.

Consequently, research fieldwork conducted resulted in two qualitative datasets being produced. The first dataset emerged from in-depth interviews conducted with business professionals, i.e., strategic leaders. The second dataset emerged from semi-structured interviews with innovation experts. The above being aligned with Bell & Bryman (2019) who advocate that qualitative data is derived from interviews. Interview protocols are included in Appendix 1.

Section 4.8: Data collection process

As briefly indicated in Section 4.5 above, semi-structured interviews were conducted during the fieldwork phase of the research project. The fieldwork took a total of three months to complete. This timeline consisted of the recruitment phase up to conclusion of the 15 interviews. Interviews conducted took approximately 45 minutes to complete.

Although some interviews lasted over an hour depending on the amount of information shared by participants, generally interviews crossed the 45 minutes mark. Timing of the interviews was done during the process for the purposes of benchmarking and reporting to assess whether the anticipated timing that was presented at research proposal stage would match. Should the timing observed during fieldwork have been significantly different, this would have been reported accordingly in this report.

Accordingly, although 45 minutes was anticipated to be sufficient to obtain the required information at the appropriate depth on an under-explored topic needing further research (Samimi et al., 2020). The recommendation would be for future researchers that replicate this study to consider one hour as sufficient time to conduct the end-to-end interview process with participants.

In terms of recruitment of sampled interview participants, recruitment emails were sent to 25 participants. The recruitment emails provided a synopsis of the research study, its objectives and a semi-structured interview would be conducted. It also contained a

proposed date for the participant and provided the participant with the option to provide a suitable date should they be willing to participate. The email also requested the participant to respond to confirm their voluntary participation.

Two weeks from the date that the initial email was sent triggered the release of a reminder email to participants that had not responded. For participants that responded, confirmation of the date of the interview was sent back to the participant coupled with a Microsoft Teams meeting link and an interview consent form that the participant was requested to sign and email back on the day of the interview once they had been taken through the consent form.

On the day of the interview, all participants signed and returned the interview consent forms via email. A lot of caution was taken to ensure that the email correspondence with the consent form had been received in the email box and viewed to ensure it was signed and dated correctly before starting the interview. Finally, all participants were asked if they consent to the interview being recorded and transcribed on Microsoft Teams.

Both video calls and audio calls were conducted depending on the preference of the participant and whether bandwidth capacity allowed. The default approach taken by the researcher was to have the camera on upon joining the meeting link. This allowed the researcher to meet and greet the participant in a professional manner. The researcher waited for a few minutes to see whether the participant would turn their camera on. Thereafter, the researcher enquired whether the participant preferred to proceed with a video call or audio only.

Instances where participants opted in for a video call assisted the researcher to gauge body language of the interview participants as well as enhance the 'richness' of information gathered as observations such as emotions for example or other reflexive reactions would be visible. After conclusion of each interview, the interview recording files and transcriptions were downloaded from Microsoft Teams and were safely stored on the researcher's device and backed up on Microsoft One Drive cloud services within twenty-four hours of concluding each interview. Notwithstanding the procedures mentioned above that were followed systematically, all 15 interviews secured were conducted virtually on Microsoft Teams.

Based on limited voluntary information shared by participants, no interviews were conducted face-to-face as participants either conformed to working from home company policies or still feared the threat of Covid-19. Flexibility on meeting face-to-face or virtually

was positioned to participants during the recruitment process. All participants voluntarily selected or opted to meet virtually. A record of reasons for the choice made was not actively maintained based on the premise that the choice was positioned as voluntary and actively collecting data on reasons informing the choice made was not part of the scope of this study. The reasons stated above were willingly shared by three participants. Whereby one participant feared the spread of Covid-19 and the remaining two stated the ease of convenience to meet virtually by making time for the interview during normal working hours.

The researcher did not rely on the services of an external service provider to transcribe interviews recordings. The researcher relied on the transcription tool in the Microsoft Teams application. Further details are provided in Section 4.9 below.

Section 4.9: Data analysis process

From a data analysis perspective, it was warranted that a qualitative data analysis process would follow on the premise that a qualitative data gathering process had been deployed (i.e., semi-structured interviews).

In practical terms, the qualitative data analysis process followed entailed making sense of the information gathered during the interviews through the process of interpreting insights provided by the participants and applying a view on how the meanings derived answer the research questions. The approach mentioned is aligned to views of scholars that have described qualitative research as the subjective interpretation of meanings within the data that was gathered in the research process to attain an understanding and knowledge of the topic being studied (Elo & Kyngas, 2008).

More specifically, the qualitative data analysis method that was used in this study was thematic analysis. It was understood that thematic data analysis would involve interpreting aspects of a research topic through the process of succinctly describing bits, segments or parts of raw data and organising that data into codes and identifying patterns or themes embedded within that data (Saldaña, 2015).

Following the conclusion of research interviews an initial review of all 15 transcripts was conducted. The initial review included checking the transcripts and cleaning up the transcripts. The researcher removed any identifiers such as names of the participants and other information provided during the interview that could serve as an identifier.

Secondly, the researcher cleaned up the transcripts in terms of punctuation, grammar as well as the flow of the discussions where there was poor transcription quality of generated by Microsoft Teams. The researcher used the audio and video recordings to verify information where it may have been unclear and improved the quality of the transcripts.

The researcher then labelled each interview transcript with a unique identifier to make them recognizable which included an acronym that the researcher was able to recognise the research participant associated with each transcript. The researcher ensured the labelling process protected the anonymity of the participants as well.

Thereafter the researcher read through all transcripts again to ensure that the quality as well as anonymity was in place before uploading transcripts onto Atlas t.i software for analysis. Once uploaded onto Atlas t.i, it was from this stage that the researcher got fully immersed into the data.

Instrumental to the thematic data analysis process was the use of Atlas t.i software that was used in the first step of creating codes from interview transcripts. During this step, no preconceived or predetermined codes were used. All codes were allowed to emerge directly from the transcript data. The process followed that allowed codes to emerge from the data is that firstly the researcher ranked each of the 15 interview transcripts reviewed in order of the best interview to the least good. Thereafter, the coding process started with loading the transcript from the best interview onto the Atlas t.i software.

The researcher then went through the transcript selecting and highlighting quotations that were identified as important and relevant to answering the research questions. This process involved looking at the context and the content, how they influenced each other to create a unit of meaning against the selected quotations. During this process a unit of meaning was considered at a time while going through the transcript. Where there appeared to be more than one unit of meaning, a new code was generated. Most importantly, the researcher allowed the codes to emerge from the data.

A rule of thumb was applied in the coding process. One code per quotation was applied because this helped to clearly distinguish units of analysis assigned to important and relevant parts of the data in the transcript hence the researcher coded the different units of meaning and had separate quotations. Essentially, the coding process assigned a label to the quotations selected. This label or code was a meaningful summary of what was being mentioned in the quotation selected (Saldaña, 2015). A careful balance was

maintained in term of each code being labelled as accurately as possible to represent the unit of meaning in what was said by the interview participant but also keeping the code abstract enough to be used again. Where a quotation reflected a code created previously, then that code was used again. This was how the researcher discovered patterns. Wherever it was reasonably possible, the researcher used the same codes repeatedly both in the same transcript as well as different transcripts because that was how patterns were identified in the data. The above was balanced with having to look out for new codes that emerged.

After completing this process on the best transcript, in order of rankings, the same approach was followed on all 14 transcripts within the Atlas t.i software. During this process either new codes emerged from each new transcript analysed or codes that had been identified in previous transcripts could be applied to quotations highlighted in the new transcripts that were uploaded and being analysed using the software. A total of 187 codes emerged from the 15 interview transcripts processed in Atlas t.i. These codes were distinct from each other as well as exhaustive of each other.

The second step involved identifying similar codes amongst the 172 codes that had been created and categorising or grouping similar codes together. The organising and grouping of similar codes together was achieved by looking for patterns, similarities, regularities, confirmations, variations and frequencies that make up a grouping (Saldaña, 2015).

Similar to the approach that was undertaken in the creation of codes, no preconceived or predetermined categories were used. All categories were allowed to emerge directly from the codes derived from the transcript data. To this end, the researcher again immersed themselves in the data as part of the process. Scholars have described this step as being an abstract process that creates more meaning to the data (Saldaña, 2015).

The researcher understood what scholars meant in the practical sense in that the coding process shifts or moves from data which was very real (verbatim experiences, views, opinions, ideas shared by participants during interviews) to being abstract to a certain level. Thereafter, categorising the codes makes the data even more abstract. The processing of the data implemented in these two steps as well the steps to be discussed shortly made the data more abstract in each step. Scholars clarified this observation highlighting that the data moves from concrete or real-world explanations provided by research participants towards theoretical explanations (Saldaña, 2015). A total of 38

code groups or categories emerged from that exercise. The categories were distinct from each other as well as exhaustive of each other.

The third step involved searching for relationships between the 38 categories. According to Spradley (1979), obtaining categories with a relationship results in the emergence of a theme. Thus, the researcher conducted an exercise in search for relationships between the categories to find themes. This process involved the use of the universal semantic relationships framework (Spradley, 1979). This exercise established logical connections between the categories by applying the rules of Spradley (1979)'s framework which included assessing various associations and linkages between the categories and making sense of connections between categories through the lens of either causal, conceptual, hierarchical and chronological sequences. By taking the categories and looking at how they connected to each other the aim of this exercise was to conceptualise, theorise and build an explanation for the research phenomenon. A total of 19 themes emerged. This exercise was done manually in Microsoft Excel.

Based on the application of Spradley's universal semantic relationship framework to the 38 categories, of the 19 themes, four themes emerged from a 'cause-effect' relationship; three emerged from a 'function' relationship; three emerged from a 'means-end' relationship; two emerged from a 'location for action' relationship; two emerged from a 'spatial' relationship and two emerged from a 'rationale' relationship; one emerged from an 'attribution' relationship; one emerged from a 'sequence' relationship and one emerged from a 'strict inclusion' relationship.

Further to the emergence of the themes, the descriptions of the themes were linked to theoretical constructs. The approach to situate the themes from a theoretical perspective followed the principles of inductive analysis. According to insights derived from research scholars, inductive analysis was applicable to the research design because in principle it normally applied to research studies that implement semi-structured interviews, allows codes to emerge from the data without the use of preconceived or predetermined codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The above being aspects mentioned in the analysis process discussed above. Another principle that aligned inductive analysis to the analysis process design of this study is that scholars state that it is normally used in scenarios where there is limited research (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), which is aligned to the objectives of the current study.

Proposed claims in Chapter 5 were derived from triangulating the insights initially obtained in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 with the insights obtained from

the interview participants in Chapter 5 and the research questions. It is important to highlight that following the presentation of findings from the interviews in Chapter 5, in Chapter 6 an additional literature review was conducted to validate or test proposed claims against existing theory. Where preliminary differences between the literature review in Chapter 2 and findings in Chapter 5 were discovered in the findings chapter (that could be potential contributions), a deep dive into the detail of those differences found were challenged against further literature. The outcomes of this process were positioned in the discussion chapter, Chapter 6.

Section 4.10: Research quality and rigour

From a research quality perspective, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were the criteria used to assess and defend the quality of the research.

To ensure credibility, the research interviews only took place after ethical clearance from GIBS was received. Approval from the ethics committee provided assurance that the research method, tools, and a plethora of other considerations were aligned to good practice and most importantly did not cause harm to anyone (Bell & Bryman, 2019).

To ensure transferability this study maintained a consistent overarching structure that reported interview analysis findings in Chapter 5, outcomes from the academic analysis in Chapter 6 as well as the conclusions in Chapter 7 according to the research questions.

Reporting in this manner was done to maintain repetition logic. In addition, the research report documented various processes conducted within the report to provide an audit trail. The above was done to ensure transferability from a process perspective as well as from a findings perspective.

To ensure dependability, detailed capturing and recording of all plans and approaches of the research process and methodology were documented. This final research report will be carefully stored on the cloud as well as on a flash disk in a lockable safe.

Interview protocols, interview transcriptions, data analysis outcomes in Microsoft Excel format, data analysis files downloaded from Atlas.ti and a full audit trail to evidence and backtrack all steps taken in the research study was carefully documented, stored, and made accessible to GIBS (Bell & Bryman, 2019).

Lastly, to ensure confirmability, the researcher demonstrated to have acted in good faith during the research study by mainly trying to eliminate bias (Bell & Bryman, 2019).

Inspired by insights from Josselson (2013), while managing the risk of researcher bias associated with recruiting participants from his current organization of employment, the researcher leveraged their ACAMS and CISA professional membership organizations and plethora of current professional connections with people in the financial services sector through placing direct calls and sending email invitations for participation with a well-articulated research pitch that fully described the study, its objectives and the purpose of the research (Josselson, 2013).

Section 4.11: Limitations of the research design and methods

A limitation that was acknowledged was that semi-structured interviews “are not conducive to exposing deviant or hidden behaviour” [p.458] (Bell & Bryman, 2019). As some interview questions aimed to explore decisions, actions and behaviours taken by strategic leaders in creating working environments that might constrain innovation implementation intentionally or inadvertently, participants may have not been truthful about this information as it would have been viewed negatively. The researcher will never know whether honest or the full extent to information was provided for this question.

Another limitation experienced was that interviews with participant were all conducted non-face-to-face via audio or video call. Non-face-to-face interviews may have limited the ‘richness’ of information gathered as opportunities to connect with participants in person to unlock openness, improve trust and transparency may have been missed.

Section 4.12: Ethical considerations

In fulfilment of the requirement that the research conducted was done so in an ethical manner, the research ethics process was followed. Accordingly, an application to the GIBS Research Ethics Committee was submitted on the 8th of June 2022. A full description of the research methodology providing a detailed outline of the steps to be taken in the research such as the methods that were going to be deployed for data collection, data analysis and storage of the data were provided. As the research involved contact with other human beings, measures were considered in the research design process to ensure that no harm would be caused on other people. Important were considerations that people approached for this research did not form part of a vulnerable population, that no incentives were offered for people to participate in the study, the

development of interview consent forms to ensure interview participants were not forced into participating, that the research would not expose them to the risk of any disadvantage, that their identities and that of their organisations would be made anonymous and that their rights were fully reserved. Ethics approval was obtained on the 13th of July 2022.

All fieldwork only took place after ethic approval was obtained.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

Section 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed description of what was found in the field in relation to seeking answers to the main research question as well as the sub-research question.

In terms of sequence, first, the chapter presents the reader with findings obtained from professionals as well as experts pertaining to their understanding of the notion of 'influence'.

This is followed by illuminating the key behaviours that strategic leaders require to be able to influence. In further exploring behaviours associated with being able to influence, the chapter then reveals how strategic leaders set the tone in creating working environments that enable innovation implementation.

Thereafter, the chapter reveals top mechanisms that leaders use to influence innovation implementation at a strategic level i.e at an executive level, team level as well as across departments. These strategies are juxtaposed with what does not work from a mechanism implementation perspective. Closely linked to what does not work is a delineation of challenges confronting leaders in influencing innovation implementation.

Section 5.2: Cluster of research participants & characteristics of data obtained

Research interviews were primarily focused on obtaining data from business professionals within the financial services sector. To be more specific, the interviews were conducted with individuals who fell within the definition of 'strategic leaders' discussed in Section 2.1 of Chapter 2. Furthermore, the individuals interviewed all work within traditional financial services particularly in banks, insurance companies as well as micro-finance businesses.

In addition to business professionals, research participants also included experts in innovation leadership. Although most interviews were conducted with business professionals, interviews conducted with experts were necessary for triangulation.

Consequently, research participants for this study were segregated into two groups for the analysis of findings. Table 1 below indicates the participant grouping.

Table 1: Participant segregation and grouping for analysis purposes

Interview	Participant Code	Analysis Group 1
1	AG	Professional
2	AM	Professional
3	AS	Professional
4	CD	Professional
5	CH	Professional
6	DD	Professional
7	KW	Professional
8	MB	Professional
9	MM 2022-09-23	Professional
10	MM 2022-08-24	Professional
11	NS	Professional
12	RB	Professional
13	TK	Professional
Interview	Code	Analysis Group 2
14	DM	Expert
15	LB	Expert

Source: Author's own

The first analysis group constituted of professionals within the financial services sector.

Their views, perspectives and insights were based on real life professional experiences and encounters in work-based scenarios. All participants within this analysis group were full time employees of reputable traditional financial services firms in South Africa.

As the study was ring-fenced to the financial services sector within South Africa, the insights obtained from this analysis group is both relevant to the geographical context of the study as well as the professional acumen of the level of operations associated with influencing innovation implementation.

Experts formed the second analysis group. Compared to business professionals, the experts provided insights that either confirmed or rebutted the views or insights provided by professionals. Their opinions were extremely useful in establishing alignment, misalignment or additional perspective on insights provided by business professionals.

Section 5.3: Process and techniques used to analyse interview data

A brief overview of the data analysis process discussed in depth in Section 4.9 of Chapter 4 is that the fundamental approach taken in analysing the interview data obtained involved first order coding which extracted relevant data associated with specific insights stemming from the research question and sub-questions.

Careful attention was applied on how interview participants articulated responses to allow for both the emergence and listing of first order codes. This resulted in specifically focusing on quotations within interview transcripts that partially answered the research question or provided insights towards addressing the research questions.

Based on the questions posed to participants, the responses were extracted and coded in alignment with the both the main research question as well as the sub-question. A total of 187 codes from carefully selected quotations emerged from the 15 semi-structured interviews transcripts. No preconceived codes were applied in the coding process. Codes was purely allowed to emerge through immersion in the data.

Code groups or categories were then developed through purposeful analysis or assessment of relationships between first order codes. This was performed after first order codes were created. Key considerations included the context of the study as well as the content of the responses provided by participants.

The context of the study was cross referenced to the initial literature review in Chapter 2. The literature review had identified knowledge gaps and the need to extend knowledge in this area. It was within this context that the content of the codes was assessed and those codes that were identified as similar were grouped into categories. In other words, code categories emerged because of grouping codes that carried the same unit of meaning.

While performing the grouping process, it is important to note that a level of abstractness was achieved by grouping codes with similar units of meaning together. To this end, categories emerged through an application of reasoning by finding connections between codes that shared similar units of meaning, identifying patterns and most importantly, similarities. A total of 38 categories emerged from the initial list of 187 codes.

A further step was initiated whereby the 38 categories were further reviewed by applying the Universal Semantic Relationships framework. This table was applied across all the categories, duly noting relationships that emerged from attempting connections between categories. The rigorous process of applying the relationships table in a non-linear approach across all categories until a suitable relationship, association or connection could be established by any two categories was conducted and concluded. The outcome of this process generated 19 abstract themes.

Further analysis of the themes through a systemic process of looking for patterns, similarities, regularities, confirmations and variations amongst the themes resulted in the emergence of six thematic constructs. Compared to the previous steps discussed below, the thematic constructs were the most abstract. The analysis had managed to shift or move the data from the interview respondents from concrete or real explanations to abstract theoretical explanations. The analysis method discussed above provides background and context in terms of informing how the findings presented in the rest of this Chapter as well as Chapter 6 were derived.

Figure 2 below depicts the outcomes of the overarching inductive analysis process discussed above. *Please zoom to 150% to render the table legible.*

ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES			Universal Semantic Relationship Title			Themes			ANALYSIS OF THEMES			Theoretical Constructs		
Ability to appeal to people's actions		Strict inclusion		X is a kind of Y	Ability to appeal to people's actions in the absence of power is a form of persuasion				1. Persuasion					
Ability to appeal to people's actions		Cause-effect		X is a result of Y	Innovation implementation is a result of successful strategies of influencing others									
Indicator (s) for signs of successful influence		Function		X is used for Y	Setting a positive tone is used to bolster the role of leaders as influencers									
Behaviors that drive/enable innovation implementation		Function		X is used for Y	Persuasion skills are used to drive innovation implementation behaviour									
How to set a positive tone for innovation implementation		Means-end		X is a way to do Y	Lack of influence is a way to limit motivation									
Specific obstacles to innovation implementation		Means-end		X is a way to do Y	Conflict resolution is a way to limit motivation									
How to overcome tensions and conflict linked to innovation implementation		Means-end		X is a way to do Y	Lack of influence is a way to limit motivation									
How to drive successful innovation implementation		Means-end		X is a way to do Y	Behaviour that needs other's participation is a result of a culture of inclusion									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Cause-effect		X is a result of Y	Inspiring people about the future is a way to motivate									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Cause-effect		X is a result of Y	Inspiring people about the future is a way to motivate									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Location for action		X is a place for doing Y	Inspiring people about the future is a way to motivate									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Attribution		X is a characteristic of Y	Lack of adequate skills is a demotivator for innovation implementation									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Sequence		X is a step/stage in Y	Cultivating a culture of empowerment motivates continuous idea generation									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Cause-effect		X is a result of Y	Values-based leadership is used to arouse enthusiasm									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Spatial		X is part of Y	Listening with empathy and intent facilitates a culture that encourages innovation									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Means-end		X is a way to do Y	Effective communication is part of good negotiation skills									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Function		X is used for Y	Inspiring people about the future is a way to motivate									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Function		X is used for Y	Values-based leadership is used to arouse enthusiasm									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Cause-effect		X is a result of Y	Successful innovation implementation by teams is a result of opportunity creation									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Cause-effect		X is a result of Y	Successful innovation implementation by teams is a result of opportunity creation									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Spatial		X is part of Y	Senior leaders facilitate provision of adequate resources									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Rationale		X is a reason for doing Y	Innovation implementation is a result of successful strategies of influencing others									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Location for action		X is a place for doing Y	Conflict resolution is a way to influence others									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation		Rationale		X is a reason for doing Y	Managing expectations is part of the collaboration process									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation					Cultivating a culture of empowerment motivates continuous idea generation									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation					Threat is a characteristic of resistance									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation					Building resilience is a step in the innovation implementation process									
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation														
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation														
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation														
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation														
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation														
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation														
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation														
How to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation														

Figure 2: Inductive analysis process from code categories to theoretical constructs Source: *Author's own*

Section 5.4: Research Question 1: How do strategic leaders influence innovation implementation

At this juncture, based on the outcomes of the thematic analysis conducted, this section presents a ‘thick description’ of the findings obtained from research participants in terms of addressing the main research question.

The first finding to be presented in the context of addressing how strategic leaders influence innovation implementation is ‘persuasion’.

Section 5.4.1: Finding number one - Persuasion

The analysis conducted on interview data identified two themes that provide insight that persuasion is used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation.

The two themes include: the ability to appeal to people’s actions in the absence of power and authority and persuasion skills used to bolster the role of leaders.

Figure 3 illustrates the code categories that contributed to the emergence of the two themes, which in turn informed the ‘Persuasion’ theoretical construct. *(Please zoom to 150% to improve legibility)*

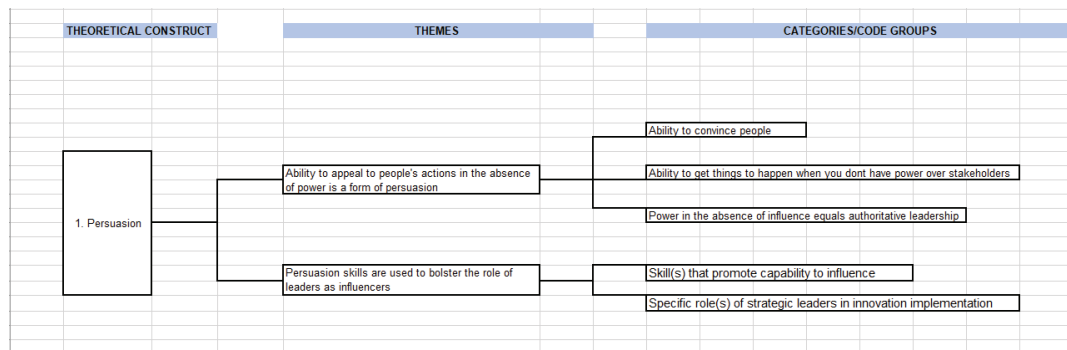


Figure 3: Persuasion Source: Author’s own

Ability to appeal to people’s actions in the absence of power and authority

It emerged from the interview data that the ability to appeal to people’s actions in the absence of power and authority is a critical component of using persuasion to influence

innovation implementation. Strategic leaders interviewed discounted the use of force or coercion as an effective means to rally teams behind innovation implementation.

Instead, they expressed views that the ability to convince people, allowing them to use their own free will and choice to elect to do something in the absence of force yields more sustainable results and builds a good leadership reputation which can be used as a lever for influencing innovation implementation as opposed to being viewed as a dictatorial leader.

The ability to convince people was identified as a sustainable approach because power dynamics shift across organizational interactions. An example provided by a participant was that a leader in one department will not always be able to leverage power as a lever in another department that is led by a peer at the same level.

In such cases, a leader would need outperform power dynamics and to be able to persuade stakeholders to support their innovation agenda even when they don't have any power or authority over stakeholders. As one leader stated:

When you don't have the power, that's really how you know the only way you can do it is through influence...When I don't have that power over you then all I have is influence.

Based on the experiences shared by some of the participants, an insight emerged that power dynamics within organizations are complex and a careful balance needs to be attained as it was found that the use power in the absence of influence equates to authoritative leadership.

The output of authoritative leadership was considered not to be effective on the basis that people will tend to 'comply' with instructions delivered from a position of authority in a dictatorial approach. It was also found that where people comply based on a dictatorial approach, the leader does not unlock the full potential of employees as employees will do things for the sake of doing it because of the control that the leader has over their lives to some degree.

Hence, to circumvent the negative outputs of authoritative leadership and the dictatorial approach, majority of the interview participants supported that it is better to convince people to do things instead.

According to insights provided by the participants convincing people can be achieved by helping stakeholder understand the objectives of the intended innovation and then get them to buy-in and also inviting them to become part of the innovation journey planned.

As one participant stated:

You are going to use certain methods to convince them.

As such, the methods to convince stakeholders are presented in the theme below.

Persuasion skills used to bolster the role of leaders as influencers

The role of strategic leaders in innovation implementation was found to be multi-faceted.

It emerged from the data that leaders play multiple roles in the context of ensuring the successful delivery of innovation implementation objectives for an organization.

However, it also emerged that the underpinning role the leader must play that serves as an antecedent to all other roles in this context is influencing.

To be able to convince stakeholders within an organization, it was identified that firstly, a strategic leader plays a role in developing a meaningful vision and purpose regarding innovation.

Secondly, a strategic leader plays the role of allocating resources that ensures capabilities are in place for innovation implementation.

The third role identified is that a strategic leader creates the momentum required to achieve innovation implementation objectives.

It emerged from the data that success in these roles is achieved by fostering a working environment where the leader plays a tacit role of being present and accessible as well as constantly inspiring stakeholders about the vision for innovation.

Lastly, it was identified that a strategic leader is required to play an oversight role that ensures accountability through overall management of the innovation implementation process.

Further to the above, it emerged from the data that the roles strategic leaders play described above interlock with specific skills that promote or increase the effectiveness of leader's ability to convince stakeholders or their teams without the use of force, power or authority. A leader who is highly skilled or a subject matter expert bolsters their appeal to stakeholders or teams however this is not sufficient. One leader stated:

You must have agile thinking and think on your feet. A lot of new information comes to light in real time and you must be able to think on your feet.

It was deduced that the skill of agile thinking mentioned above appears to supplement good listening skills. One would react in the manner described above if they have listened with the intent to understand, and thereafter process the information as quickly as possible in real time. Thus, based on the discussion above, a leader having the skill to think in an agile way bolsters the role those strategic leaders play in the organisation which in turn increases their ability to convince stakeholders.

Furthermore, a skill found which interlocks with the role of a leader being accessible and available to people and or the team is the skill of being a good observer. The combination of this skill and the role allows the leader to perform the role of leading by example and being a coach who can inspire and enable a team to innovate. This culmination is supported by a participant who stated:

You learn a lot from a good leader's example. And I think that's what you want, right? You want people to come to you and say can I get your advice on something, you know, simply because you know it'll help you be better and yeah, that for me, is what a good, influential leader is.

From a coaching perspective, it was identified that this is an effective method to convince people if done correctly in a manner that does not make people that reach out for guidance feel embarrassed, humiliated or like they are stupid for asking.

Lastly, it emerged that the combination of a skill that bolsters a strategic leader's role as an influencer is tolerance coupled with being able to cultivate a culture that empowers people in the organisation. This was illustrated by a leader who expressed:

By the time we got out of there basically he had changed everything I had done but he'd influenced me. I didn't come out of there thinking like, oh my God, I screwed that up badly. You know what I mean? It's about letting people try, letting

people make the mistakes, helping them to correct it, helping them see why it is that it could be done better in a different way.

If used correctly, the persuasion skills mentioned above have been cited by leaders that participated in this study to really bolster or strengthen the role of the leader as an influencer and person who can convince people across the organisation rather than a dictator.

In conclusion, based on the two themes discussed above underpinning persuasion as one of the ways identified that strategic leaders influence innovation implementation, it emerged that combining the ability to appeal to people’s actions without the use of power and authority, coupled with specific skills that will persuade people will influence the behaviour of employees towards innovation implementation.

Section 5.4.2: Finding number two - Negotiation

The analysis conducted on interview data identified two themes that provide insight that negotiation is used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation.

The two themes include: listening with empathy and fostering a listening culture to understand and effective communication forms part of good negotiation skills.

Figure 3 illustrates the code categories that contributed to the emergence of the two themes, which in turn informed the ‘Negotiation’ theoretical construct. *(Please zoom to 150% to improve legibility)*

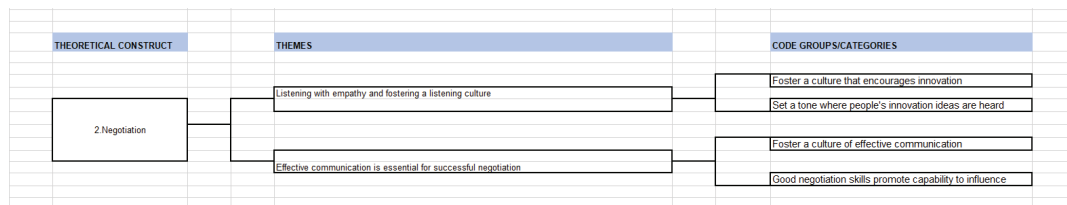


Figure 4: Negotiation Source: Author’s Own

Listening with empathy and fostering a listening culture

Interview participants highlighted the importance of acknowledging that not all employees working in an organization are innovators. This finding is particularly

important as it warrants a strategic leader to think about positioning certain teams accordingly within the context of the innovation value chain of the wider organisation.

Furthermore, it warrants a strategic leader to think about how to position certain individuals in teams accordingly in terms of talent and the propensity of these individual to contribute towards innovation implementation in the context of the wider organisation.

In terms of the first view, a strategic leader will need to assess team objectives and expectations from an innovation implementation perspective. Where there are great expectations for the delivery of innovation outcomes, this in turn informs the tone of the culture that the strategic leader will cultivate within the team. This may include the leader assessing the talent profile within the team and checking whether the talent pool within the team will foster a team culture that thrives at being innovators.

In terms of the second view, on the one hand, where a team is positioned within an organization and the expectations for delivery of innovation objectives are not great, a strategic leader would be well suited to acknowledge that the level of talent focused on being innovators will be minimal. In turn, this also informs the culture that a strategic leader will foster within that team.

On the other hand, where a team is positioned within the organization to be forerunners of innovation implementation, it emerged from the interviews that a strategic leader would be well suited to purposefully create specific culture within that team that upholds listening as one of its core values. Notwithstanding that communication in organizations is usually top down and most listening is done by employees taking instructions from leaders, participants expressed leaders need to deliberately create the space in their teams to listen to the contributions employees make towards innovation implementation.

It was advocated that within such spaces, strategic leaders need to listen properly in order know and obtain a deeper understanding of employee contributions, their thoughts, ideas and most importantly how they would have based their thoughts upon certain structures.

Linked to the above, it was evident from participants that that top-down listening is not a favourable approach to influence innovation implementation. For example, a participant stated:

A lot of interaction in corporate is one way, from the top down and then execution is measured et cetera. I think a key part of leadership being able to influence is having a structure that allows for listening and a structure that has some space in it for people to voice what they can change from an innovation perspective.

The structure mentioned above relates to creating a culture of listening within teams. A culture of listening was thus identified as an extrinsic enabler of innovation implementation.

Furthermore, it was identified that leaders must factor tactical considerations before embarking on creating a culture that encourages innovation implementation within their teams. The first consideration is understanding the broader ecosystem of how innovation fits in. An appreciation or understanding of the environment of business (which could be at industry level, organization level or even team level) assists to determine the culture that needs to be fostered across various teams and individuals depending on the positioning mentioned earlier.

Also based on the positioning of teams and individuals mentioned earlier, a second consideration is calculating the amount of effort required to drive a culture of curiosity, enquiry or exploration within a team. Majority of the business professionals interviewed (12 out of 13) provided views that allude to leaders fostering a culture that encourages innovation and affording opportunities for individuals to be creative.

However, for this third consideration, both experts interviewed warned that in the same breath, employees must be kept honest by fostering a culture of continuous testing of ideas, respectful checking and challenge as well as providing feedback in a way that does not discourage but builds trust within the team instead. An additional insight from experts that tied with the above is that maintaining a spirit of honesty and transparency builds trust between the leader and the direct reports which in turn promotes a culture of innovation implementation. For example, an expert stated:

When your team understands how you've set-up the environment, the level of trust allows for experimenting to happen. As long as it happens, there will be learnings and those learnings will inform another experiment. And before you know it, it moves into a culture that's easier to adopt for new team members.

The fourth consideration is for leaders to reward risk taking. As doors are opened for employees to explore and continuously experiment, summing up the approach to

developing a culture of innovation can include continuously rewarding employees. The outcome of doing this were stated by a participant who mentioned:

Try reward risk taking. As long as there is learning involved, that opens up a space for more invention and more innovation.

In sum, should the considerations mentioned above be implemented, creating a space for employees to be heard, allowing employees to explore freely as well as rewarding risk taking, the research analysis indicates that should the team start doing the aspects mentioned above, a leader will start creating an innovation culture and people start thinking about it at all given times. Which in essence would be an indicator that such a culture has the potential to be sustainable.

Effective communication is essential for successful negotiation

Insights that emerged from the analysis of interviews point towards negotiation being a two-pronged approach. The first entails the ability to communicate effectively and the second being the ability to skilfully negotiate.

According to interview participants, the ability to communicate effectively is multi-layered and entails four key abilities. First is self-influence, which has been described as believing in what you are saying before it is communicated to others. Some leaders interviewed were of the view that:

We need to believe in it ourselves before we can try to convince other people to believe in what we're trying to do.

The views that emerged from the participants is that a leader needs to believe in what that are going to be imparting to others they want to communicate to. It was believed by participants that a leader will not be successful at motivating for something that they themselves are not 100% clear on. It was the view of participants that one of the key enablers for successful negotiation is being clear and self-influenced about innovation implementation and the ability to communicate in such a way that helps others to understand how the leader themselves understand it.

The second associated ability that emerged from the interview data is the ability to articulate goals clearly. Again, this speaks to the issue of self-influence and being convincingly clear in understanding of what needs to be achieved from the onset. It

emerged from the data that if a leader does not know or understand what they intend to achieve, it will be very difficult to influence others. To be successful in influencing others, the leader (backed by a good understanding) needs to then convey the message to the people that they are trying to influence in clear fashion, without being vague. In fact, one participant advocated that:

It is good to influence innovation and its implementation, but it also needs to have a level of ability to articulate what it is that we're trying to do, where we are going, what are the objectives here and what are the goals. If I'm not clear on what the goals are, the objectives or where we're going is difficult to influence a person because they haven't got a crisp picture in their mind of what it is. So that ability to paint something, to be able to get the message across and the vision and the kind of picture of what it is, is important to be able to influence.

Zooming into the process of articulation, a key insight that emerged from the interviews is that a leader should engage with people in such a way that they see, that they understand and that they appreciate the innovation and its associated changes so that they buy into that. The interviews also revealed that obtaining buy-in assures commitment from the employees.

Notwithstanding the above, a fundamental step that emerged is that effective communication requires two-way interaction. A finding emerged that advocates for leaders to create room for people to engage. Part of this engagement involves a leader creating a working environment that allows employees to provide a leader with feedback.

Participants highlighted that there is a lot of benefit in it for leaders if they afforded teams opportunities to share feedback. The benefit identified is that such an approach helps a leader to bring people along the innovation implementation journey. The same principle of sharing feedback was raised in cases where the leader is dealing with an executive body such as a board. One participant stated:

I think it is good behaviour to keep your executives informed and then equally so, to provide feedback to the implementing team on what the other executives are saying and if there's anything important that that they need to know or incorporate in the implementation.

It also emerged from the analysis that bringing people on board, or on the innovation implementation journey requires leaders to be skilful in their negotiation approaches. As discussed earlier, the use of coercion, power and authority are not effective.

Majority of research participants shared the view that leaders require negotiation skills to leverage success particularly when dealing with peers on the same level or leaders in more senior positions such as the board. This is not to say negotiation is not applicable to their direct reports or lower ranking employees. However, the point being made is that to obtain buy-in at any level in an organisation, this will at some point require a leader to negotiate to get people to approve, support or even execute on the innovation implementation agenda.

Further insights obtained from the research participants cross over between effective communication and good negotiation. Negotiation is underpinned by communication hence negotiation is skilful form of influential communication. The research undertaken revealed that negotiation is of utmost importance when dealing with senior stakeholders within an organization. This is evident in the statement below provided by one of the board members of a reputable South African bank. He stated:

When it comes to operating at a senior role, there is nothing more important than the ability to negotiate because typically, the simpler decisions are the black and white decisions. These are generally taken lower down in the organization. The stuff that ends up at the top, at a senior level, is typically the ones that are harder to make decisions on...your starting point is not going to be a starting point of total alignment. The starting point is going to be a starting point of diverse thoughts. And to get to a position of alignment and to get to I wouldn't say the right answer the most appropriate answer will require you to move others across.

As mentioned in the statement above, 'moving others across' should be the goal of negotiations involving innovation implementation. To get others across, several persuasion tactics were provided by interview participants.

The first includes leaders reasonably meeting the needs of their stakeholders. As mentioned above, where the starting point is going to be a starting point of divergence, then good negotiations will require reasonably meeting some of the needs of the counterparties with different views.

Secondly, a key aspect to position when negotiating is considering what is in it for them (i.e., the stakeholders, counterparts, colleagues). Closer analysis of interviews revealed that this involves asking questions such as:

How does the item that the person trying to influence play with the individuals in terms of their construct? Does it speak to them? Is it something that aligns to what their goals are? Is it something that really aligns to where they want to go forward? How will it benefit them? How are they going to use what you're trying to innovate? How is it going to be better than what they're doing? How is it going to be better for the organization? What are the benefits that will come out of what you're trying to implement?

Is it going to make the processes quicker? Is it going to make the customer happier or is it going to make the things cheaper for the customer?

So that will work because when they see that it adds value to them, the organization or the people around them, then it's easier for them to want to move in that direction

Given the above, research participants seemed to be aligned and their responses generated a particular trend. This trend was associated with the leader being deliberate in making it clear how the counterpart will benefit. Research participants advocated that this position must be clearly articulated in the process of communicating with the counterpart by clearly framing the benefit involved. The benefit discourse is not ringfenced to how the counterpart will benefit in their individual capacity but also includes how the organization will benefit. As one participant mentioned:

Where they don't understand how it's benefiting them or the organization, then it's a bit difficult. You can't convince anyone when they can't see what benefits will come out of something. Try to understand what's in it for the company and how it's going to benefit the company as a whole or the community.

The third element to consider when communicating in the process of negotiation is to consider whether what is positioned by the counterparty aligns with the values of the leader or of the company. It emerged from the data that this consideration is a good factor to decide and communicate whether a proposition or proposal can be accepted or not.

Another decision factor provided by participants is for a leader to assess whether a proposition or proposal tabled by a counterparty is aligned to the strategic underpinning innovation implementation.

Still on the notion of making decisions in negotiations, one of the experts cautioned leaders to not compromise on what should not be compromised on the face of difficult conversations with stakeholders. It was suggested that leaders carefully consider their best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA) when making negotiation decisions. A quotation that makes this point of caution very clear for leaders states:

You should not compromise where you should not be compromising because then you can't change your mind later...you can't make the conversation easy by compromising on something that you know you should not be compromising on because if you do that and you must change your mind later, then your credibility is lost with the stakeholders.

Evidently, based on the insight provided by the expert, a leader changing their mind at a later stage impacts the leader's credibility. In turn, this would negatively impact a leader's potential to influence based on a negative reputation associated with that leader.

Based on further analysis of the challenge pertaining to dealing with pressure in negotiation discussions, some ways of mitigating this risk emerged from the data. One of the experts suggested that leaders can put forward options for consideration as opposed to approaching stakeholders or negotiation counterparts with a single position or proposal. The expert provided the recommendation that:

You put options on the table as opposed to pushing a specific idea because I'm not selling an idea I'm putting options forward and that helps to influence because then the person can also themselves work out around these three options, and you can influence the one that you want to go for, but at least the person's mind is open now because you're not going with one single answer to the person.

Similarly, another suggestion that was presented was for strategic leaders to proactively solution for tomorrow's problems and workshop the solutions with stakeholders before the problems materialize. This proactive approach positions innovation teams within an organization to start seeing warning signs, red flags or alerts and acting on them before the organization or function area gets caught out. Strategic leaders of such teams can negotiate from a position of forecast, in a less pressurized context and approach

stakeholders from a position of wanting to help to change things such financial products to create more value for customers and for the financial services organization itself. Such a proactive approach renders negotiation more fluid or smooth as benefit for the department or organization is clearly positioned.

In conclusion, based on the two themes discussed above underpinning negotiation as one of the ways identified that strategic leaders influence innovation implementation, it emerged that successful negotiation dialogue is enabled by deployment of skilful negotiation and communication tactics that are propelled by a culture that encourages innovation implementation, where leaders listen with intent to understand and actively create the space for employees to explore, continuously experiment and get rewarded for taking calculated risks on innovation implementation.

Section 5.4.3: Finding number three - Resilience

Research participants acknowledged that influencing innovation implementation faces some serious challenges. The challenges identified include allocation of resources, office politics, power struggles, resistance as well as failure.

A common view shared by research participants was that these challenges confronting innovation implementation are threats that hinder success. Most importantly, they considered these challenges as threats that confront their innovation aspirations from being implemented.

Specific negative factors and experiences were identified as threats by the research participants. As failure was not considered a viable option by any of the strategic leaders interviewed, it emerged from their contributions that building resilience needs to form part of the innovation implementation process.

Strategic leaders interviewed for this research study identified ways of how to foster resilience when influencing innovation implementation as well as indicators that signal successful implementation of resilience strategies to counter threats.

The analysis conducted on interview data identified two themes that provide insight that resilience is used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation.

The two themes include: threats confronting innovation implementation and building resilience- an important step in innovation implementation.

Figure 5 illustrates the code categories that contributed to the emergence of the two themes, which in turn informed the ‘Resilience’ theoretical construct. (*Please zoom to 150% to improve legibility*).

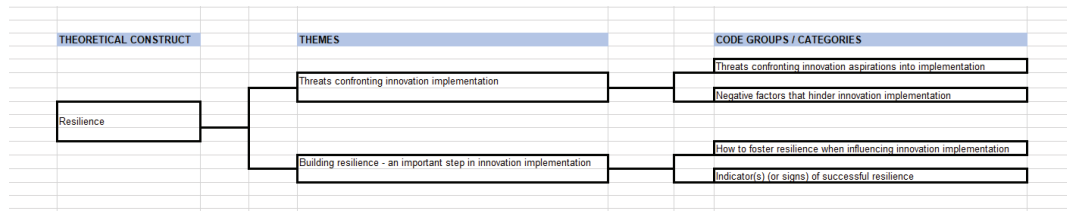


Figure 5: Resilience Source- Author’s own

Threats confronting innovation implementation

This section presents the key threats identified by interview participants that confront innovation implementation.

The first threat is legacy systems in older financial institutions that have been around for so many years. The combination of legacy systems and legacy thinking was deemed a combination that threatens innovation implementation. This threat was said to be exacerbated by the mindset that legacy systems should not be replaced by new systems built from scratch. As one participant stated:

I think our legacy technology platforms become a risk to us when it comes to how quick and effectively we respond to competition in the market. So, I think in that area we really need to think about what's the type of technologies we think we should evolve to, plus the skill that we need to be sustainable.

Based on the above, it is evident that a static mindset can hinder opportunities for exploratory innovation mentioned in Section 2.2.4 in Chapter 2. In this case, the opportunity to explore building new agile systems from the ground up which may in turn be a competitive advantage for an organisation may be stifled by strategic leaders who have a static mindset.

In addition, mindsets that do not even consider possibilities of delivering incremental changes to legacy systems to see value created are indicative of a true threat to the implementation of exploitative innovation also mentioned in Section 2.2.4 in Chapter 2.

If these two main categories of innovation are at risk of not being realised in an organisation where mindsets are static and take comfort in legacy systems, any form of significant innovation implementation is threatened.

Both experts interviewed cautioned that where such mindsets are identified, strategic leaders will discover that their teams do not do enough to scale innovation implementation in the right places where it is required. According to the experts a key cause is leaders not believing in themselves that they can implement innovation of a significant scale that can disrupt the market or take the performance of the organisation to the next level. One of the experts supports this insight as she mentioned:

In my opinion and let me say this properly. You are the biggest obstacle to you being innovative. You need to trust yourself. If you're not getting buy in from your line manager, you need to understand why you are not getting buy in from your line manager or go to speak to somebody else. If you feel the organization really stifles innovation, move to another organization. I believe that you need to control your own destiny. And the first thing that you need to address before you look anywhere further is yourself. Constantly challenge yourself on what is going to be my next idea.

Contrary to the view above that leaders are the masters of their destinies, some opposing views were identified in the data collected from business professionals noting the threat of job losses from innovations that fail do not really make strategic leaders masters of their own destiny. This was one of the reasons identified why some strategic leaders would opt for a static mindset and keep legacy systems as opposed to implementing innovation that can be a game changer for the organisation. For this reason, some leaders would opt for the safe option to protect their jobs.

On further immersion into the interview data, it was also identified that the issue of job security is not a threat for strategic leaders alone when it comes to the implementation of innovation but also for some employees in general. Participants stated that such a scenario arises when employees feel threatened by either not knowing or not feeling that they are a part of the innovation implementation journey. As a result, such behaviour was identified by participants to stem from a job security perspective which in turn fuels the stance of rather focusing on trying to preserve their roles and jobs than being involved in innovation implementation that could fail and result in losing employment.

Another threat identified through this study that hinders innovation implementation is having misaligned innovation strategy within the same organization. Research participants indicated the dangers of innovation implementation hubs or departments not being aligned with other areas of the same organization. If not aligned, this creates challenges of prioritization and inclusion of innovation implementation on the book of work of business units. It was found that if the strategy is not aligned, it will create difficulties to obtain buy-in or priority from a book-of-work perspective.

On the aspect of strategy execution, research participants identified that using innovation ideas that have not worked in the past is a threat to innovation implementation. The threat is that it slows down innovation implementation in the sense that it is extremely difficult for a strategic leader to convince stakeholders to buy into ideas that are well known to have failed in the past. In such a scenario, stakeholders consider whether it is worth spending resources on ideas that have not yielded success. If a leader does not acknowledge this limitation, it threatens the speed at which innovation implementation can be achieved as other stakeholders tend to block ideas or propositions that failed in the past.

Further to the above, the study revealed how cost-benefit assessments can be a threat to innovation implementation. Research participants revealed that at times, when great innovation ideas emerge, if the benefits to be derived or extracted from implantation of the idea are going to cost too much, then there is a threat that such ideas may not succeed at making it through the innovation implementation pipeline.

Notwithstanding the above, it surfaced from the research that a threat to innovation implementation in some instances can be fuelled by influential leaders in organizations with power and authority who are closed minded. Based on the insights obtained, closed minded leaders are leaders that are not prepared to listen to other employees opinions and ideas. Furthermore, they are leaders that are not approachable and do not afford employees to freely position or propose their ideas.

Leaders with such character traits pose a risk to innovation implementation because being closed off, unapproachable, being rigid in their own thinking stifles employees to come forward with innovation ideas.

In situations where leaders are unapproachable and rigid in their own thinking, it was found that such leaders have the tendency to coerce or force people to execute on a vision that only they can see and don't solicit input or feedback from other employees.

The threat to innovation implementation is that such leaders put the organization at risk of implementing ideas that will not benefit the organization nor add any value because they are not accommodative of other people's views. As one participant stated:

If we've come from a position of you may, to you must, this is how then that doesn't work. If people see you in a dictatorial state, you're not going to achieve a lot of innovation because when you are confining the rules within how you operate, you might inadvertently not add value from an innovation implementation perspective.

On the one hand, while a dictatorial leader in such instances forces their ideas and their vision, on the other hand or in comparison, employees often coerce or force their ideas through escalations. Both methods trigger the use of force, power and authority. The research found that both instances threaten innovation implementation.

A recommendation that emerged from the findings is that escalation should be the last resort for influencing. As one research participant stated:

Not every door needs to be kicked down at first. You can try open and maybe it is open. Or sometimes it may be just a bit stuck. Maybe it needs a little bit of a shove. I have learnt that sometimes try gently to open it. If you get to the point, you know, to kick it down, you might have to. But at first, that's not the immediate strategy.

Furthermore, it was found that the threat of coercion in instances such as the above is that it does not create sustainable relationships with key stakeholders. Instead, 14 out of 15 participants alluded to the view that it creates resentment and resistance which in turn hinders efficient innovation implementation.

Notwithstanding the above, the research study found ways in which strategic leaders can build resilience against the threats identified as well as resistance they may have unintentionally triggered as an outcome of coercion by using power and authority. This is discussed in the next theme below.

Building resilience - an important step in innovation implementation

Having identified the threats that confront innovation implementation, the research study found that strategic leaders need to incorporate a resilience strategy in their innovation

implementation processes. As discussed in the previous section, there are threats that emerge based on complex and dynamic human interactions in the process. Thus, a strategic leader must be prepared to counter threats. As such, insights emerged from research participants that building resilience is an important step in innovation implementation.

Stemming from the research study conducted, one of the ways in which strategic leaders can build resilience when things go wrong in the innovation implementation process is to provide guidance in a way that does not attack or discredit anyone's dignity. Maintaining mutual respect, professionalism and dignity preserves and sustains the relationship between a strategic leader and employees.

According to research participants, resilience is also built when strategic leaders allow employees to 'fail forward'. Meaning that failures experienced by employees warrants extracting lessons learnt and continuation to explore and move forward in further attempts to make innovation implementation successful.

The above builds resilience in the sense that employees develop confidence that even if they experience some challenges or failures, the leader will support them and back them up in a dignified, respectful and encouraging learning process to strive for future success.

Another way to build resilience identified through the research study is for strategic leaders to support their teams in the innovation implementation journey. Ideally not to micromanage them but to provide senior support when employees are struggling or have failed to successfully execute. Similar views provided by many participants of this approach were perfectly outlined by a participant who stated:

Seeing the team heading towards failure gives you the opportunity to say guys, this is not going right and then it gives you the opportunity to say look I've given you an opportunity and it hasn't worked so I'm going to recommend how this thing should go. This is how I want it to be implemented because then people in that sense then understand that they were given an opportunity, they were given a chance, they were heard and things didn't go as planned and you need to let them know why. But it's not like you're waiting for them to fail you. You're supporting their vision, but if it's genuinely not working, then it is ok, you know, we try something different and you know, you get people to reflect on what do you think we could have done better? How do you think we could have done things differently? And then you say look, perhaps we should try to do things a

different way. And I propose we do things this way and you can start delegating roles.

It was evident from the views of the participant above that firstly, a leader should create and afford opportunities to their team to implement their ideas as opposed to being dictatorial.

Secondly, a leader should acknowledge when to stop the team and be transparent with the team that they have not succeeded. This should be done in a manner that does not discredit anyone's dignity.

Thereafter, the leader should guide the team and recommend solutions to turn the failure into success. A key insight derived from this approach is that the leader makes recommendations and involves the team towards finding solutions to turn the failure around into a success. Furthermore, the role of the leader is to nudge the team towards seeking alternative ways of doing things.

Similar to the finding presented earlier that related to providing guidance, a coaching approach should be taken as opposed to completely taking over the process that could leave the team feeling incapable.

A coaching approach maintains respect for the contribution the team makes, coupled with showing that their input is valued by keeping them involved through the delegation of roles in turning the unsuccessful outcome toward being a successful outcome.

Based on the various contributions of insights from the research participants, building resilience in the innovation process is deemed to yield successful outcomes.

From a strategic leadership perspective, some indicators of successfully building resilience cited by research participants include:

...you start attracting people who are more innovative into the organization to make, to build that organization.

...you start changing the minds of people already in the organization who's a little bit more in the box thinking. And you start to get them out-of-the-box thinking and a little bit more innovative.

Based on the presentation of findings discussed above, it was evident in the findings that strategic leaders equally need to be aware of the threats that hinder innovation implementation while building a resilience capability.

The combination of these two aspects helps a leader to be prepared for negative scenarios associated with the threats identified and have a fundamental approach that can be deployed to counter the threats.

In conclusion, strategic leaders having the built the capability and or approach to counter threats in a bid to continue innovation implementation within the organization is what then constitutes resilience.

Section 5.5: Research Question 2 - What are the mechanisms used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation

At this juncture, based on the outcomes of the thematic analysis conducted, this section presents a ‘thick description’ of the findings obtained from research participants in terms of addressing the sub-research question.

The analysis conducted on interview data identified three themes that provide insight that effective engagements is a mechanism used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation.

The three themes include: innovation implementation is a result of successful strategies of influencing others, conflict resolution is a way to influence others and managing expectations is part of the collaboration process

Figure 6 illustrates the code categories that contributed to the emergence of three themes which in turn informed the ‘Effective engagements’ theoretical construct. *(Please zoom to 150% to improve legibility)*

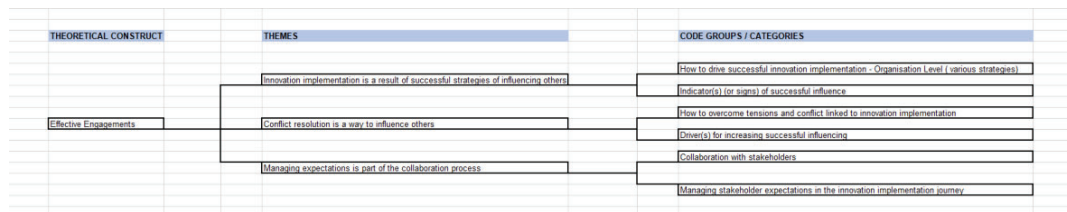


Figure 6: Effective Engagements Source: Author's own

Section 5.5.1: Finding number one - Effective engagements

According to the findings obtained from the research study, effective engagement consists of strategies of engagement that lead to success cases of influencing others through various means and forms of engagements. It also consists of a leader being able to engage in such a way that can resolve conflicts as well as being able to manage stakeholder expectations in the innovation implementation journey. These aspects are discussed in detail below, starting with successful engagement strategies.

Successful engagement strategies

Analysis of the research findings revealed some key engagement strategies that strategic leaders can adopt in their management style that can lead to success in terms of influencing others.

The first is being open and having transparent discussions about change and the need for innovation at any level of the organization. It emerged from the research that taking this approach can be effective in influencing at executive level. However, it is a process that entails a few steps. For example, one participant mentioned:

The first point you make to the executive committee is that the world is changing very fast. Any leader at executive level knows that doing nothing or standing still is going to be a disaster sometime in the future.

The insight provided above is progressive and forward looking. By virtue of engaging the executive committee in an open and transparent way, it aims to convince fellow executives to not have a linear perspective but one that considers possibilities of the future. As an innovation executive, the aim is to nudge other executives to be proactive and innovate ahead of time to meet the organization's requirements and needs of the future.

The research findings also revealed that another step is to make provision for fellow executives to take responsibility and accountability for both exploratory and exploitative innovations in their respective portfolios. The above being subject to an innovation strategic leader having an oversight role and providing support as and when required.

Research findings suggested that this approach can be successfully achieved by investing adequate time to engage with other executives. Such engagements must not

be rushed. The main goal being to get other executives in the organisation to understand the importance of the work that innovation strategic leaders and their teams do as well as how their role as executives managing different teams across the organisation can assist to drive both exploratory innovation and exploitative innovation implementation in the organisation.

Participants found the step above to be of great importance because strategic leaders (innovation executives in particular) often assume people know and understand what innovation implementation is and why it is pursued within the organization. Hence the importance of delivering quality engagements that convince stakeholders to obtain their requisite buy-in and approvals.

Findings further revealed that it is better to over engage across the innovation implementation value chain than to not engage enough. One participant who shared her experience in successfully delivering an innovation program at a top insurance firm mentioned:

I over engage. I engage when I start. I engage about where I am on the journey. While I'm, you know, still developing whatever it is that I'm doing, and then I invite people in so I engage with to them to say this is what we are doing, and I would like you to be part of crafting.

The example above indicates that constant engagement with stakeholders brings them closer to the innovation implementation journey and creates opportunities for them to contribute.

It was also found that keeping them consistently informed at various milestones in the innovation implementation journey facilitates smoother delivery and less bottlenecks or blockers. This is because this approach acknowledges key stakeholders that hold certain mandates and authority in the innovation journey. It also ensures that they are not caught off guard by certain aspects at the end of the journey which may potentially be a blocker at concluding milestones. Thus, the finding's emphasis is that it is better for stakeholders to raise aspects such as risks earlier, and these are resolved sooner in the journey as opposed to later.

Furthermore, on the topic of risk, it emerged from the interview data that engaging about risk is a crucial factor for consideration in effective engagements. More specifically, it was found that leaders tend to talk about innovation, but they do not engage at level

deep enough about risks and exactly how an intended innovation can mitigate threats and risks. Two examples are presented where the participants who felt strongly about this stated:

The other bit that I find with some of the executives is they are afraid and fear failure and they worried about what risk this innovation will introduce. Tell them that it reduces the risk because if we don't do this, there's a problem. So then talk about what those things are from a risk point of view. How the innovation you're doing will reduce risk.

Tell them doing nothing is a false perception on your side that there is no risk.

Tell them we are going to get killed here if we do nothing. Most people can understand that ok we must do something and we have to change it, but this doesn't mean we are introducing more risk.

Based on the views expressed above by the two participants, it is deduced that strategic leaders should engage stakeholders about risk in a way that positions risk in two ways.

First, engaging about the risk of not doing anything. Secondly, engaging about how the desired innovation implementation will mitigate the risks that are concerning for stakeholders. Thus, engaging about risk with other executives and being transparent that if they are not willing to innovate and not thinking about the future, a potential consequence is the imminent risk that the organization will become less effective and the workforce less efficient. Based on the above, it is deduced that having robust engagements such as the examples discussed above is an important component of effective engagements.

Therefore, being able to engage at multiple levels within an organisation with multiple types of stakeholders would be a good indicator of effective engagements that will in turn promote innovation implementation.

Conflict resolution is a way to influence others

As discussed above, influencing innovation implementation involves strategic leaders engaging with stakeholders. While a leader may engage with emotional intelligence, expertise and experience, it is possible that they may be confronted by conflict directly or indirectly.

Research findings from this study indicate that either way, strategic leaders need to be prepared to adequately deal with either managing conflict or resolving conflict. The primary mode of doing so is through effective conflict resolution communication.

It was confirmed by all 15 participants that at some point a strategic leader will get confronted with conflict. For instance, when stakeholders do not agree with a leader's viewpoint. There may be conflict in terms of interests, objectives, resources or priority for example.

In situations such as the above, findings from the research suggested that listening is one of the ways to deal with conflict. Insights from the study revealed that listening forms part of the communication process. To strategically make use of listening to resolve conflict, it was suggested that leaders can schedule meetings with all the different stakeholders, listen to their views, listen to their grievances and challenges that they have with the intended innovation. The leader can then take the points raised, revert to their innovation team, take all the challenges noted into consideration and assess how they can reasonably incorporate the feedback and attempt to resolve aspects to better suit all parties.

A second means of effective conflict resolution communication was identified from the research findings. It was found that being able to sell the bigger picture is a way to resolve conflict pertaining to innovation implementation. Communicating to stakeholders with the deliberate intention of making them see where the world is going was highly recommended. In addition, one of the experts provided an insight that knowing where the world is going and nudging stakeholders to think broader about the future is a way to shift their thinking towards progressive thinking. However, for this mechanism to be effective it was added this needs to be coupled with incrementally solving for the needs of various stakeholders at different times or phases particularly if there are conflicting needs between key stakeholders. One participant suggested the below approach which is deemed reasonably balanced:

Where there's differing opinions, my biggest thing is putting the facts on the table. Putting the bigger picture on the table and kind of going, how do we achieve what everyone's wanting or majority of what's wanted? What are the key common threads that will solve a bit more holistically? Let's agree. Let's solve that first and go, ok, yes. You might need a bit of nuance plugged into there. Let's do that as a phase two. But let's build the core and kind of get what covers everyone. It's like

influencing people being comfortable with not getting their Rolls Royce on day one. But they'll get, you know, a Toyota first and then we'll build on it to make it a bit of a Porsche. And then I'll, you know, kind of build on that from their perspective to tailor it more.

Notwithstanding the above being a reasonable approach to addressing conflicting interests, two research participants acknowledged a limitation to any approach taken to resolve conflict by balancing the needs of impacted stakeholders. They alluded that the limitation is that even when innovation leaders go back to the drawing board and think of ways to resolve matters in a way that better suits all parties, getting stakeholders to trust that an output of compromise is in their best interests can still be a challenge that perpetuates the same conflict of interest. The above is an interesting point would warrant further investigation.

Nevertheless, at this juncture, the focus of this section shifts to instances concerning indirect conflict.

For instance, a finding that emerged from the research revealed that people in organizations may feel threatened by innovation implementation especially if it creates efficiencies that may potentially render their roles redundant in the future.

In such instances, the findings posited that an innovation leader must deliver honest and transparent communication in such a way that gets employees to trust that what they are doing is in their best interest. One of the research participants expressed the below:

The reason why we work is because we have families. We take care of them and stuff like that. I've seen real innovation fail because we failed to communicate how we supplement change versus the users experiencing a threat. So, it's about first achieving common alignment. I'll make an example. We implemented AI. Real great stuff. We went from having 120 people to now forecasting we only need 32. To an executive, you are reducing operations cost. You allowing us to have a better return by reducing operations costs, but what the employee is saying is who's the 90 people that need to go? Who's the 90 houses that can't get fed? What we should have done is communicate to the executives that if you have 120 staff reducing to 30 there is opportunities for 90 to rescale, be redeployed as our organization is getting better with cost. If change doesn't have a win in it for everyone it's not going to work. It's about having the heart in it at the end of the day, for me, that's the difference that makes it work. It's about being

able to translate at every level what it is that we're able to achieve. Saying we need to do this because our ops cost is high versus saying there is opportunities for 90 people to change their perspective or their job.

While the participant raised the point around conflict and tensions created from innovation implementation from a job security perspective, the core communication aspect to consider in this case is the message to executives.

It is deduced from the insight stated above that as a leader championing innovation implementation, communication and messaging must be cognizant of systemic impacts.

The way in which the benefits are to be framed, positioned or presented need to be sensitive to the greater ecosystem of the organization (particularly job security) for employees. It must have a holistic view of how innovation implementation will impact various parts or individuals within the organization.

The above leads to an additional consideration that emerged from the findings which is allowing for teams and or stakeholders to check and challenge. Research insights indicate that check and challenge is not a form of conflict. It is a professional exercise where one affords others to question and interrogate the validity and or veracity of innovation implementation ideas raised and provide feedback.

Check and challenge requires a leader to have the professional maturity for stakeholders to sense-check proposed ideas or approaches to innovation implementation without taking offence.

A key insight obtained from the study is that allowing stakeholders to ask questions, make suggestions to initial ideas and or recommend alternatives is a way to circumvent conflict. It is a non-dictatorial approach that gets stakeholders to be part of the innovation journey.

One participant who claimed to have mastered this technic stated:

So there is a balance here that one needs to strike which is very important for success. What you want to do is you want to allow the team enough time to challenge the ideas. Like I said, in a meaningful way. But also you don't want leave a very open-ended engagement forever.

In turn, taking stakeholders along the innovation journey is a form of partnering that circumvents them from blocking the innovation implementation objectives. Where opinions appear to block progress, where passion and emotions hamper progression, it was found that if there are data points available, the use of data removes emotions and assists to address conflicting ideas and opinions. The use of supporting data to demonstrate and back up a statement makes that statement become more meaningful and more impactful. One of the experts interviewed confirmed this insight in the quotation below:

...but to me data is critical so if you're going to have people having conflicting ideas, different opinions, you need to get the data point. So, whether that's customer testing or whether that's research, or whether that's you know, to your point qualitative versus quantitative research, those things all speak to almost factual support of things. And you can't argue with fact. You can't argue with data and it speaks a story by itself. So, when I find that there is conflict and oh no, you know, that doesn't make sense or whatever, you start pulling out the data. You make it take out the emotion out of the conversation. So, you take out the opinions and the views and you focus on what is true.

Business professionals interviewed shared similar views. One comment stood out the most. This innovation leader stated:

I've realized how powerful using data points is. It is because you can sit and talk about your opinions till the cows come home. You know, we should do it this way or we should solve the problem this way or this is the right way to do it. It becomes a stumbling block if you only listening to people's opinions and to me, the quickest way to clear that is to look at data.

Over and above, even after the use of data to resolve contentious views pertaining to innovation implementation, the research revealed the limitation that one can potentially still be unsuccessful in getting the other party to agree. This is evidenced by a participant who stated the below:

Research is important and having data to support what you're putting on the table. If the person that you're trying to influence can't see the benefit to them, you're not going to win.

Based on the last quotation presented above, it was prudent that the study further explored potential reasons why stakeholders could rebut such a powerful approach (i.e., use of data points).

The research surfaced insights that one of the causes is that a strategic leader may be dealing with a stakeholder that is too junior. Junior employees tend to be very passionate and are more inclined to want to solve their own problems and do not necessarily have an organization wide view. In such cases, research participants recommended that it would be worthwhile to get more senior stakeholders involved in the engagement through a form of escalation and discuss the way forward with more senior stakeholders. Thus, in such cases where factual data points are used and conflict is still present, two research participants (with confirmation obtained from an expert) advocated for escalation as an alternative approach to resolve the conflict. Although no formal approach was presented by participants, however two views stood out. These follow below:

You must try at least three times, right in good faith, assuming you know, when you get to the 4th time, that's when you start asking yourself how I'm going to pursue this? So just say to yourself I'm now just going to go up and because at the end of the day, if the person is just a blocker, you at some point must use a different strategy.

I mean I guess eventually if you're not getting anywhere, you use some level of escalation to their line manager and position an appeal to them. But even then, it's still about trying to win that initial stakeholder over.

Lastly, the analysis conducted also revealed that winning stakeholders over where there are conflicting views can be achieved by sometimes simply getting to know and understanding that stakeholder better.

One of the experts interviewed stated the importance of getting to understand people, their dreams, their weaknesses and where they are coming from (in terms of their standing opinion), which also includes understanding the personalities of stakeholders.

This approach was advocated by the expert because it can assist to understand what opposing stakeholders want to see. This then allows a strategic leader to shift their approach from what the leader needs to what the stakeholders need. In essence, this approach is about 'moving others across' as mentioned earlier. The expert further indicated that this approach can be used on leaders that are the same level, or leaders

upwards or even with employees lower down the value chain. Overall, applying an adaptive conflict resolution communication approach was highly recommended as 12 out of 15 research participants alluded to it in various ways.

Having discussed mechanisms of conflict resolution, the next presentation discusses how managing stakeholder expectations and collaboration form part of the theoretical theme 'effective engagements' which has been identified as a mechanism that strategic leaders use to influence innovation implementation.

Managing expectations forms part of the collaboration process

As a point of departure, if an innovation leader has successfully obtained buy-in and participation of stakeholders in an innovation implementation project, it was found that one of the ways of managing stakeholder expectations entails communicating what percentage of that stakeholder's original idea or input will remain intact.

Secondly, it was found that it also entails being honest about the when innovation implementation will be delivered.

Based on the research conducted with the interview participants, it was found that achieving effective engagements through managing stakeholder expectations entails taking the stakeholders along the innovation implementation journey by keeping them well informed.

For example, informing them of milestone delivery dates as well as the phases of delivery. The research also found that it helps to let stakeholders know of any compromises that will be made to accommodate those compromises particularly in instances where there may have been some initial conflict or differences.

However, research participants warned that if managing expectations with stakeholders is not executed well, there is a possibility of not delivering anything at all if stakeholders keep changing the scope as this hinders delivery. An example of a participant illustrating this limitation stated:

It is important to identify where you are sitting with the stakeholder, because what you may need to say to them, which is what I'm doing at the moment is accept that you will probably be 50% ok with what you take out to market and to the customer with the view that whatever you will pick up and learn will be part of the

feedback as you refine the solution. If you wait for all the pieces to come together, they will not come together because, well, this is not something they've done before themselves.

The statement above is indicative of a leader being open and pragmatic with their stakeholders. The research provides an important insight that when having this type of engagement, carefully crafting the right words to deliver the underlying salient message to stakeholders that being dogmatic about their own needs will not yield success is required. A way of positioning this was found as follows:

As a negotiated settlement, the outcomes of innovation implementation are a culmination other people's inputs and considerations, thus 100% of one particular stakeholder's requirements will be difficult to achieve. As a common ground, all stakeholder needs must be reasonably achieved. Advising the stakeholder that progressively, the aspects that had been diluted along the journey may be considered in further iterations helps to manage their expectations.

Carrying some underlying lessons of compromise embedded with the managing expectations approach described above, in terms of assessing the findings associated with collaborating with stakeholders, it was found that that when it comes collaborating with stakeholders, an innovation leader must also be open to be influenced as opposed to only being the influencer. As a participant mentioned:

I think it is that collaboration piece and kind of going you know, we don't all know everything and kind of going, you know, being open to being influenced as well as being the influencer. So, I think it's that open mind and being open to different people's views and opinions and almost rather than always driving what you're wanting, take a step back and go actually. What they saying could that be beneficial? Actually, sometimes is that a better way of doing it? You know, sometimes your way isn't always the right way and kind of having that. And so, I think that to me the biggest take away is being open to being influenced as well as being a driver of influencing people.

Based on the above, the fundamental finding is about not being too rigid as an innovation implementation champion, but rather being open to people to express their ideas and even to assist them in seeing them through as well. This point was elaborated clearly by a participant who mentioned:

If you come into a team and asking them to innovate. You want give them time to expand on your idea. Be prepared for them to kill some of the elements of your idea and challenge them and then build on it. So that means you can't be overly obsessed with just your views, and by that I mean you own the initial seed planting, how that scales and grows becomes a team element, and you must allow for that to happen. If you hold on to it longer than you should. What ends up happening is you end up with a still born innovation idea. And it happens in most corporates because you are carrying the feeling that it's mine. It's mine so I want to make sure I still represent a large part of it. And by you doing that, it loses favor with other individuals because, well, it's not their idea. If you do the opposite, you have included that sense of ownership, communal ownership of the innovation which I feel has a very strong impact on whether innovation moves or it doesn't move.

Based on the statement above, it is understood that a strategic leader ought not to be too obsessed by their innovation ideas but rather be open to being influenced by others and thus also managing their own expectations as a leader championing and influencing others.

Furthermore, in terms of collaborating with stakeholders, several insights were found in terms of how effective engagements can be leveraged in this approach. A point of departure is that in terms of innovation implementation in organizations, collaboration is key. This is emphasized by a participant that stated:

I think leaders today and especially in the type of environment that we're in, collaboration is key. I think if you almost coming across as demanding or coming across as you know, we work in the regulatory field, the narrative is often you must comply, you must do this or that. I think even our current executives have challenged us and said we have a risk appetite where maybe you can collaborate; we do not want to fight with stakeholders. So, if we are not fighting, let us rather have people's understanding that there's something to gain from it or something that is goingt change from it, from a worse off position to a better, and that is where collaboration skills are really key.

In essence, the statement above emphasizes the finding that collaboration is not about only giving out instructions, telling people what to do and how they should do it. It is about acknowledging that one cannot do it themselves and that strategic leaders have an opportunity to learn, be influenced and leverage off other people's skills.

It also emerged from the research that taking a collaborative approach does not take away any credibility from a leader. It was highlighted that working in silos is detrimental not only to a leader but to the organization as well. Hence the importance of inviting and involving people to be part of the solution that the strategic leader has set as the vision.

Most importantly because collaboration helps people within the organization to understand the vision, buy into the leader's vision, understand what, why and how they intend to achieve innovation implementation as this solicits people's commitment. This point was emphasized by a participant who passionately expressed the view that:

If your business still has someone called a Chief Innovation Officer, you are not heading on the right path. That's all I'm going to say. Innovation doesn't belong in one person or one team. It belongs to everyone and you need to create a sense that everyone can and should be contributing to it.

At this juncture, this section presents four specific collaboration skills derived from the research findings that participants deemed to aid in being successful at collaborating with stakeholders.

It was mentioned earlier that collaboration skills are key. Consequently, it was important to specifically identify and understand the collaboration skills.

It emerged from the research that collaboration skills include firstly being knowledgeable in the specific area concerned. Secondly, being very confident in what is being sold to stakeholders. There are synergies between the first and second skills as one builds confidence in what is being sold by being knowledgeable about the innovation. The third skill is knowing the stakeholders which entails not always engaging about work but also about things outside of work and getting to know what motivates them or what drives them. The fourth skill is listening with empathy. Research findings showed that this was the highest referenced skill recommended for good collaboration with stakeholders. For example, a participant mentioned:

I need to be able to listen. Listening is very important, but not just listening. You need to listen with empathy because you need to understand where people are coming from, right? And if you listen with empathy again, you win people over because they feel like you stepping into their shoes and you understand where they're coming from.

It was gathered from majority of interviewees that there are several benefits linked to listening with empathy that a leader can use.

The first is that actively listening to different perspectives can enable a leader championing innovation implementation to leverage off the views supplied by stakeholders.

Secondly, it places a strategic leader in a more favorable position to influence as listening with empathy gives the leader a deeper understanding of people's needs and concerns because they feel more connected to them.

Thirdly, it was found that if a strategic leader listens with empathy, they become more curious and become active listeners who aim to understand stakeholder constraints, concerns, needs and desires. Consequently, the benefit is that if leaders listen with empathy, they will be in a better position to manage stakeholder expectations because they are strategically placed to see the uncertainty that their stakeholders are trying to hold. In such cases, the research findings revealed that with such a skill, a strategic leader championing innovation implementation can almost see how the innovation will roll out and anticipate how it will be received by stakeholders.

In addition to the elements discussed above that lead to good collaboration, a participant shared the below approach, which incorporates most of the key findings presented above. This participant said:

So in a general discussion, we're trying to influence somebody, if you speaking more than you're listening, you've got a problem. So my personal technique that I use is I listen to people and then I play back to them. Even if I disagree with what they said, I play it back so that I understand what they're saying. But they also know that I understand what they're saying because I'm playing it back. And just by doing that, you bring people into the conversation. If a person feels that you're not listening to them, they are not in your conversation. You can talk all you want. You're talking to the wall. But so yeah, I think listen very, very carefully without interruption and with intent to understand. And you could frequently confirm to the person that you understand when they are speaking. Look, the practicality is when you're sitting in a meeting with many people. Then other people interrupt as well. So, if it's your meeting and you want to emphasize listening, you also have to control all the other people that are interrupting as well.

So, you have to let each person to be able to say what they need to say. I need to adopt it and then play it back so that there is a common understanding. So I think listening is very important and understanding other people's point of view and then reacting to it appropriately.

Based on the approach above, it can be summed that effective engagement is underpinned by a dual process that includes inward (listening) and outward (speaking or interacting) components. On the one hand, there is the component of delivering engagements which includes how leaders address or vocalize aspects. On the other hand, there is the listening component, which has been specifically ring fenced to listening with empathy and intent to understand.

In conclusion it emerged from the research that conflict resolution techniques, adaptive approaches to managing stakeholder expectations and a flexible collaboration approach with stakeholders are also essential to the overarching finding that effective engagement is a key mechanism used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation.

Section 5.5.2: Finding number two – Positive enabling behaviours

The analysis conducted on interview data identified five themes that provide insight that positive enabling behaviours is a mechanism used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation.

The five themes include: Values Based Leadership (VBL), setting a positive tone, intrapersonal qualities that drive innovation implementation, interpersonal qualities that drive innovation implementation and general positive behavioural traits that inspire and motivate stakeholders.

Figure 7 illustrates the code categories that contributed to the emergence of the two themes, which in turn informed the 'Positive enabling behaviours' theoretical construct. *(Please zoom to 150% to improve legibility)*

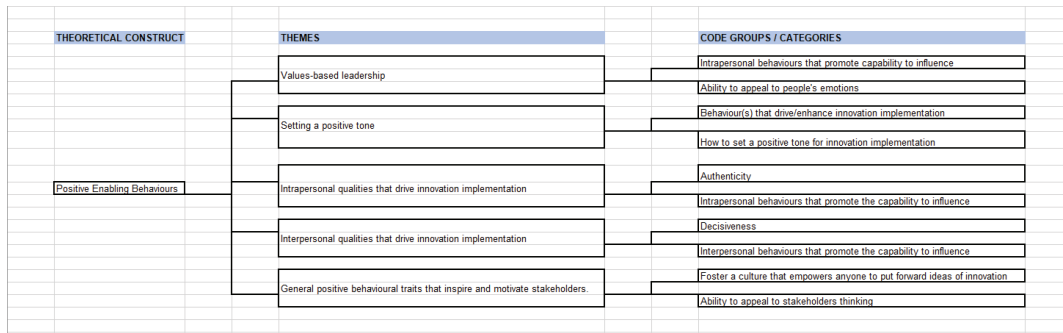


Figure 7: Positive Enabling Behaviours Source: Author's own

Values-based leadership

Values-based leadership (VBL) is the first theme to be presented in relation to positive enabling behaviours identified through the research interviews conducted. As a point of departure, it surfaced that VBL is intrapersonal. This was found to mean that this is a type of leadership style is ingrained within 'self' or rooted within a leader. It was also discovered that this leadership style is centered on personal values which in turn manifest in behaviours that are influenced by those values.

The VBL behaviour that emerged most frequently from research participants pertained to a leader being trustworthy. The research findings revealed that in order to be trustworthy, a leader needs to embrace the value of 'honesty' for people to regard that leader as trustworthy. In turn, being trustworthy allows stakeholders to trust the information that is communicated to them.

Based on the research interviews conducted the second most frequently mentioned value was transparency. Research participants were of the view that transparency is a key leadership behaviour that makes it easier for a leader to influence people. It emerged from the data that this is because when people can see that a leader is transparent, they are prone to trust and believe in that leader. The research also revealed that a transparent leader is one who remains true to 'self' and is able to be remain honest and truthful in both smooth and turbulent times.

It was also found that VBL can appeal to people's emotions. For example, it was drawn from the responses of six participants that VBL is a leadership style that can get employees to aspire to grow professionally and develop in a similar way to that of the leader that demonstrates this trait. Hence for strategic leaders, their VBL behaviour can inspire employees in the organisation to move in the same direction as them, which in short can be said positions them to be influential.

Setting a positive tone

The second theme attributing to the construct 'positive enabling behaviours' is setting a positive tone for innovation implementation in the working environment. Research interviews showed that this can be achieved in several ways. For the purposes of this study, the top three ways to achieve this will be presented.

The highest participant-referenced way to achieve this is for a strategic leader to create an environment that encourages ideation. Similar to several other participants, two participants were of the views presented below:

In order to unleash innovation you need to create an environment which encourages people to voice ideas and not shut them down because then an idea maybe bad from you listening but once you test it or do something you may think of how to improve it. It can spark something else.

An environment that unleashes innovation is where people feel comfortable to share ideas without them being shut down.

It is evident from the quotation examples above that participants are of the view that if a leader sets a tone that encourages ideas, they unlock the potential for innovation implementation. It was gathered from the interviews that by creating a working environment where people are free to express their ideas, brainstorm their ideas in an environment that they are genuinely heard and nurtured (as opposed to being shut down), it encourages people to be innovative.

In addition to the above, it surfaced from the research findings that a positive tone for innovation implementation can be done by creating an environment that fosters learning.

In this approach, leaders are challenged to create a safe space for employees to pursue learning about what innovation really is. It is recommended that this could be achieved through master classes or even through webinars. Research participants acknowledged that learning is a process. As such, learning is not a once off process but rather a process that also includes a shift in mindset of employees. Recommended learning includes employees learning behavioural aspects such as empathy, positivity, failing forward and resilience. Over and above this, learning about the principles and process of innovation implementation. This position was supported by a participant who stated:

I think in general we should have the learning ability to want to change and do something different. That's what's also going to foster innovation because if you're doing stuff the same way you've always done it, you're not getting that different result. So, if you actually allowing a learning environment where it's always about learning, always about design and changing, then it's easy to foster that. You want to bring that. That's where the influence comes from, right? Because you have an understanding that things could work differently.

Linked to the notion of learning mentioned above, the research findings alerted the importance of a strategic leader creating an environment that is aware that innovation comes from anywhere within an organization. As one participant posited:

Innovation can come from anywhere. It can come from someone perceived, and I'm sorry my terminology is not always correct, lower in the organization to top executives. And it's not that only a certain set of people are allowed to be innovative.

The quotation presented above provides the insight that innovation should be something that every single person in an organization should be part of.

However, as further immersion in the data revealed, this would be dependent if a leader empowers employees such that they can be part of it. In the event that this should be the case, several participants were of the view that employees would innovate on their day-to-day work in a meaningful way.

Sadly, the reality is that most financial services organizations represented by the interview participants limit innovation implementation to either executive leaders, a designated innovation leader (for example a Chief Innovation Officer) and or a designated innovation department or team. The consequence of this approach was well articulated by a participant who stated:

And I think that's where business will sometimes go in the wrong direction. I'm sorry, I will focus on myself. So business will say we need more innovation. We're going to send a whole bunch of people off and they must learn innovation and then we'll hide them in a little group of people and keep them separate to everyone else and don't bother them with your problems. That's not how we're going to innovate. You should rather than sending them some way, get the biggest complainers in the business that have the biggest issues with your own

internal systems together to hash out what is really a problem and why it's driving them absolutely berserk and then get a whole bunch of people to help them think how it could be better and then using that to create amazing innovation. But we don't think about it like that. We don't operationalize it like that.

According to this research participants, the solution to the problem statement mentioned above is for leaders to be open minded, to allow and embrace innovation ideas from any part of the organization. This is because innovation ideas that could add value could emerge directly from the source of the request or where challenges are being experienced.

Therefore, having an open mind as presented above and creating an environment within the organization that is aware and recognizes that innovation can stem from anywhere within it are desired leadership behaviours. The role of the innovation leader would then shift towards soliciting and identify value adding ideas across the organization enabled through creating a tone of open ideation and learning.

Intrapersonal qualities that drive innovation implementation

Insights from research participants revealed that there are intrapersonal qualities as well as interpersonal qualities that leaders exhibit that can positively influence innovation implementation. This section focuses on findings related to intrapersonal qualities and will be followed with interpersonal qualities in the next section.

The first intrapersonal quality identified that research participants believe and have witnessed to positively influence innovation implementation in financial services organizations is authenticity.

An interesting observation from the research findings was that while most participants were of the strong view that leaders need to be authentic in whatever innovation they try to implement, there were some views from participants that lifted some concerns (although not very passionate) about the need for leaders to understand that being authentic does not make them vulnerable.

In almost all interviews conducted (13 out of 15), participants urged leaders to be authentic particularly when it comes to creating tones within the working environment. It emerged that employees tend to evaluate, judge and simply have a knack about

authenticity when leaders create spaces for them to table their ideas, explore those ideas and the space to fail.

Essentially, an insight emerged from the interview data that employees will trust a leader and only allow themselves to be vulnerable to some extent if they know that leader is authentic about creating a safe environment.

One participant summed this approach quite eloquently when they stated:

If you provide support and comfort in being empathetic it is easier for you to effectively take your hand and put it on top of the team as it were, and let them feel that they do not have to worry about making mistakes. So you would lean on whatever elements of your own individual personality come across or shine across better that way. You avoid being for lack of a better word, being fake.

Linked to this intrapersonal quality of authenticity discussed thus far, majority of the research participants (12 out of 15 to be exact) voiced their insights about leaders acknowledging that they do not know everything. While it is a fact that no one knows everything, it surfaced that from a behaviour perspective, some leaders act like they know everything based on their position of authority. This behaviour was heavily criticized by these participants.

Rather than pretending like they know everything and shutting the ideas of others down while at it, it emerged from the research participants that leaders ought to acknowledge what they do not know and be open to learning and open to understanding what other people (it could be their teams or stakeholders external to their team) bring forward as inputs, suggestions or ideas for innovation implementation.

Some participants were very specific and positioned the notion that a leader ought to have what they termed 'controlled vulnerability'. The key example provided concerning controlled vulnerability pertained to situations where a leader is not the knowledge expert at something. In such situations, controlled vulnerability involves a leader being able to ask for support. For example, one of the participants mentioned the below:

To influence people to actually buy into your innovation program, you need to engage with people who are knowledgeable in that organization and be vulnerable and understand their viewpoints cause you need to be able to incorporate what they think, and that's how you would get buy-in from them. So

influence requires controlled vulnerability as well. So, accepting when you don't know something because that creates a platform for people to understand that actually you know what. you're human after all and that can win them over.

The key insight extracted from the statement above is that a leader must be authentic to show this vulnerability as it signals to people that the leader is a genuine individual based on the premise that in reality, no one actually knows everything.

Another intrapersonal quality that was identified through the research interviews is the consistent application of personal values. Again, this finding is associated with VBL and a leader being authentic by standing behind their values and enacting those values.

Meaning if a leader has certain values, then they would need to follow them through consistently as well. According to research participant experiences that were shared in interviews, this approach is said to be effective for influencing. For example, a participant confirmed this position stating:

Yeah. I think also just in terms of influencing, I think people are more drawn to leaders who are consistent in what they do and take accountability. If you know a leader to live up to or ascribe to certain types of values, and they consistently follow those through. People are more drawn to that as well.

It follows that the consistent application of values and a leader's corresponding actions are observed by people. On the insight shared by the participant above, it seems that people gravitate towards authentic leaders that consistently demonstrate or enact specific values in a way that is habitual. This insight highlights that a leader takes accountability for the consistent application of their actions because they believe in the values behind them. Based on this insight, employees would then gravitate toward such a leader because they know what to expect from the leader as there is a pattern of consistent behaviour.

Finally, it was found that being aspirational is an intrapersonal quality that is useful to bolster influencing innovation implementation. Participants found this aspect be critical for moving or shifting ideas from 'self', into the working environment. Meaning, being aspirational sort of bridges a leader's values into the environment in which they are immersed. Based on the research interviews, it was found that transformational leaders that want to achieve change and transformation implant or sow the seeds of their aspirational views within their work environments. Participants were of the view that is

how a leader gets people around him to aspire to think and act like them because they fundamentally act different and are transparent about their values as discussed in this section above.

Interpersonal behaviours that drive innovation implementation

The research conducted with interview participants surfaced specific interpersonal behaviours that participants deemed to enhance innovation implementation. The first behaviour is that a leader must be decisive. It was stated by one participant that:

As a person of influence, you need to show that you can make decisions. Because if you seem to be faltering and not knowing what your direction is, again you not going to be influencing nobody. And I've seen this in most organizations that are turning around and where, you know, quick decisions are needed to take the organization forward. And if people feel that one you take long to make decisions or you're indecisive, they're not going to follow you. They're not going be interested in what you stand for, and you're not going to influencing nobody.

Based on the above, being decisive would appear to create credibility amongst peers and stakeholders. According to the narrative above, being a decisive leader signals a focused and intentional direction which in turn builds on the credibility of the leader and their ability to influence others on matters of innovation implementation.

Notwithstanding uncertainties that create an extra layer of complexity in terms of executing innovation implementation, the research conducted revealed that strategic decisions are always made with an enormous amount of uncertainty. The study identified an influential leader as one who demonstrates that they are open to uncertainty, are conscious and aware of uncertainty and also willing and able to manage that uncertainty.

As one participant responded on the need for decision making, they stated that:

You can make the wrong decision. You can be lucky and have made the right decision. But then the worst thing that you can ever do is make no decisions.

Therefore, it is evident from the research study that the demise of a strategic leader would be an inability to make decisions. Being undecisive is thus a negative behaviour that strategic leaders implementing innovation implementation would want to avoid.

On the contrary, the second interpersonal behaviour that was extracted from the research interviews pertains to leaders avoiding being emotional. Research participants cautioned against being too passionate. It was advocated by a select few that a leader should take emotion out of their views and focus on delivering the innovation implementation goals and bigger picture views.

Another interpersonal behaviour supported by research participants is for leaders to seek to understand others before others understand them. Research participants greatly favoured an approach where leaders take the time to know why things are the way they are before they attempt to influence innovation implementation solutions to any department within the organisation.

Finally, another interpersonal behaviour identified by participants to be effective for influencing innovation implementation is being confident. This insight was extremely common amongst all research participants. They highlighted the importance of confidence demonstrated from a subject matter expert perspective as it was viewed as one of the leadership qualities that helps to draw people to align in cases where there may have been divergent views from knowledge point of view.

While the view presented above rests on a leader's confidence influencing from a position of knowledge and objectivity, an interesting discovery emerged which centres on a leader's confidence influencing from a position of subjectivity. One participant mentioned the insight below in which they said:

I think the other one that is not spoken about a lot is just having presence and presence is, I don't know if it's a skill, but it's just something that you need to have. Like when you walk into a room you must be confident and you know, look like you know what you about to say. So for me, presence is the overarching thing that is required to be influential because if you think about it, if someone walks into a room and they like you know, not sure of themselves, not confident, you are not going be listening to that person and they are not going to be able to influence you.

Based on the dichotomous views presented above, an appropriate analogy to describe the dual benefits of confidence is that it serves two masters ie fact and subjective. The appeal to rationale and appeal to subjectivity ideally positions being confident as a behaviour that increases the chances for convincing people.

General positive behavioural traits that inspire and motivate stakeholders

The final theme identified that contributes to the theoretical construct of 'positive enabling behaviours' was general positive behaviour that inspires and motivates stakeholders.

The research interviews conducted revealed that to achieve the outcome of inspiring and motivating stakeholders, a leader is required to appeal to stakeholders thinking. This was identified as the most fundamental step.

It emerged from the research interviews that being able to appeal to stakeholders thinking has specific indicators of success. These include having changed stakeholder divergent opinions; having stakeholders aligned in thinking; having stakeholders thinking differently in the direction you want them to think and having stakeholders thinking more broadly, openly and freely.

Of the four indicators mentioned above, it was identified that getting stakeholders to align in thinking was considered the most important one because it cuts across aspects such as conflict resolution discussed earlier in this findings section as well as mobilization of people towards the strategic leader's vision and objectives for innovation implementation.

It was also identified that aligning stakeholders thinking is not simplistic. This was acknowledged by a participant who stated that getting stakeholders to align in thinking is about:

Changing or impacting stakeholders thoughts about things. So it could be about their attitudes towards things because they could be against something, but you could change their attitude towards that.

In essence what is described by the participant is that aligning stakeholders thinking includes shifting attitudes, biases, defences and divergent views and getting them to start thinking in the same way.

The research also found that the above is very useful when dealing with scenarios involving multiple senior executives and or stakeholders that are driving their own agenda. In such cases, a success indicator would entail getting other executives to think more broadly than their own agenda and focus on common or holistic innovation

implementation solutions that benefits the organization rather their own departments or portfolios.

Another behaviour that was identified to generally inspire employees towards innovation implementation that is linked to appealing to people's thinking is allowing employees to think openly and freely.

This behaviour was found to be associated with giving employees some level of freedom to think in a way in which they are empowered to find solutions for themselves, or at least provided with an opportunity to contribute to proposed innovation solutions.

This finding requires an innovation strategic leader to take a step back and present an opportunity to facilitate emergence of innovative solutions to a problem rather than coming to diagnose the problem. Research participants believed taking this inclusion type of approach creates openness in the sense that the leader does not 'box' employees in such a way that prevents any ideas, inputs or contribution towards finding an innovative solution.

This issue was expressed by a participant who stated:

You know not to box them in a way in which you actually stifling them and organizations often make that mistake. We have put you in a box, you know. And I kind of say this is your mandate. This is all you allowed to do. And that kills a career. That kills an individual. People need to be given the freedom to be innovative.

It emerged from 14 out of 15 interview participants that by giving employees freedom, it inspires them to be innovative because it empowers anyone to put forward ideas of innovation. Interview participant experiences further revealed that in turn, such inspiration is evident when people across the organization showcase their talents, skills and mobilize towards developing innovative solutions to their problems. This creates prospects for a strategic leader to maximize pockets of collaboration opportunities coming from different people's skillsets and harnessing that inspiration towards taking the innovation implementation agenda forward and to the next level.

An important finding derived from the scenario described above is that in essence, a strategic leader will have inadvertently created an environment where people in the organization generally think broader, holistically and bigger than their actual day-to-day

roles. The leader will have created an environment where the objective is to make bigger, impactful and better innovation solutions that meet the needs of the organisation for the future.

Upon interrogating this finding further, it emerged that a leader shifting their mindset towards being open for innovation to come from anywhere within the organization stems from a leader acknowledging that the priority is to be effective by not limiting innovation to come from a designated innovation team or department which may have been the norm for many years.

Rather a shift in approach where effective engagement (discussed earlier) is adopted in which leaders listen actively with the intent to understand ideas that emerge from anywhere with the organization, coupled with flexibility around innovation implementation that is forward looking into the future.

As all departments in an organization look towards the future from a strategy perspective, that is an opportunity that innovation leaders need to leverage and absorb ideas from such sources. This approach was perfectly summed up by one of the participants who stated:

The first thing is that the leader must change. The objective here is not continuing with what I know and what I do and do that faster or better. The actual objective here is that how can we actually make a bigger impact, how can we be more optimal, what is the best solution for the future? The world has changed. What do we do now, we can't just continue doing the old thing because it's not as effective anymore. So if the leader isn't in that space, you are going to have a problem.

A closer look at the finding discussed above provides the insight that greater involvement of stakeholders and employees from any part of the organization fosters a culture of motivation for innovation implementation within the organization.

This insight emerges from participant recommendations that a shift towards a consultative and inclusive approach is needed whereby innovation leaders adapt their approach towards meeting the needs within the organization as opposed to prescribing innovation solutions without any consultation which they used to do in the past.

Research participants advocated that a consultative and inclusive approach motivates employees across the organization because it extends the innovation implementation value chain to everyone within the organization. In other words, strategic leaders become adaptive in their way of influencing across the whole organization in a meaningful way that aims for optimization of an organization's systems and or processes.

Finally, a key insight that emerged from research interviews is that inspiring employees cannot be achieved if a leader is not inspired by their own vision. An illustration of this insight was provided by a very senior executive of a globally acclaimed insurance company who stated:

So I think if I look and I'm going to use my own example right. It's about being passionate about something, right? So when I'm passionate about something then people feel that passion and feel that energy and they want to be part of it and they say, you know, I like your vision. I want to be part of that. It's quite hard if I get given something to do that I'm not passionate about and I don't even think it's a great idea. It's quite hard to inspire other people to do that. So the best thing to do is the innovative things that you want to do, what you want to be involved in and what you believe in. It really should be something that you must get your passion at first. Have passion and excitement and motivation and really believe in it. Because then when you do that, it becomes easier to sell that to somebody because it's something that is not a sales pitch but something you really believe in, right? It's something you really want to do. People will say I like how passionate you are about this you know. Well certainly that's been my success.

The statement from the senior executive's experience illustrates how passion and self-drive attribute to successfully motivating others. It illustrates that employees evaluate the energy projected by strategic leaders when they attempt to influence them. It illustrates that there is a combination of appeals to various aspects of human interaction. According to this quotation, there is an appeal to emotion, there is a rational appeal, there is an appeal to liking and also an appeal to acceptance through credibility that emerges from this leader's authenticity. Overall, based on this example, the key insight derived is that being passionate is a positive behaviour that can inspire and motivate stakeholders.

Section 5.6: Chapter Conclusion

By way of concluding Chapter 5, this section reflects on the key milestones delivered by this chapter.

First, the theme of the chapter was a presentation of the research findings which emerged from semi-structured interviews conducted with 15 participants from South Africa's financial services sector. The chapter commenced with identifying the two groups of participants which included business professionals as well as industry experts knowledgeable on the overall research topic.

This was followed by an outline of the data analysis process that generated the research findings presented in the rest of the chapter.

Thereafter, Chapter 5 presented the research findings for both Research Question 1 and Research Question 2.

Based on the analysis of data obtained from the interview participants, three answers emerged that addressed Research Question 1: How do strategic leaders influence innovation implementation? It was found that strategic leaders do this through persuasion, negotiation and by building resilience.

Specific to persuasion, this is achieved by having an appeal to people's actions in the absence of the use of power and authority. It was found that persuasion is further supplemented by specific persuasion skills used to bolster the role of leaders as influencers.

In terms of negotiation, the chapter presented how listening with empathy and the intent to understand, as well as effective engagements are critical components required for excellent negotiation skills.

The chapter then proceeded to present how strategic leaders factor in building resilience as part of innovation implementation. To achieve this, specific threats confronting innovation implementation were identified and subsequently followed by how to build resilience against those threats.

The chapter then progressed to present two specific mechanisms that are used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation in addressing Research

Question 2. It was found that the key mechanisms are effective engagements and positive enabling behaviours that influence innovation implementation.

In terms of effective engagements, the chapter presented strategies that yield success in engagements. It also presented findings on how to resolve conflict and tensions that may be encountered during the innovation implementation journey. Furthermore, a presentation on how to manage expectations was delivered. These three themes formed the basis of the mechanism of effective engagements.

In addition, the chapter presented 5 specific strategies linked to positive behaviours that enable strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation. These included the VBL leadership style, setting a positive tone in the working environment, intrapersonal qualities that drive innovation implementation, interpersonal qualities that drive innovation implementation and general positive behavioural traits that inspire and motivate stakeholders to innovate.

Although the findings presented in this chapter are not exhaustive of the overall finding obtained in the overall research study, the findings presented were carefully selected and classified as key findings. In conclusion, the next chapter of the research report discusses the findings presented in Chapter 5 in relation to academic theory.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

Section 6.1: Introduction

The primary focus of this chapter is an academic analysis of the research findings presented in Chapter 5 against the initial insights that emerged from the literature review discussed in Chapter 2.

A comparison between the interview findings and the initial findings in the literature was performed. Similarities and differences between findings obtained from the interviews and the insights initially derived in the literature review were highlighted and discussed.

As points of difference are potential contributions to the existing body of academic literature, a deep dive into the details of the point of differences and/or nuances of difference to check and challenge against 'new literature' was performed. In other words, an additional literature review was performed to ensure that any tentative proposed claims of new contributions based on differences identified were confirmed through an additional review of literature.

If a difference and/or nuance of difference held up against this test, that was likely to be claimed as a contribution within the context of this topic.

This chapter informed concluding claims and or contributions that were both well understood and verified. This chapter played a critical role in generating outcomes that informed the content of Chapter 7.

Section 6.2: Cluster of research participants

One of the fundamental departure points of Chapter 2 was the specific identification of individuals that fall in the academic definition of 'strategic leader'. Chapter 2 delineated these individuals and ringfenced the occupations that positioned them within the ambit of that definition. To this end, the interview participants that contributed to the findings and insights presented in Chapter 5 were carefully selected according to this academic criterion.

According to Cortes & Herrman (2021), Withers & Fitz (2017), Heavy et al. (2020) and Samimi et al. (2020), individuals that occupy the positions of chief executive officers, members of board of directors, members of top management teams (TMT) and middle-

level executives respectively, are strategic leaders. As such, only individuals occupying these positions were selected as interview participants for the study.

Table 2 below is an updated version of Table 1 from Chapter 5, which maps each participant (*represented by the heading 'Participant Code'*) to the occupations identified in Chapter 2.

It is evident from the below that there were no deviations from the ringfenced thematic occupations recommended by scholars for this research. Thus, consistency and integrity of the scope of the recommended research was maintained.

Table 2: Cross mapping of research participants interviewed to ringfenced occupations in academic literature

Interview	Participant Code	Analysis Group 1	Occupation	Strategic Leader Theme
1	AG	Professional	Head of Department	Middle-level executive
2	AM	Professional	Head of Department	Middle -level executive
3	AS	Professional	C-Suite Officer	Executive board member
4	CD	Professional	Group Head	TMT
5	CH	Professional	Head of Department	Middle-level executive
6	DD	Professional	C-Suite Officer	Executive board member
7	KW	Professional	Chief Strategy Officer	Executive board member
8	MB	Professional	Group Head	TMT
9	MM_2022-09-23	Professional	C-Suite Officer	Executive board member
10	MM_2022-08-24	Professional	Chief Executive	CEO
11	NS	Professional	Group Head	TMT
12	RB	Professional	Head of Department	Middle -level executive
13	TK	Professional	Chief Executive	CEO
Interview	Code	Analysis Group 2		
14	DM	Expert		
15	LB	Expert		

Source: Author's Own

Application of a consistent selection criteria with the academic literature reviewed in Chapter 2 ensured the fieldwork research would maintain the essence of specific replicability of a ringfenced population.

In addition, it ensured that the study focused on the correct level of leaders as the study was focused on the theoretical construct of a 'strategic leader' as the targeted participants. Interviewing persons outside the ambit of the definition and specific occupations ringfenced in Chapter 2 would not have aligned with the research question

and would have included insights from a population of professions whose experiences and knowledge would have produced skewed data.

By applying a consistent approach to the recommended occupations from the academic scholars reviewed, the study ensured that only insights of true strategic leadership level participants would contribute to the answers for the research questions.

In conclusion, from a sample population perspective this section demonstrates the finding that the current study upheld the integrity of the scope of the research as prescribed by Sammimi et al.,(2020) thus legitimising the findings from the research interviews from Chapter 5 that will form part of the outcomes of this chapter.

The next section discusses the findings that emerged from the research interviews. The findings are presented according to research questions. This was the structure deemed most appropriate to deliver the findings. The structure is also aligned to Chapter 5 from a consistency perspective.

Section 6.3: Research Question 1: How do strategic leaders influence innovation implementation

This section addresses the first research question of the study which states: How do strategic leaders influence innovation implementation?

The objective of this section is to discuss insights that emerged from the original literature review in Chapter 2 against insights that emerged directly from the interview findings presented in Chapter 5.

To this end, this section discusses both similarities and differences as well as incorporate additional theoretical insights that either confirm or discount proposed claims and contributions that emerge from the interview findings during the discussion.

Section 6.3.1: Finding number one – Persuasion

Summary of interview findings

According to the thematic analysis performed on the data obtained from the research interviews, it emerged that strategic leaders use persuasion to influence innovation implementation.

An in-depth analysis of this finding from Chapter 5 revealed that combining the ability to appeal to people's actions without the use of force, power and authority, coupled with specific skills that will convince people will influence the behaviour of stakeholders towards innovation implementation.

More specifically, the interview findings in Chapter 5 revealed some specific persuasive actions and behaviours that strategic leaders use to influence innovation implementation.

For example, the interview findings emphasized that strategic leaders should not use force, authority or their power as the basis to get people to execute on the innovation implementation vision and objectives. Instead, the findings placed emphasis on the behaviour of leaders convincing people without the use of force, power or authority and letting people exercise their free will and choice. This approach was viewed to have the potential to yield more sustainable results and build a good leadership reputation which can be used as a lever to influence innovation implementation as opposed to being viewed as a dictatorial leader.

The interview findings in Chapter 5 also clarified that power and authority dynamics shift across organizational interactions and engagements thus the use of force, power and or authority is not sustainable. For example, applied laterally, the legitimacy of power and authority is likely to be checked and challenged by other leaders at the same level. In addition, findings also emerged that applied to employees on lower levels or direct reports, use of force, power and authority tends to only unlock minimal innovation potential. While applied vertically, the use of force on higher levels may not even be possible.

Further to the above, the interview findings in Chapter 5 provided detailed accounts of persuasion behaviours and skills that bolster the role of strategic leaders as influencers.

In other words, specific behaviours and skills that strategic leaders need to adopt in order to be effective at influencing were presented.

On the one hand, examples of specific behaviours presented in Chapter 5 were that strategic leaders need to avail themselves as well as be accessible to their teams and stakeholders and that strategic leaders are required to constantly be inspiring employees. On the other hand, an example of a specific skill presented was that a strategic leader should be able to adopt the skill of agile thinking in real-time in order to

be effective at decision making. These were examples of two key behaviours and skills believed to increase the ability of strategic leaders to persuade stakeholders.

The next section below discusses key similarities identified between insights initially obtained in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview research findings presented in Chapter 5.

Similarity number one

A similarity identified between the literature and the interview findings in Chapter 5 relates to the concept of discretionary influence discussed in Chapter 2. The literature surfaced that strategic leaders generally use discretionary influence through actions and behaviours that influence innovation implementation (Cortes & Herrman, 2021).

Likewise, the interview findings in Chapter 5 discussed specific persuasive actions and behaviours that strategic leaders use to influence innovation implementation.

According to additional literature reviewed, a research study conducted by social psychologists in the United Kingdom (UK) on vocabularies of social influence, the study explored the meaning of 'persuasion'. It came to light that from a pure academic scholarship perspective there is no agreed definition of persuasion (Gass & Seiter, 2018). It also surfaced that there is a lot of scholarship pertaining to what persuading someone means and its relationship to convincing as well as force or coercion (Huma et al, 2021).

Notwithstanding the above, that study provided insights that confirm the interview findings in Chapter 5 that the outcome of persuasion is achieved in the absence of force, power or authority. Specifically, that UK study conducted in the additional literature review revealed that 'persuading', 'convincing' or 'changing someone's mind' appeals to "a moral accountability of influencing others" [pg.319] (Huma et al.2021).

As it was found that there is a moral dilemma when it comes to persuading people because it infringes on people's autonomy, persuasion has come to be understood as the ability to "shift someone from one robustly held stance to another" [pg.319] (Huma et al.2021) "without reliance on implicit or explicit threats or restricting the influencee's freedom to respond" [pg.320] (Huma et al.2021).

Based on the additional literature discussed above, it can be surmised that the findings in Chapter 5 pertaining to the identification of persuasion being the ability to influence without the use of implicit or explicit force is confirmed.

The confirmation not only pertains to how persuasion is applied to other people (ie no use of implicit force such as power and authority nor explicit force such as threats or shutting people down and not allowing them to speak up or respond) but also pertains to confirmation of its stature as a means of influence which in the context of this study can be used to drive innovation implementation.

The next section below discusses key differences identified between insights obtained in the original literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview research findings presented in Chapter 5.

In terms of differences identified between the insights that surfaced from the literature review and insights that emerged from the research data, three key differences were earmarked for discussion in this section.

Difference Number One

Unlike the interview findings, firstly the literature review did not disclose how strategic leaders should influence in a manner that yields sustainable influence outcomes.

In contrast to the literature review in Chapter 2, the interview findings in Chapter 5 clarified that power and authority dynamics shift across organizational interactions thus the use of force, power and or authority is not sustainable.

Additional literature was reviewed to assess whether the claim deduced from interviews that good leadership reputation is a lever of persuasion could be a new insight.

Accordingly, Laksmita & Sukirman (2020), confirm this insight in a study they conducted on leadership reputation in 2020. They found that reputation is an image of a leader that is built over time and that stakeholders within an organization tend to be influenced more by leaders that have built good reputations and have maintained a positive image (Laksmita & Sukirman, 2020).

These scholars argued that the better the reputation of the leader, the more possible it is to influence within an organization (Laksmita & Sukirman, 2020). An interesting

observation from the additional literature review that emerged was that in an earlier study conducted by Mukhtaruddin et al. (2018), these scholars had found that leaders are able to maintain good leadership reputations by working objectively, treating people fairly and through being knowledgeable enough to detect organizational problems and finding innovative ways to resolve problems. Furthermore, where leaders manage to maintain good reputations, it was found that employees tend not to easily lose their trust in them (Mukhtaruddin et al., 2018).

It would appear that in the later quantitative study that followed a few years after the Mukhtaruddin et al. (2018) study, Laksmi & Sukirman (2020) built on some of the principal findings of the earlier study and posited the conclusion that good reputation built over time by leaders has a positive effect both on persuasion and influence. Lastly, they added that once a positive reputation is built, leaders tend to protect their reputations and avoid the risk of tarnishing that reputation, Laksmi & Sukirman (2020).

Given the discussion above, the additional literature reviewed which expanded the depth of the initial discussion in Chapter 2 confirmed the interview finding in Chapter 5 that from an influencing perspective, a good leadership reputation is a lever of persuasion.

Therefore, based on both literature reviews performed and the interviews conducted, this study tentatively claims that a good leadership reputation is a lever of persuasion that can be used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this theme will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as an extension of the knowledge explored in the context of this research study.

Difference Number Two

Another difference spotted between the original literature review and the interview findings was that from a discretionary influence perspective, the literature review in Chapter 2 only provided a high-level view that a strategic leader needs to implement certain actions (Cortes & Herrman, 2021). Yet the interview findings in Chapter 5 provided detailed accounts of specific persuasive actions that strategic leaders are required to implement to influence innovation implementation.

The difference is that the interview findings were prescriptive of the specific actions and behaviours required to influence innovation implementation as opposed to the initial

literature review conducted in Chapter 2. The interview findings did not leave the reader seeking exact actions and or behaviours on how to persuade as compared to the literature review. Generally, a myriad of actions was discussed in Chapter 5, however the strongest one identified is discussed in the section below.

Difference Number Three

Still on discretionary influence, the third difference identified between the literature review in Chapter 2 and the interview findings presented in Chapter 5 relates to decision making as a persuasive action that influences innovation implementation.

The main difference identified was that Chapter 2 discussed decision making from an asynchronous point of view. In other words, decision making was positioned as if it occurs in isolation of other factors and as a stand-alone aspect considered in isolation.

Yet the reality is that decision making is central to all actions, behaviours and planning that goes into innovation implementation. Thus, without sounding too critical, the original literature review was limited in that it only provided insights on decision making in the context of strategic planning (Simsek et al., 2018) (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

In comparison to the literature review, over and above decision making in the context of strategic planning, the interview findings highlighted the importance of agile thinking in real-time decision-making across all scenarios involving innovation implementation. This insight presented in Chapter 5 was identified as a potential nuance of difference that could be positioned as a contribution to the literature.

Given the limited scope discussed in the original literature review in Chapter 2 on decision making, it was prudent for additional literature to be reviewed to assess whether this finding could be claimed as a nuance of difference from a theoretical perspective.

Based on the additional literature review conducted, it was found that agile thinking is a long standing and extremely well researched academic construct. The earliest academic literature that was identified on this topic dated back to as early as the year 1990 (Haycock, 2012). An academic article reviewed stated it was from the year 1990 that a definition has been consistently maintained which positions agile thinking as thinking that has speed, flexibility and that creates value (Haycock, 2012).

In a more recent study, Dhir (2020) used the same principles of this definition in an academic research article and added that the value of agile thinking is realized with being able to “deal with ambiguous and emergent circumstances” [pg.177] (Dhir (2020).

In the context of the current research study, the contribution of Dhir (2020) to the existing body of literature can be viewed as leaders being able to think in a way that is very quick, flexible. Value and benefit emerge when faced with unexpected and even ambiguous situations and decisions are efficiently made albeit the challenging circumstances. Being able to execute this skill would be critical for a strategic leader as the innovation environment and demands within financial services organisations are constantly changing as discussed in Chapter 5.

In addition to the above, it was acknowledged that agile thinking presents the following top three advantages from an influencing perspective. First, it is speedy and cancels out delays that may hinder innovation implementation in the face of uncertain and or ambiguous situations (Dhir, 2020). Secondly, it provides flexibility in the sense that leaders can be creative in their efforts to resolve problems (Dhir 2020) and thirdly the resolution of problems or challenges would be one that brings value into the organization in the sense that innovation implementation blockers are either completely removed, mitigated or circumvented (Dhir, 2020).

Based on the discussion above, it would appear that the tentative claim from the interview findings in Chapter 5 that adopting the skills of agile thinking in real-time improves decision making effectiveness is confirmed in the already existing body of literature and scholarship. To be precise, the literature positions agile thinking as an antecedent of decision making (Dhir, 2020), meaning it is a necessary step for the implementation of decision making in the organizational context (Dhir, 2020). This is aligned to the business language-based definition provided by a participants in Chapter 5 who described agile thinking as ‘being able to think on one’s feet’.

Therefore, based on the evidence obtained from additional literature reviewed, this study claims the nuance of difference that agile thinking in real-time enables effective decision making which can be used by strategic leaders to persuade for the implementation of innovation particularly in the face of uncertain and or ambiguous situations.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this nuance of difference will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as a nuance of difference in the context of this research study.

Section 6.3.2: Finding number two – Negotiation

Summary of interview findings

According to the thematic analysis performed on the data obtained from the research interviews, it was found that strategic leaders use negotiation to influence innovation implementation.

An in-depth analysis of this finding from Chapter 5 revealed that strategic leaders combine listening with empathy with fostering a culture of listening in the work environment and use effective communication for driving successful negotiations to influence innovation implementation.

More specifically, the findings presented in Chapter 5 highlighted the need for strategic leaders to be self-convinced first such that they can influence others. The findings also revealed that if a strategic leader is not clear on the goals, objectives or the direction pursued, it becomes difficult to influence people. Furthermore, the interview findings revealed that if a leader is self-convinced, the level of clarity delivered when negotiating with stakeholders becomes very convincing.

Findings obtained from the interviews advocated for strategic leaders to foster a culture that encourages innovation by creating safe spaces for employees across the organisation to be creative. These should be spaces where negotiation discussions on whether innovation ideas generated can be implemented are characterised by continuous testing of those ideas, respectful checking and challenge as well as providing feedback to stakeholders in a way that does not discourage but builds trust.

In terms of effective communication that improves influencing through negotiations, it emerged from the interview findings that effective communication requires 'dual interaction'. Research participants advocated for leaders to create room for 'dual interaction' to take place. It was further emphasised that part of this engagement involves leaders deliberately listening to others, thereby allowing others the opportunity to speak and be heard and allowing employees to provide the leader with feedback.

According to the experiences endured by some participants that contributed to this insight, it was highlighted that creating a space where 'dual interaction' happens correctly, that is when strategic leaders also listen and obtain an understanding of the thoughts, ideas and overall contributions from others, these are negotiation spaces that increase the influencing potential of leaders.

On the matter of making decisions in negotiations engagements, a critical insight was provided where strategic leaders were cautioned not compromise on what should not be compromised on the face of difficult conversations with stakeholders as withdrawing decisions post negotiation engagements was identified as a behaviour that limits a leader's influence as it makes a leader lose credibility with stakeholders.

The interview findings also delineated the approaches deemed to be successful strategies of negotiation engagements. It was acknowledged that engagements with senior stakeholders such as board directors presents the greatest challenge. The reason for the difficulty at a senior level is that while senior leaders have the power and authority, engagements usually start from a point of divergent views. It was explained that the power dynamics at this level are complex. In most cases a strategic leader would not be able to use power or authority on a peer at the same level which makes good negotiation skills extremely valuable.

Having discounted the use coercion, power and authority levers because they will not work at this level, the only available means of influencing is to get to a position of alignment and obtain the desired decisions from senior executives within the organization through negotiation. Therefore, the interview findings revealed a very important insight that when it comes to operating at a senior level, the ability to negotiate is an essential requirement.

The next section below discusses key similarities identified between insights initially obtained in the original literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview research findings presented in Chapter 5.

Similarity Number One

On the construct of negotiation, a key finding presented in Chapter 5 that was found to be similar to the insights that surfaced in the literature review in Chapter 2 was that both chapters referred to the importance of delivering clear communication.

For example, the interview findings presented in Chapter 5 highlighted the need for strategic leaders to self-convinced first such that they can influence others by communicating clear goals, objectives and the direction pursued in terms of implementing innovation.

Likewise, a similar insight had initially surfaced in Chapter 2 where the literature had indicated that clear interactions are fundamental to influencing desired outcomes within an organization (Simsek et al., 2018).

Combining both views from their respective chapters it is submitted that clear communication plays a fundamental part in negotiations as it can be one of the antecedents to influencing stakeholders in the context of negotiation engagements.

No fundamental theoretical difference was identified from the assessment conducted on the first similarity discussed above, thus there is no impact on the conceptual framework from a theoretical principal perspective.

Similarity Number Two

The second similarity identified between the literature review in Chapter 2 and the interview findings in Chapter 5 relates to how interactions should be done (duly identified as 'interfaces' in Chapter 2). More specifically, the similarity identified was that both chapters highlighted the importance of respectful interactions.

In addition to the above, both the literature review and the interview findings aligned on the insight that the roles and responsibilities of a strategic leader include deliberate actions that promote well defined engagements and interactions with stakeholders in the innovation implantation value chain (Simsek et al., 2018).

While the literature review in Chapter 2 positioned that a strategic leader is required to determine the frequency, scope and mode of such engagements (Simsek et al., 2018), similarly the research findings positioned key behaviours, values and virtues that should underpin engagements with stakeholders. It was within both contexts that respect emerged as one of the fundamental values that underpin successful negotiation interactions that influence innovation implementation.

Transposed to how engagements should be conducted, it was submitted that respectful engagements (*notwithstanding how frequent they happen, the mode in which they happen which could be face to face or virtually and the scope or priority agenda*) would be central to how negotiation engagements should be conducted.

Therefore, in as far as the second similarity is concerned, no fundamental theoretical difference was identified from the assessment conducted on the second similarity

discussed above, thus there is no impact on the conceptual framework from a theoretical principal perspective.

The next section below discusses key differences identified between insights initially obtained in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview findings presented in Chapter 5.

In terms of differences identified between the insights that surfaced from the literature review and insights that emerged from the research data, three key differences were earmarked for discussion in this chapter.

Difference Number One

The first difference identified was that the literature review in Chapter 2 positioned communication in a very linear way. More specifically the literature review positioned communication from the angle of interactions directed towards employees who are direct reports to strategic leaders (Simsek et al. 2018). It was focused on one way communication, predominantly referencing top-down communication.

Unlike the one-way, top-down communication positioned in the literature review in Chapter 2, the interview findings in Chapter 5 positioned communication as dual interaction. The findings proposed that successful negotiations are facilitated through dual interaction.

Additional literature was reviewed to assess whether the claim deduced from interview findings on dual interaction could be a nuance of difference on the original theme of 'communication'. Coupled with whether dual interaction increases the likelihood of successful negotiation as means of ultimately influencing innovation implementation.

Upon reviewing additional literature to assess whether dual interaction is indeed a potential new contribution to the existing body of literature, it was found that dual interaction is embedded within an academic theme known as 'accommodation'.

According to academic scholars, accommodation is defined as a phenomenon of intercommunication that entails adaptation or adjustment made by the interlocutor (person speaking or communicating a message) to better connect with the persons they are speaking with (Seel et al., 2021). To note that an emphasis is placed on the term

'speaking with' as opposed to 'speaking to'. The reason being that accommodation, to Chapter 5's point pertains to dual interaction.

The adaptations made by the interlocutor are aimed at bringing the communication partner into the conversation through several tactics such as physical posture, voice intensity and eye contact for example (Seel et al., 2021). Other academic work reviewed on this phenomenon posited that accommodation happens both intentionally or consciously and can also happen unintentionally (Schlegel & Scherer, 2017).

A critique observed was that some scholars were of the view that accommodation doesn't always happen (Schlegel & Scherer, 2017). When it does, the literature states that it starts by the interlocutor trying to recognize and acknowledging the communication partner as a means of simplifying interaction through reducing uncertainty and increasing understandability between the interacting parties (Seel et al., 2021). In other words, the interlocutor will do what they can to adjust towards the communication partner to simplify communication and increase engagement.

However, another critique surfaced that argued that the downside is that the interlocutor gives up part of their individuality in doing so, which was also identified as one of the reasons why in some cases there is no accommodation at all and there is only one way communication (Schlegel & Scherer, 2017).

The discussion above assisted in understanding why one way communication may be the potential default for most leaders (as positioned by the original literature review in Chapter 2).

The additional literature revealed that there is a cost the interlocutor must pay, which in the case of a leader would entail giving up part of their individuality to 'accommodate' the communication partner (Schlegel & Scherer, 2017). In the case of this current study, this may be a strategic leader's authority and power discussed earlier in this chapter whereas they could have simply instructed their subordinates or coerced them. However, as discussed earlier, this method does not yield sustainable influence and does not unlock the full potential of effort from employees.

Therefore, based on the additional review conducted above, it is claimed that accommodation is a nuance of difference that has been positively identified.

Furthermore, based on the additional literature review, it appears that giving up power and authority to accommodate stakeholders and allow for dual interaction in negotiation engagements is required for a strategic leader to yield sustainable influence on the stakeholders as opposed to one-way communication. This is a nuance of difference that could be added to the extension of the knowledge in the context of this study

Accordingly, based on the discussion above, it is warranted that the theme 'accommodation' is included under the theoretical construct 'negotiation' being one of the ways strategic leaders influence innovation implementation.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this theme will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as an extension of the knowledge explored in the context of this research study.

Difference Number Two

The second difference that was identified between the literature review insights provided in Chapter 2 versus the interview findings presented in Chapter 5 pertains to negotiation strategy where it was recommended in interviews that leaders should consider use of the best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA) negotiation tactic.

While Chapter 2 highlighted that there are specific behaviours that influence innovation implementation, the findings in Chapter 5 cautioned strategic leaders to be careful when making decisions in negotiation discussions and not compromise on aspects that should not be compromised. The finding adds that leaders should deploy negotiation tools such as considering the BATNA when making decisions during negotiations to avoid this.

As this insight had not initially emerged in Chapter 2, additional literature was reviewed to assess whether this insight was indeed potentially a new theme that could extend the existing body of literature on negotiations through this study.

The additional literature reviewed revealed that BATNA is an already existing theme in academic literature. BATNA was found to be a strategy used for winning negotiations (Hughes & Ertel, 2020).

Based on the literature reviewed, one of the key applications of BATNA identified to be useful for the current study was the guidance that in negotiations where one feels powerless, one needs to find a viable alternative for the other party as opposed to only

considering the best alternative for oneself as the classical application of BATNA suggests (Hughes & Ertel, 2020).

Scholars recommended that sometimes this may require narrowing the scope of the initial deal and jointly evaluating the pain points or areas presenting the most challenge for the other party and calculate removing that challenging area completely from the deal (Hughes & Ertel, 2020).

Although there is a price to pay for considering alternatives for the other party, rethinking the scope of the deal and not taking the parameters of deal as a given as well as not only considering how close to the desired outcome one can get helps to shift one's thinking towards considering the opportunities that can be unlocked by achieving an even footing as opposed to just winning (Hughes & Ertel, 2020).

Applying the approach discussed above within the context of internal negotiations between strategic leaders and stakeholders, lessons can be drawn that a shift in mindset towards achieving an even footing or a win-win situation would reap a more beneficial outcome for all parties. In the context of this study, an even footing would be considering the best outcome for the organisation as opposed to departments, portfolios, personal agendas or ego.

Based on the additional literature reviewed above, it is deduced that moving away from the approach of negotiating to win, towards negotiating to achieve the best outcome for the organization by presenting alternatives or options (such as narrowing the scope of the aspect of negotiation) will likely change the outlook of negotiation engagements from the perspective of the stakeholder particularly in instances where the strategic leader is selling an idea and increase influence.

Given the approach discussed above, the additional literature review confirmed that BATNA is a negotiation tactic. However, based on the insights that emerged from the additional review, it is warranted that 'rethink the scope rather than compromise' is included is a potential extension of the existing knowledge in the context of this study on the theory construct 'negotiation' in the updated conceptual framework.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this outcome will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as an extension of the knowledge explored in the context of this research study.

Difference Number Three

The third difference observed between the insights that emerged from the literature review in Chapter 2 and the findings that emerged from interviews in Chapter 5 was that the literature review was silent on how to communicate effectively across the various levels within an organization.

In contrast, the interview findings provided this view. Unlike the insights that emerged from the literature review which did not provide any specific negotiation skills related insights, some insights emerged from the interviews which highlighted the core skills required for successful negotiations.

The top key skills included reasonably meeting the needs of the negotiation counterpart. It also included taking into consideration (as part of the negotiating strategy) that the counterpart will want to know what is in it for them. In other words, a strategic leader would be required to have a firm understanding of the benefits that can be extended to the counterpart and being able to communicate these benefits in a manner that is clear.

Based on the interview findings, it is claimed that the most important skill that enhances positive outcomes from negotiation engagements is the ability to position benefits in the context of how either the stakeholder or the organization will benefit from the innovation, an approach research participants called 'framing the benefits'.

According to additional literature reviewed to better understand the notion of framing, it was found that framing is described as a mind game as well as a mechanism of nudging which can be a very effective way to influence (Dimant et al., 2020).

It was also learnt that through communication, framing pertains to how an interlocutor presents an idea or phenomenon to their audience. One school of thought revealed that an idea or phenomenon could be positioned or messaged in a positive or negative way or in an inverted and equivalent opposite way depending on the desired influence outcome (Chang et al., 2019). It was also found that existing research suggests that people react to positive or negative frames differently (Bicchieri & Dimant, 2019).

A study conducted on the same concept concluded a year later build upon this insight by giving it an academic name called 'the principle of description invariance' (Dimant et al., 2020) where for example "two phrases can mean the same thing"[pg.18] (Sunstein, 2017), however one can be positioned in such a way scholars believe to be legitimately

manipulative (Sunstein, 2017). For example, “if a company says that its product is 90% fat-free, people are likely to be drawn to it, far more so than if the company says that its product is “10% fat’.” [pg.18] (Sunstein, 2017). What is fascinating about framing is that framing (positive framing or inverted in a negative way) can be designed and implemented in such a way that gets people to opt out of what would have been the default action.

Applied to the current study, framing innovation propositions in such a way that would get stakeholders to opt out of what would have been a negative response or outcome would be a desirable outcome from a negotiation perspective. Converting an almost guaranteed potential negative outcome into a positive outcome would be indicative of a successful campaign to influence the stakeholder.

Based on the discussions above, one can see why the challenge with framing is that it can be considered misleading or manipulative. If applied by strategic leaders, this approach would require that framing be used responsibly and ethically in negotiations.

Notwithstanding all due considerations discussed above, it is warranted that ‘responsible and ethical framing’ be included as an extension of knowledge under the theoretical construct ‘negotiation’ in the updated conceptual framework.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this insight will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as an extension of the knowledge explored in the context of this research study.

Section 6.3.3: Finding number three - Resilience

Summary of interview findings

The third and last finding presented in Chapter 5 in response to Research Question 1 was centred on the theoretical construct of ‘resilience’. According to the thematic analysis performed on the data obtained from the research interviews, it was found that strategic leaders foster resilience strategies to counter threats when influencing innovation implementation.

An in-depth analysis of this finding from Chapter 5 revealed that in times of uncertainty, ambiguity and failure, strategic leaders provide guidance in a way that does not attack

or discredit anyone's dignity, they maintain mutual respect and professionalism and that is what builds resilience in their working environments.

Research findings in Chapter 5 were very specific that to build resilience, a leader would be required to take a coaching approach when taking lead on remediating or addressing failures. For example, the findings clarified that a coaching approach should be taken as opposed to complete takeover of the process by the leader to avoid leaving the innovation team feeling incapable.

The next section below discusses key similarities identified between insights initially obtained in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview research findings presented in Chapter 5.

Similarity Number One

By way of introducing this section, similar to the interview findings presented in Chapter 5, it is important to bring to the reader's attention that communication was also found to be fundamental in the in the insights associated with 'resilience' in the literature review in Chapter 2.

Both sources of insights highlighted the importance of delivering communication in such a way that preserves the relationships between people involved. For instance, one of the recommendations from the interview participants was that:

Leaders should be open and communicate in a transparent manner that the team should stop a project when the leader sees that an innovation implementation project is failing.

Similarly, the literature in Chapter 2 had provided the insight that honesty and transparency are key behaviors associated with successful leadership (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

Notwithstanding the above, there was no theoretical theme identified that warranted the conceptual framework to be updated on the premise of the evidence of similarity discussed.

Similarity Number Two

A second similarity between the insights in the literature review in Chapter 2 and the insights that emerged from the research interviews findings in Chapter 5 was identified.

Chapter 5's findings discussion on how to counter specific threats confronting innovation implementation was similar to the discussion in Chapter 2 on the point made by Cortes & Herrmann (2021) that strategic leaders have to make decisions that create a specific environment. Applied to instances where a leader is building resilience within the team, in this case it is assumed that a strategic leader makes the decision to create an environment of resilience.

The decision referred to above pertains to identifying suitable techniques, tactics and approaches to implement in scenarios where an innovation team is either faced with threats confronting their innovation projects or when failure happens.

In other words, the literature review and the findings shared a common theme, which is decision making. It was further identified that Chapter 5 expanded the theme of decision making which initially appeared in Chapter 2 in the context of making decision pertaining to building resilience within a team.

Having carefully assessed the second similarity discussed above, there was no new theme that was identified that warranted the conceptual framework to be updated under the 'resilience' theoretical construct.

The next section below discusses key differences identified between insights initially obtained in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview research findings presented in Chapter 5.

In terms of differences identified between the insights that surfaced from the literature review and insights that emerged from the research data, three key differences were earmarked for discussion in this chapter.

Difference Number One

One of the main differences between the insights presented in Chapter 2 versus the interview findings presented in Chapter 5 was the finding that there are threats that hinder innovation implementation.

While the literature review in Chapter 2 highlighted the key processes that leaders generally take in influencing innovation implementation, it was silent on possible negative journeys.

Negative journeys in this case mean challenges that could possibly confront how strategic leaders influence generally. The literature review in Chapter 2 only presented positive journeys pertaining to what leaders should do to influence innovation implementation but did not alert readers to challenges that may be faced or how strategic leaders should mitigate those challenges. Thus, a gap in the context of this study was identified in this regard.

However, the gap mentioned above was subsequently closed by the findings that emerged from the interviews. To this end, key threats confronting influencing innovation implementation were documented in Chapter 5. Key examples included resistance to discarding the use of legacy systems, static backward-looking mindsets that do not intend to implement neither explorative innovation nor exploitative innovation in the organisation or other agile systems to replace legacy systems as well as job insecurity mindsets pertaining to fear of innovation replacing humans.

Static backward-looking mindsets stood out and an additional desktop literature review was conducted to obtain a better understanding of how backward-looking mindsets are a threat to innovation implementation and how resilience against it can be built. Very interesting insights were gathered from that exercise.

Firstly, it was confirmed from the additional literature review conducted that backward-looking mindset are a threat to innovation (Boeuf, 2019).

Although centred on product innovation, the main article used in this additional literature review provided useful insights as this study includes product innovation as one of the areas where static leaders in the financial services sector aim to influence innovation implementation. Thus, legitimizing the insights drawn from the additional review for the purposes of enhancing this research report.

It was found that a backward-looking mindset is a form of defence mechanism that is triggered by the uncertainty of changes associated with new innovations, whereby people thinking about the past is a defence mechanism against an intimidating future underpinned by uncertainty (Boeuf, 2019).

According to an earlier study on the same topic, the conclusion of that study was that the consequence of a backward mindset is a negative attitude towards innovations associated with the future thus leading to resistance to change and reduced innovation adoption (Van Tonder, 2017), while retro-innovation of products associated with the past was found to trigger positive attitudes and higher adoption (Boeuf, 2019).

Albeit that the additional literature review situating the impact of backward-looking mindsets on product innovation, the insights discussed above may be applied in the context of this study because product innovation falls within the broader definition and scope of innovation implementation.

To this end, the additional literature review has confirmed the findings that emerged from the interviews presented in Chapter 5 that a backward-looking mindset is a threat to innovation implementation.

Based on the discussion above, it is evident that innovation has the potential to trigger a backward-looking mindset in people which in turn can be a threat and a barrier for innovation implementation.

Therefore, the additional insights obtained from further engagements with the literature indicate that the process of influencing innovation implementation is prone to threats that have the potential to negatively impact on desired outcomes.

Although an important insight emerged, the outcome of the discussion above did not warrant an update to be performed on the conceptual framework.

Difference Number Two

The second difference identified was that the interview findings promoted the need for strategic leaders to include resilience strategies that mitigate threats to innovation implementation. As a result of not having discussed or acknowledged threats initially as discussed earlier, it followed that resilience strategies against threats were also not acknowledged in the original literature review in Chapter 2. Whereas Chapter 5 discussed various ways that leaders should confront, mitigate and sustainably prevent threats from manifesting within their business environments.

According to Chapter 5 some of the ways in which strategic leaders can build resilience when things go wrong in the innovation implementation process were mentioned in the

summary of interview findings earlier in this section. One of the ways not mentioned earlier is leaders playing a more supportive role to their teams when threats manifest was found to keep the team moving forward albeit them facing challenges according to research participants.

Additional literature was reviewed to achieve a deeper exploration on ways for building resilience against threats confronting innovation implementation. To this end, an exciting theoretical discovery was made. A clearer theme was discovered. This theme was 'resilience interventions' (Liu et al., 2020).

As the preceding paragraphs above overtly indicate, the initial narrative around the finding was not crisp. Having located the name of the theme from an academic source assisted to refine the search for articles that would provide more insights on this theme.

Accordingly, it was found that resilience interventions is a well-researched academic theme. What was interesting to find was that resilience interventions have different levels of complexity, they are multi-dimensional in nature, there have various approaches and most importantly they have different levels of effectiveness (Ungar, 2019).

The literature also provided the insight that there are specific factors that determine the effectiveness of resilience interventions. These include the targeted population, the type of threat exposure they are meant to counter, available resources, logistical considerations and accessibility of the resilience tools afforded to employees (Liu et al., 2020).

However, a criticism emerged from one of scholars whose work was reviewed where they mentioned that very little attention is given towards measuring resilience interventions both by business professionals in real workplace settings as well as by academic scholars within the literature (Joyce et al., 2018).

Notwithstanding the above, one of the articles reviewed strongly advised that building resilience interventions is context specific and has not blueprint approach (Ungar, 2019).

In contrast, opposed to leaving the reader with a problem, there was an article that recommended a potential solution. Stating that readers should be aware that there are contextual factors and settings that determine the right type of resilience intervention to be used for a specific targeted population. (Liu et al., 2020).

It specifically emerged from that publication that to optimize resilience interventions, due consideration of the targeted group is required, coupled with the ability to implement the interventions in an agile way that adopts selective approaches based on contextual factors and or the setting (Liu et al., 2020).

Based on the discussion above, it was evident from the additional literature engaged that inclusion of the theme 'resilience interventions' in innovation implementation processes is a prudent approach to secure confidence that planned execution of innovation implementation efforts will continue even in the face of challenges discussed above that threaten its success.

Therefore, it warrants that the conceptual framework is updated with the incorporation of 'resilience interventions' as a theme under the theoretical construct of 'resilience'.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this theme will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as an extension of the knowledge explored in the context of this research study.

Difference Number Three

The third difference identified between the literature review in Chapter 2 and the interview findings presented in Chapter 5 is that with reference to how interactions should be conducted, the interview findings are very specific about how a strategic leader should interact with their team in the event that they have failed. Failure in this context could be because of succumbing to a threat and unable to mitigate its impact thereof or actual failure of the innovation implemented.

In comparison to the insights surfaced by the literature review in Chapter 2, the role of a strategic leader in a negative scenario where the innovation team has experienced a failure is not clarified unlike how the interview findings provide insights and a recommended approach.

In addition, the findings in Chapter 5 claim that taking a coaching approach builds resilience because it maintains respect for the contribution made by the team, coupled with showing that their input is valued by keeping them involved through the delegation of roles in turning the unsuccessful outcome toward being a successful outcome.

In layman's terms, the findings in Chapter 5 claim that in recuperating after setbacks, a leader should involve the team in turning the situation around and getting back on track.

To assess the validity of the claim from a theoretical perspective, an additional literature review was conducted.

Consequently, the additional literature review confirmed that coaching is already a part of academic studies conducted in the past. More specifically, the literature surfaced studies that position coaching specific to the concept of resilience. In comparison to this current study, an earlier study on this topic clearly articulated a theme called 'resilience coaching' (Stark, 2021).

According to the literature reviewed the theme started developing in discussions where the concept of resilience was being expanded by scholars from an individual or personal level competence towards an organizational or corporate level focus (Soucek et al., 2018). Three corporate-level areas of resilience framed as 'management-relevant areas of resilience' were developed which include resilience coaching, organizational resilience and personal resilience (Soucek et al., 2018).

In subsequent studies conducted, it was found that within the context of organizations, the notion 'resilience coaching' is understood by scholars to be focused on taking a protective stance over employees (Heller & Gallenmüller, 2019).

In support of this understanding, as scholarship developed on the notion of 'resilience coaching' recent scholars have associated resilience coaching as a competence for the leader of the future (Stark, 2021).

Based on the literature it would appear this competence is an addition to the list of the roles of what modern management is believed to be. It joins the list to inform the three core tasks of modern management which including leading, organizing and now coaching (Stark, 2021). Operationally, based on the literature findings, resilience coaching is associated with developing and empowering others (Stark, 2021).

It appears that the insights discussed above relate and are applicable to the current study because the interview research findings made reference to a leader helping their team to overcome setbacks such as a failure. In such a scenario the literature recommends a strategic leader takes control of the situation and empowers their team through resilience coaching in bringing them back to a place where they continue to perform. Chapter 2

and Chapter 5 briefly mentioned the concept of failing forward. This would be one of the skills that a leader can impart to their team when coaching resilience. In essence, the strategic leader deploys means, skills and tools that will empower the team to face threats, challenges and failures.

Based on the discussion above, it is deduced that the additional literature review has confirmed the claim from the findings that coaching approach builds resilience. More specifically through 'resilience coaching'.

As a result, it warrants that 'resilience coaching' is included in the conceptual framework as an extension to the existing body of knowledge on the 'resilience' theoretical construct as it caters both for managing potential threats and threats that materialize and negatively impact innovation implementation.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this theme will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as an extension of the knowledge explored in the context of this research study.

Section 6.4: Research Question 2: What are the mechanisms used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation

This section addresses the second research question of this study which states: What are the mechanisms used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation?

The objective of this section is to discuss insights that emerged from the original literature review in Chapter 2 against insights that emerged directly from the interview findings presented in Chapter 5.

To this end, this section discusses both similarities and differences as well as incorporate additional theoretical insights that either confirm or discount proposed claims and contributions that emerge from the interview findings during the discussion.

The discussion commences with the first mechanism identified. This mechanism is effective engagements.

Section 6.4.1: Finding number one - Effective engagements

Summary of interview findings

The first finding presented in Chapter 5 in response to Research Question 2 was centred on the theoretical construct of 'effective engagements'. According to the thematic analysis performed on the data obtained from the research interviews, it was found that there are benefits associated with having open and transparent engagements about change and the need for innovation implementation at any level within the organization.

More importantly, it emerged that the quality of engagements delivered by a strategic leader renders the success of the engagements in driving the innovation agenda at any level of the organisation. Indicators of success include a shift in mindsets of stakeholders across the innovation value chain of an organisation from not acknowledging the risks associated with backward mindsets that block a progressive approach, to knowing about the risks of not innovating and making the organisation 'future fit'.

A second indicator identified is a shift of mindset of stakeholders from not wanting to do anything innovation related because of the fear that innovation will introduce risk albeit innovation leaders having positioned how innovation implementation will mitigate risk. An escalation approach to more senior decision makers with a broader view was recommended by interview participants.

In terms of managing stakeholder expectations, the findings posited the importance of strategic leaders having honest and frank conversations with their stakeholders firstly about their key concerns. Secondly, honesty about the amount of dilution that will happen to the original ideas they contribute, that is, the extent of compromise that was done to accommodate the needs of other stakeholders holistically. Thirdly, honesty and transparency about delivery timelines and lastly benefits that will be leveraged. These four points of interaction were deemed to be essential contributors for enhancing effective engagements that influence innovation implementation.

The next section below discusses key similarities identified between insights initially obtained in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview research findings presented in Chapter 5.

Similarity Number One

The first of three similarities that surfaced in both the literature review in Chapter 2 and the interview findings in Chapter 5 was that both chapters aligned on the premise that openness and transparency contribute towards effective engagements.

Arrival to the deduction above stems from interview insights discussed in Chapter 5 that revealed the benefits associated with having open and transparent engagements about innovation implementation at any level within the organization.

This was aligned to literature review insights that surfaced in Chapter 2 that pertained to the recommendation that leaders need to be able to communicate openly if they intend to influence outcomes such as innovation implementation (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

Having assessed the first similarity discussed above, there was no new theme that was identified that warranted the conceptual framework to be updated under the 'effective engagements' theoretical construct.

Similarity Number Two

The second similarity that was identified between insights that emerged from the literature review in Chapter 2 and the interview findings in Chapter 5 was inclusive engagement.

In Chapter 2 the literature review surfaced insights that parameters of strategies of influence need to consider the direction of influence within the organization in the sense that it could upward, downward or lateral (Simsek et al., 2018).

Similarly, the interview findings in Chapter 5 presented that an antecedent of effective engagement is a leader's ability to interact at all levels within the organization. The findings posited that a leader should be able to conduct interactions that include anyone within the organization which includes engagements with executives, middle and lower-level managers and even ordinary ranking employees.

Applying the findings presented in Chapter 5 against the context of directions of influence presented in Chapter 2, translated in terms of influencing upwards, this would primarily entail engagements about the benefits of innovation implementation with senior executives. In terms of influencing laterally, this primarily would entail engagements with

stakeholders about risks. In terms of influencing downwards, this would entail engagements about systemic impacts, ie how innovation implementation efforts will affect the rest of the organization with employees in general across the organisation. Notwithstanding that while having inclusive engagements a strategic leader would need to allow to be checked and challenged by all individuals at any level in the organization.

Given the similarity discussed above, consequently the claimed from the interview findings that inclusive engagement contributes towards effective engagement had to be assessed from a theoretical perspective. To evaluate this claim, additional literature was reviewed.

According to the additional literature reviewed, inclusive engagement has been a theme that has been subject to academic research studies for many years. What was an important discovery for this research was that inclusive engagement is actually regarded as a skill and that this skill is on high demand (Brce & Kogovsek, 2020).

From a process perspective, inclusive engagement is believed to have respect as a core value as it involves findings ways to reduce barriers of communication for everyone and ensuring that what is communicated is accessible (Chang et al., 2019).

In addition, further literature explored revealed an important supplementary insight that “Inclusive engagement can contribute to clarity in a shared vision of change.” [pg.177] (Brce & Kogovsek, 2020). It is this insight that confirms the finding that inclusive engagement contributes towards effective communication. This is because providing clarity on any subject of communication means people can understand better which in turn leads to execution (Chang et al., 2019). This is also contributed by what the literature found to be one of the fundamental aims of inclusive engagement which is reducing communication barriers such as prejudices and various forms of exclusions by sharing information in a way that everyone understands and allows people to express themselves in the best way that they can and that meets their needs (Brce & Kogovsek, 2020).

Furthermore, the additional literature review conducted has confirmed the research interview finding mentioned above through the provision of an additional insight that holistically described inclusive engagement as “an approach that seeks to create a supportive and effective communication environment, using every available means of communication to understand and be understood.” [pg.179] (Brce & Kogovsek, 2020).

It is evident from the extract above that the literature confirms that inclusive engagement contributes towards effective engagements and the creation of an effective communication environment overall.

Therefore, based on the corroboration between the evidence from the initial literature reviewed in Chapter 2, the additional literature reviewed above and the interview findings in Chapter 5, it is warranted that the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 should be updated to include 'inclusive engagement' as a theme falling under the theoretical concept of effective engagements.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this theme will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as an extension of the knowledge explored in the context of this research study.

The next section below discusses key differences identified between insights initially obtained in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview research findings presented in Chapter 5.

In terms of differences identified between the insights that surfaced from the literature review and insights that emerged from the research data, three key differences were earmarked for discussion in this chapter.

Difference Number One

One of the fundamental differences between insights that emerged from the literature review and the findings that emerged from the interview research data is that the interview findings revealed the insight that it is better to over-engage than to under-engage.

Arrival to this deduction rests on the premise that unlike the insights that surfaced from the literature review presented in Chapter 2, the research findings revealed the benefits of consistent and persistence engagement.

In Chapter 2, the literature brought to the attention of the reader the high-level importance of how interactions should be conducted. The literature alerted the reader to be cognizant about the frequency of engagements, the mode of engagements and the scope of those engagements (Simsek et al., 2018). However, it did not explain how each of these components are to be delivered.

The difference with the interview findings is that the findings that emerged supplemented this gap. Specifically, the findings articulated the importance of consistently and persistently communicating with stakeholders in a manner that takes the stakeholder on the innovation implementation journey. The research findings implied that this includes engagements with stakeholders at the planning stage, decision making stage, initiation stage of execution, communication of feedback at various milestones during the execution stage as well as communication at conclusion stage. Assessing the sequence stated above, it represents the end-to-end journey of innovation implementation.

In comparison to the insight from the literature review, it can be argued that consistent and persistence communication was the key differentiator. Given the above, it was warranted that the claim from the interview findings that consistent and persistent engagement is a driver of effective engagement be evaluated from a theoretical perspective.

To evaluate this claim, additional literature was consulted to determine whether indeed consistent and persistent engagement are drivers of effective engagement.

According to the additional literature review, ten recommendations were identified to be drivers of effective engagement. However, before discussing these drivers, it is worth mentioning the fundamental principle identified that an overarching effective engagement strategy is “a two-way process that involves clear messages, delivered via appropriate platforms, tailored for diverse audiences, and shared by trusted people.” [pg.1] (Hyland-Wood, 2021). What the research report gathered from the extract above is that an effective engagement strategy hinges on developing and maintaining the trust of stakeholders.

Furthermore, as discussed earlier in the report, this can be facilitated through an interactive engagement approach where information, opinions, ideas, constructive criticism and feedback is shared between strategic leaders and stakeholders in the innovation implementation value-chain.

Notwithstanding the above, the ten recommendations for implementing an effective engagement strategy that emerged from the additional literature reviewed includes firstly that leaders engage clearly through the provision of specific information, concrete actions and specific timelines in a way that requires little processing effort (Hyland-Wood, 2021).

The second recommendation is for strategic leaders to establish credibility amongst the stakeholders as it was found that credibility is a factor that is essential for effective persuasive engagements as discussed in Difference Number Two in Section 6.3.2 (Gass & Seiter, 2018).

As also discussed earlier in the chapter, this is followed by the recommendation to engage stakeholders with empathy by listening to the needs of stakeholders, their concerns and responding by showing compassion through looking for ways to alleviate the concerns they may be experiencing (Hyland-Wood, 2021).

At this juncture it is prudent to remind the reader that all prior discussions on empathy were based on interview findings and have not yet been cross referenced against academic literature.

The fourth recommendation for implementing an effective engagement strategy was found to be engagement that is based on fairness, openness, frankness and honesty (Sull et al, 2020). This recommendation was discussed earlier in this research report and is being brought back in this section as a strategic driver for effective engagement.

The fifth recommendation identified is for strategic leaders to recognize that most people dislike uncertainty, thus it would work in a strategic leader's favour to provide assurance wherever possible and prompt people to proactively prepare for the uncertainty that the future holds (Hyland-Wood, 2021).

Recommendation six relates to a strategic leader empowering stakeholders to act by means of communicating appropriate guidance on how to act as well as providing the necessary capabilities, opportunities and motivations to deliver the actions required (Stark, 2021).

The seventh recommendation identified pertains to promoting desirable social norms through appropriate messages that appeal to descriptive norms and injunctive norms in a manner that is mindful of a careful balance where oppressive effects of social norming are avoided (Hyland-Wood, 2021).

The eighth recommendation is for leaders to acknowledge that stakeholders within an organization have different needs and are affected by things in different ways and as a result strategic leaders are encouraged to obtain insights from the various stakeholders which in turn they can use to plan engagements (Pickles et al., 2020).

The last recommendation identified in the additional literature reviewed deemed to be a strategy for effective engagement was for leaders to be proactive in combating misinformation by providing stakeholders with factual and current information, in some cases exposing tell-tale signs of misinformation and also performing fact checking (Hyland-Wood, 2021).

Based on evidence from academic scholars that have performed research on drivers of effective engagement, it is warranted that the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 is not updated to include 'consistent and persistent engagement' as a theme as both the literature review in Chapter 2 and the additional literature review performed to the best of ability within the context of the current study could not confirm this claim. Therefore, this claim is discounted.

Difference Number Two

The second most important difference between the insights that emerged from the literature review in Chapter 2 and the findings that emerged from the research interviews presented in Chapter 5 was on the aspect of communicating risks.

The difference was that insights obtained from the literature review were silent on the inclusion of risk as a discussion point that can be leveraged for influencing innovation implementation. The only instance where the literature review referred to the notion of risk and its application thereof pertained to its definition of strategic leaders, where strategic leaders were defined as individuals that carry risk from a decision-making perspective (Cortes & Herrman, 2021).

Although risk was acknowledged in the sense that the level of risk and accountability is different between a strategic leader and an operations employee in the broader organizational context, it was not positioned as a lever that can be used to influence innovation implementation through effective engagements.

Unlike the literature review, the interview findings identified that communicating about risks to stakeholders is a lever critical for effective engagements. The interview findings revealed that effectiveness of engagements can be determined by how the message about risk is delivered to stakeholders.

Based on the interview findings, it emerged that one indicator of success is shifting the mindsets of executives or any stakeholder from not acknowledging risk to knowing about associated risks.

Furthermore, on the matter of escalation to senior individuals discussed in Chapter 5, it was argued that communicating risks across the innovation value chain within the organisation is a key differentiator compared to Chapter 2.

Consequently, the claim that communicating risks contributes towards effective engagement that influence innovation implementation needed to be assessed. To evaluate this claim that stemmed from the interviews, an additional literature review was conducted to verify whether this claim is new to the body of academic literature or whether it is a nuance of difference of communication.

According to the additional literature reviewed, it was found that risk communication is actually an interdisciplinary field that has been researched on for many decades (Balog-Way et al., 2020). Understanding that risk communication is an academic field provided some level of assurance that the answer to whether it contributes to effective engagement could potentially be confirmed.

However, insights obtained from the additional literature focused more on the discussion of how the field continues to evolve on the basis that it mirrors the development of the concept of 'risk' which in turn warrants that risk communication within the business context be approached in a way that is open-minded, "acceptable, ethical, or effective". [pg.2252] (Balog-Way et al., 2020).

Furthermore, some scholars have argued that there is no one formula to execute risk communication, however to achieve effective risk communication a multi-faceted approach would need to be taken which includes engaging people through meaningful dialogue and deliberations (Pidgeon, 2020).

According to the literature review discussion presented above, it would appear that risk communication is confirmed to contribute towards overall effective engagements on the premise that the field of risk communication strives to achieve outcomes of effectiveness through multiple ways and approaches to risk communication which as mentioned in the paragraph above includes having dialogues with stakeholders as opposed just presenting risk assessments to stakeholders.

Therefore, based on the corroboration between evidence from academic scholars that have explored and researched on the specific field of risk communication and evidence presented based on the views of interview participants, it is confirmed and thus warranted that the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 is updated to include 'risk communication' as a nuance of difference under 'effective engagements', the theoretical construct identified as one of the mechanisms that strategic leaders use to influence innovation implementation.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this theme will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as a nuance of difference in the context of this research study.

Difference Number Three

The third key difference between insights from the literature review in Chapter 2 versus the interviews findings presented in Chapter 5 on effective engagement is that the findings in Chapter 5 provided granular insights on further considerations. One of the considerations conflict resolution communication skills.

Unlike the insights in Chapter 2, insights that emerged from the interview findings in Chapter 5 caution leaders not to expect things to always go smooth from an engagement perspective. While the insights in Chapter 2 provide strategic leaders with a high-level guideline about when and how to interact (Perry-Smith and Mannucci (2017). The findings in Chapter 5 go a step further and caution leaders to prepare to deal with conflict that may emerge during engagements.

The difference between insights from the literature review and the interview findings is that the insights from the interview findings situate the leader to real-life circumstances that a leader will most likely face. For example, in terms of conflict resolution communication, the interview findings revealed that strategic leaders need to prepare for compromise as well as being good at positioning benefits of innovation implementation over perceptions of threats on stakeholders minds that may be the source of tension, conflict or resistance against an innovation initiative.

The near-reality positioning and delivery of the insights from the findings that emerged from the interviews marks a significant difference compared to how insights in the literature review were positioned.

A common feature between conflict resolution communication and managing expectations that emerged from the findings was that in both actions, the leader was encouraged to also be open to being influenced in the two types of interactions discussed above.

Thus, in comparison to the insights from the literature review, it is argued that the conflict resolution (within the context of the original literature review conducted on this topic) was a key differentiator.

Consequently, the claim from the interview findings that conflict resolution communication contributes towards effective engagement needed to be evaluated from a theoretical perspective. To evaluate this claim additional literature was reviewed.

Based on the additional literature review that was conducted, the first finding made was a list of proven collaborative conflict resolution techniques used in corporates. This list includes facilitation; negotiation; meditation and consensual decision making (Katz & Flynn, 2013). Upon reviewing each of these methods, what stood out was that they are all non-violent based practices.

This was a key observation if strategic leaders are to implement any of these methods as the objective is to maintain a non-violent working environment even while conflict is present.

Another important observation was that the four techniques mentioned above are not exhaustive. Additional techniques from more recent scholarship identified were advanced communication skills and arbitration (Bonache et al. 2017).

In terms of implementation of conflict resolution techniques, the review conducted found that depending on financial resources, there are different approaches that have been pursued in the past. For example, big corporates have been found to have in-house mediation departments or have capacitated their human resource departments with arbitrations skills and in some instances some corporates have allocated resources to hiring conflict resolution specialists (Katz & Flynn, 2013).

An interesting observation from the academic studies reviewed on conflict resolution was that from an implementation perspective the key factors or indicators organisations consider in measuring whether capacities such as those mentioned directly above have yielded effective and efficient conflict resolution are “cost; settlement satisfaction;

durability of the agreement and overall satisfaction of the process” [pg.394] (Katz & Flynn, 2013).

Notwithstanding the above, some challenges experienced with conflict resolution techniques and approaches discussed above were identified in a recent academic study anchored on the techniques positioned Katz & Flynn (2013)’s study. Bonache et al. (2017)’s study qualifies these approaches as being susceptible to gaps and thus having some weaknesses. For example, it was found that if parties to a conflict are completely not aware of the value of conflict resolution practice techniques they may not see the value of such processes (Bonache et al. 2017).

However, what the review did obtain was concrete evidence that “Ample evidence exists that workplace conflict that is not handled well has heavy direct and indirect costs for employers, employees, and organizational effectiveness and efficiency.” [pg. 397] (Katz & Flynn, 2013). Evidence from the review also surfaced that “Data on the causes of conflict range from the obvious lack of resources, poor communication, competition, power abuses, and salary/rewards comparisons and dissatisfaction to less obvious causes such as ambiguous reporting lines and unclear expectations, extreme behaviour regulation, and subtle cultural differences.” [pg.397] (Katz & Flynn, 2013).

The findings presented above have indicated that workplace conflict impacts organizational efficiencies. Based on the scholarly evidence discussed above, it was stated that poor communication is one of the causes of conflict within the workplace. The argument put forward is that breakdown in communication between strategic leaders and stakeholders would exacerbate conflict.

In the context of the current study (and against the backdrop of concerns that emerged from interview findings discussed earlier in this chapter), the additional literature review has confirmed that parties could end up in circumstances of conflict because of poor communication, power abuses and unclear expectations.

Based on the premise that conflict resolution (and the associated techniques discussed above) are aimed at addressing the causes of conflict discussed three paragraphs earlier as well as those directly mentioned in the context of the current study (i.e. poor communication, power abuses and unclear expectation), the additional literature review confirms the claim made in the interview findings that conflict resolution communication contributes towards effective engagement (by addressing poor communication which was one of the causes identified in the additional literature review).

Therefore, based on the discussion above, it is warranted that the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 is updated to include 'conflict resolution communication'. This theme will fall under 'effective engagements', the theoretical construct identified as one of the mechanisms that strategic leaders use to influence innovation implementation.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this theme will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as an extension of the knowledge explored in the context of this research study.

At this juncture, the research paper will turn its focus on discussing the second mechanism identified in the section that follows below. The mechanism is positive enabling behaviours.

Section 6.5: Finding number two – Positive enabling behaviours

Summary of interview findings

The second finding presented in Chapter 5 in response to Research Question 2 was centred on the theoretical construct of 'positive enabling behaviours'. According to the thematic analysis performed on the data obtained from the research interviews, it was found that there are certain behaviours that strategic leaders can use to influence innovation implementation. Several behaviours were discussed in Chapter 5 however there a few that were recommended to be highly impactful.

For example, strategic leaders were challenged by interview participants to foster a culture within their innovation teams that appreciates that innovation can come from anywhere within the organisation. That is to say, innovation can emerge from anywhere within the organisation's value chain.

Furthermore, insights from the interviews predict that should a positive enabling environment be successfully created, innovation leaders should see employees confidently approaching innovation teams with problems as well as ideas about how they can be solved through innovation interventions.

Interview participants made the case that in this way, an organisation proactively innovates as relevant innovation based on the needs of an area of the organization as well as potential innovation solutions based on ideas from employees that require

innovative solution are explored, as opposed to innovation leaders and their teams being prescriptive about innovation requirements across the organization.

A leadership quality was identified by interview participants as a key driver for leaders to set the tone in the working environment mentioned above. This quality is authenticity.

Majority of research participants were of the view that authenticity is a leadership quality that contributes towards positive enabling behaviours that influence innovation implementation in the workplace. It was believed that the key values behind a leader being authentic are honesty, integrity and transparency.

Nevertheless, very few interview participants believed that if strategic leaders are too honest and authentic in their bidding to galvanize trust from stakeholders, those leaders are at risk of being exposed to some level of vulnerability. In terms of examples used to clarify this view they mentioned situations where an innovation leader is not an expert. It was believed that admission by a leader to stakeholders that they do not have knowledge is a significant threat for a leader's ability to influence.

The next section below discusses key similarities identified between insights initially obtained in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview research findings presented in Chapter 5.

Similarity Number One

In Chapter 2, within the context of strategic leaders being the architects of the organizational context, key insights that emerged from the literature review revolved around leaders creating an enabling environment for innovation implementation within the organization in general (Cortes & Herrmann, 2021).

Similar to the insights that surfaced from the literature review in Chapter 2, the interview findings in Chapter 5 also revealed an insight centred on creating an environment where innovation employees are empowered by learning about innovation, including soft skills (such as empathy, failing forward and resilience) that will allow them to reinforce innovation amongst themselves.

This new insight although specific in nature in terms of highlighting the benefits of empowering employees through training, does fall under the ambit of the 'enabling environment' theme. The research findings in Chapter 5 connect the empowerment

aspect to fostering a working environment that will enable employees to be immersed in innovation implementation through positive reinforcing behaviours.

Given the similarity and alignment discussed above, it was warranted that the theme 'enabling environment' is maintained as is on the premise that the new insight from interviews falls within the ambit of its broad application.

The next section below discusses key differences identified between insights initially obtained in the literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and insights obtained from the interview research findings presented in Chapter 5.

In terms of differences identified between the insights that surfaced from the literature review and insights that emerged from the research data, two key differences were earmarked for discussion in this chapter.

Difference Number One

Notwithstanding the discussions on similarities above, one of the fundamental differences between insights that emerged from the literature review in Chapter 2 and the findings that emerged from the interviews was that the interview findings revealed the insight that leaders do not only influence from an architectural influence perspective but also influence through their behaviours. More specifically, they influence through leadership qualities and behaviours.

The interview findings in Chapter 5 further revealed that leadership qualities and behaviours contribute towards the creation of a tone at the top that cascades into the workforce. Furthermore, the main difference is that the interview findings in Chapter 5 go a step further by providing insights that the success of a sustainable positive tone that encourages innovation implementation in the workplace is perpetuated by a leader being authentic about the culture they are setting.

Consequently, the claim from interview findings that authenticity is a leadership quality that contributes towards positive enabling behaviours that influence innovation implementation in the workplace needed to be evaluated from a theoretical perspective.

To evaluate this claim, additional literature was reviewed.

The additional literature reviewed created a better understanding of authenticity and its association with behaviour from an academic point of view. Based on the additional literature reviewed, the first revelation encountered was how authenticity was referred to as 'authentic leadership' and referenced as an authentic leadership style (Supriyadi et al., 2020). What was also an important learning from the literature is that there have been studies that have been conducted to assess the relationship between authentic leadership and creation of a positive working atmosphere (Supriyadi et al., 2020).

However, before discussing the outcomes of that study, further exploration of authentic leadership revealed that one of its key outcomes is that it improves engagement with people through strengthening of one's identity (Zubair & Kamal, 2017). This discovery hinges on the premise that studies have found that in the context of being a leader, being authentic builds legitimacy through honesty and respect as part of one's identity (Supriyadi et al., 2020). The identity construction element may incorporate values that inform the actions that are aimed at getting trust within the organization (Zubair & Kamal, 2017).

Notwithstanding the above, it was also learnt that authentic leadership is underpinned by four aspects.

The first aspect is self-awareness, which entails a leader fully understanding themselves and using that understanding to determine the impact they can have on others (Supriyadi et al., 2020).

The second aspect is relational transparency, which entails open disclosure of information by a leader as well as truth expression about thoughts and feelings about the information disclosed (Supriyadi et al., 2020).

The third aspect is balanced processing, which entails the leader being able to carefully analyse information and taking the views of others into consideration before making decisions (Supriyadi et al., 2020).

Lastly, the fourth aspect is moral perspective, which entails a leader being able to regulate themselves according to the morals of an organization or even society (Supriyadi et al., 2020).

An interesting observation made is that all four aspects mentioned above have been discussed in earlier sections of this chapter linked to the various ways identified in this study that a leader can use to influence innovation implementation.

In fulfilment of delivering the objective of the additional literature review conducted on authenticity mentioned at the start of this discussion, it was found that “authentic leadership can motivate employees to improve work performance and create a positive situation in the working space.” [pg.384] (Supriyadi et al., 2020).

Accordingly, the findings presented above, interpreted and applied in the context of the current study would mean that authenticity is confirmed as one of the leadership qualities that drives an enabling environment for innovation implementation.

Therefore, based on the discussion above, it is warranted that the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 is updated to include ‘authentic leadership’. This theme will fall under ‘positive enabling behaviours’, the theoretical construct identified as one of the mechanisms that strategic leaders use to influence innovation implementation.

Although not a new theoretical contribution, this theme will be added to the conceptual framework initially developed in Chapter 2 as an extension of the knowledge explored in the context of this research study.

Difference Number Two

The second most important difference identified between the insights that emerged from the literature review in Chapter 2 and the findings that emerged from the interviews presented in Chapter 5 was on the aspect of vulnerability.

The difference was that insights obtained from the literature review were silent on the possibility of strategic leaders being vulnerable at any point in their attempts to influence innovation implementation.

However, some of the findings from the interviews conducted exposed an interestingly opposing and negative view about authentic leadership concerning instances where a strategic leader may be vulnerable. To the contrary, the literature review in Chapter 2 did not mention such a concern.

Notwithstanding the above, the difference is that the interview findings in Chapter 5 presented these insights.

To reiterate the emergence of this insight, it was first acknowledged by research participants that it is factual that a strategic leader does not know everything. It was then highlighted that there are some leaders that do not act in good faith from an authenticity point of view and pretend that they know everything by virtue of their position of authority.

It was mentioned that some leaders do not act in good faith to the extent that they do not listen to ideas from subordinates or quickly shut down ideas presented by stakeholders.

Majority of interview participants advocated that an authentic leader would be honest about being out of depth and look for assistance from others when their knowledge is either limited or when they are not familiar with the subject. However, on the one hand, a few participants were of the view that honesty and authenticity in such scenarios render a strategic leader vulnerable to the threat of losing credibility to influence stakeholders in terms of innovation implementation.

On the other hand, some interview participants felt that a leader can demonstrate a balancing act that does not compromise honesty and authenticity. Participants called this level of exposure “controlled vulnerability”. The understanding is that this is where a strategic leader, based on factual circumstances that no one knows everything, acknowledges this limitation and seeks the support of others for assistance.

Based on the presentation of this finding in Chapter 5, the notion of ‘controlled vulnerability’ was a key differentiator to Chapter 2. Consequently, the claim from the interview findings that controlled vulnerability is a leadership quality that contributes to positive enabling behaviours that in turn influence innovation implementation needed to be assessed from a theoretical perspective.

To evaluate this claim, additional literature was reviewed.

Based on the additional literature review conducted, the term “controlled vulnerability” proved extremely challenging to locate in academic scholarly publications. Potential reasons may be that it is a term that has not been derived through academic scholarship and is used loosely in the business context by professionals.

What was found in the additional literature reviewed was that vulnerability within the context of effective leadership is a relatively new academic discussion (Coyle, 2018). The review conducted was specific to management studies as vulnerability is a broadly applied term or concept.

To this end, a definition found that appeared most relevant to the current study defined vulnerability as “uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure” [pg. 24] (Tran, 2021). Added to that, it was found that “vulnerability is not a weakness and poses the foundation and birthplace of all emotion and connection” [pg. 24] (Tran, 2021).

In attempting to interpret the above, this report would describe vulnerability not as a display of insecurity as alluded by the research participants of this current study in Chapter 5 but rather the risk of being exposed to external threats that can possibly attack someone emotionally (not so much the case of physical attack) as the paper alluded earlier that non-violent conflict is more pertinent in a professional working environment.

The term ‘controlled vulnerability’ brings the word ‘controlled’ into question. It is this research report’s view that this would mean the degree, stage, depth or level to which a leader would allow themselves to be exposed to the risk mentioned above.

Given that a leader may opt to expose themselves as per the case with leaders that are authentic, it is gathered that if the word ‘controlled’ is used in the literal sense, it would pertain to the willingness of a leader to being exposed to the possibility of being attacked emotionally or in the case of this study, being rejected from an influencing perspective.

The difficulty in positioning this term within the context of this study and possibly in the wider academic studies community (if that is the case or can be verified) opens an opportunity for future researchers to assess this business term or phenomenon from an academic lens.

Nevertheless, based on the assessment conducted on academic scholarship and the feedback presented in the discussion above, it is warranted that the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 should not be updated to include ‘controlled vulnerability’ as a theme.

The position above is based on the premise that within the ambit of the current study, this research report cautiously claims that there was no conclusive evidence from existing scholarship reviewed that could confirm or verify it. Albeit this position, further

research would need to be conducted at the luxury of time to fully verify whether there is no scholarship or literature before firmly claiming that 'controlled vulnerability' is a new theoretical construct.

Therefore, based on the reason that efforts to review additional literature attempted could not situate the claim from the interview findings, within the context of academic scholarship reviewed, this study discounts the claim that controlled vulnerability is a leadership quality that contributes to positive enabling behaviours that in turn influence innovation implementation.

Based on the discussion chapter, the outcomes of claims assessed from a theoretical perspective are summarised in the updated conceptual framework below (Figure 2).

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

The aim of this final chapter of the research report is to provide the main conclusions derived from the research process. This chapter will commence with outlining the principle theoretical conclusions. This will be followed by the research contribution then followed by recommendations for management. Thereafter, limitations of the overall research study are outlined. The report concludes with suggestions for future research.

Section 7.1: PRINCIPAL THEORETICAL RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

Samimi et al., (2020) challenged future researchers to investigate the influence of strategic leaders on innovation implementation. In doing so, the study followed a prescriptive qualitative research process that managed to extract outcomes that attempt to address the theoretical problem that was positioned.

On structuring the outlay of the overall research study, Samimi et al., (2020)'s theoretical problem was operationalized through the formulation of two research questions that sought to explore what outcomes would emerge from the business world.

To this end, the objective of this section is to highlight the main theoretical conclusions drawn from the study. However, in terms of structure, these conclusions will be outlined on how they address the two research questions starting with the first research question, then followed by the second research question.

Section 7.1.1 Research Question 1: How do strategic leaders influence innovation implementation

Based on the overall research study conducted, it was found that strategic leaders within the traditional financial services sector influence innovation implementation through persuading people, negotiating with people and by building resilience that ensures continuous pursuit of meeting the innovation implementation objective.

Prior to conducting research interviews, communication and discretionary influence were the high-level views solicited from the initial literature review however these views were too general. The research findings coupled with the analysis against additional literature reviews found linkages that rolled up their initial insights into persuasion, negotiation and resilience. This is depicted in the final conceptual model below.

FINAL CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF INFLUENCING INNOVATION IMPLEMENTATION					
THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT	THEME(S)	THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT	THEME(S)	THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT	THEME(S)
Influence (in general)	Channelling communication is a means of influencing	Persuasion	How persuasion should be done/conducted	Negotiation	How negotiation should be done/conducted
	Communication done in a way that provides steer		Agile thinking in real-time (NoD)		Communication that gives direction (S)
	Communication that gives direction (S)		Good leadership reputation (Pot Ext)		Respectful communication (S)
	Open communication/Communicating decisions made openly		Soft people skills		Accommodation (NoD)
	Respectful communication (S)		Win-win agreements		Rethink scope rather than compromise (Pot Ext)
			Flexibility		Responsible & ethical framing (Pot Ext)
RQ 1: How do strategic leaders influence innovation implementation (generally)?					
Effective Engagements	How to engage effectively	Positive enabling behaviours	How to behave		
	Inclusive engagement (Pot Ext)		Authentic leadership (Pot Ext)		
	Risk communication (NoD)		People are different and have different views and values		
	Conflict resolution communication (Pot Ext)		Meet people's needs		
strategic leaders utilize to influence innovation implementation?					
Grit and perseverance					
Resilience interventions (Pot Ext)					
Resilience coaching (Pot Ext)					
Shapes thriving under challenging circumstances					
Fosters positive outcomes for individual and organisation					
How resilience is built					
RESEARCH QUESTIONS					
KEY					
MEANING					
Nuance of difference					
Extension of knowledge					
No impact -remains					
Similarity					
Rejected					
DISCOUNTED					

Figure 8: Final conceptual model of influencing innovation implementation Source: Author's Own

A concluding position from a theoretical perspective of each of the three answers to Research Question 1 mentioned and depicted above is provided below starting with persuasion, then negotiation and lastly building resilience.

PERSUASION

In terms of persuasion, from a theoretical perspective, there was sufficient alignment established between what academic scholars have positioned in past studies and the outcomes of this study (Huma et al.2021).

In particular, the fundamental approach found in this study pertaining to the use persuasion as a non- aggressive, non-coercive and non-authoritarian tool to bring initially divergent perspectives, agendas and mandates of relevant stakeholders to the point of aligning towards innovation implementation goals is confirmed to be of true stature to the theoretical understanding of what it means to influence.

Further to the above, based on the outcomes of the study, persuasion is a sustainable approach to influencing in comparison to the use of power and authority because as the study has revealed, power dynamics constantly shift in innovation implementation engagements. Power dynamics shift in engagements upwards, downwards and laterally (Simsek et al., 2018), however if persuasion is the modus operandi (way of doing things) of influencing innovation implementation across the organisation, the parameters of engagement are not compromised by concerns of limited power or authority when engaging with stakeholders at different levels. In turn, the removal of the dependency on the use of force and substituted with reliance in persuasion tactics such as nudging and leveraging the free will of stakeholders creates a myriad of opportunities for a strategic leader to drive their innovation implementation agenda at any level without any limits.

In arriving at this outcome discussed herein, this research study relied on the findings from interview participants coupled with past academic insights that have empirically proven that persuasion has a subjective appeal to individuals (Laksmi & Sukirman,2020).

Outcomes from the overall research conducted supports the claim that a good leadership reputation can be used by strategic leaders as a lever of persuasion. Another key conclusion is that a good reputation that is built over time by a leader has been proven

to have a positive effect on influencing (Mukhtaruddin et al., 2018) (Laksmi & Sukirman, 2020).

Therefore, based on the outcomes of the current research, this report posits the first tentative conclusion that in terms of utilization of persuasion for influencing, a good leadership reputation can be used as a lever of persuasion.

In addition, this research report posits that agile thinking in real time enables effective decision making which can be used by strategic leaders as a persuasion tool. The key to unlocking influence is in the ability of the leader to demonstrate that they can make real-time decisions in times of uncertainty. Amongst a myriad of possibilities, a strategic leader can build a good leadership reputation if they can be relied upon by stakeholders to make the effective decisions in ambiguous situations and in times of uncertainty (Dhir, 2020). Furthermore, building a good leadership reputation associated with effective decision making can be leveraged to appeal to the subjective bias of stakeholders as well as the rational side.

Therefore, it is this research report's submission that agile thinking done in real-time enables effective decision making which can influence innovation implementation particularly in the face of uncertainty, crisis and or ambiguous situations when the organisation requires it the most.

NEGOTIATION

Based on the outcomes of the research study, it was found that strategic leaders use negotiation to influence innovation implementation in organisations. An iterative research process conducted during this study verified that stronger and deeper connections are formed when purposeful adaption and adjustments are made to bring stakeholders into the conversation (Seel et al., 2021). In essence, it is posited that if strategic leaders intentionally aim to build strong connections with stakeholders in engagements, they are likely to succeed in negotiating with them.

According to insights obtained from research participants in this study, strategic leaders have a tendency of not fully recognising and acknowledging the stakeholders they engage with in the sense that they do not bring them into the conversation fully because they will not have accommodated them (Seel et al., 2021).

To address this shortfall strategic leaders must focus on being deliberate in terms of accommodating stakeholders during engagements. Based on the outcomes of this study, this has been assessed to increase successful negotiations which ultimately means that influencing innovation implementation increases as well.

Zoning into the tactical intricacies of negotiation tactics, this research report posits that strategic leader's negotiation mindsets require a shift in terms of outlook. According to the outcomes of the analysis performed in this study, a winning mindset is not the right mindset for internal day to day negotiations taking place in organisations. At face value, conservative supporters for negotiation scholarship might not align with this output.

However, what is suggested is that they enter internal negotiation engagements with a mindset to achieve the best outcome for the organization.

What that promotes from an internal negotiation perspective is that a strategic leader begins to practice rethinking the scope of what is being negotiated at an organisation level rather than making compromises where they are not warranted (Hughes & Ertel, 2020).

Given the importance of negotiations as one of the key ways strategic leaders influence innovation implementation, ensuring that it is done in an ethical way that does not harm stakeholders is an important responsibility. Based on the outputs of the research study conducted, it was ascertained that strategic leaders are accountable for how they deploy negotiation tactics in their engagements.

Therefore, it is key that strategic leaders take ownership of their actions during negotiations and ensure that while they are influencing innovation implementation within the organisation, they are conducting these negotiation engagements in a responsible and ethical way (Sunstein, 2017).

RESILIENCE

Based on the outcomes of the research process, it has been confirmed that backward mindsets are the biggest threat confronting strategic leaders influencing innovation implementation.

Discussions on persuasion and negotiations above have in common the theme that influencing innovation implementation is an appeal towards shifting the minds of

stakeholders towards the goal of innovation implementation. It is evident from the outcomes of the current study that this appeal to stakeholder thinking and shifting their mindsets from the status quo towards implementation of innovation is shared by all three theoretical answers addressing the first research question.

Given that it has been positively identified that backward mindsets are a barrier to influencing innovation implementation, it is this research report's submission that strategic leaders building resilience into the way they influence is a prudent approach.

Whether influencing is pursued by means of persuasion or negotiation, outcomes of this study indicate that strategic leaders need to be aware that their modes of influencing are prone to the threat of backward mindsets and behaviours such as negative attitudes towards the implementation of innovation, resistance to innovation changes as well as reduced adoption of innovation within organisations (Van Tonder, 2017). Therefore, based on the outcomes of this study, the importance of planning and building resilience is fundamental to sustaining influence strategies that are deployed by strategic leaders in their organisations.

Through the incorporation of resilience interventions into resilience building plans, strategic leaders can circumvent both direct and indirect threats and their negative impact by virtue of being aware of imminent threats. As a result, confidence levels increase and a stronger sense of purpose is bolstered knowing that resilience interventions are in place both for strategic leaders and their teams.

For example, employees knowing that they are operating in an environment that allows for them to make mistakes and learn from them, coupled with an authentic leader who makes room for employees to take calculated risks and fail forward secures confidence that innovation implementation efforts will continue in the face of threats presented by challenging stakeholders as well as in uncertain and ambiguous situations.

According to the outcomes of this study, the key to unlocking the true value of resilience interventions lies in how they are designed and implemented. From a design and implementation perspective, a key aspect is that successful interventions are those that are agile in the sense that implementation is informed by context which in turn allows for easy adoption (Liu et al., 2020).

On the matter of intervention targets, in most cases this will be the strategic leader's team. Thus, a strategic leader would need to be well equipped with fundamental skills of

how to build and embed resilience within a team. Based on the outcomes of this study, this can be achieved through resilience coaching.

On the one hand when dealing with potential threats, resilience coaching involves the strategic leader teaching the team skills and tools that will empower the team to face the imminent threats (Stark, 2021). On the other, hand in dealing with real challenges and failures, resilience coaching involves the strategic leader taking control of the situation and deploying skills, tools and including the team in the process of resolving the challenges and failures (Stark, 2021), which in turn empowers the team and builds the overall resilience of the team when influencing innovation implementation in the organisation. In conclusion, building resilience ensures sustainability of efforts being made in organisations daily in influencing innovation implementation.

Section 7.1.2 Research Question 2: What are the mechanisms strategic leaders use to influence innovation implementation

Based on the overall research study conducted, it was found that the two key mechanisms used by strategic leaders within the traditional financial services sector to influence innovation implementation are effective engagements and positive enabling behaviours. A concluding position from a theoretical perspective on both answers to Research Question 2 mentioned above is provided below starting effective engagements, followed by positive enabling behaviours.

EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENTS

Based on the research study conducted, effective engagements was the first finding that emerged in response to Research Question 2. In terms of the underlying theoretical principles associated with this finding and according to the outcomes of the current research, it is claimed that open communication is an antecedent of effective engagements. This claim was confirmed against existing academic scholarship articles.

Although similarities to initial insights positioned in the original literature review were identified, the outcomes pertaining to open communication discussed in this research report seemed to be different to those in the Samimi et al., (2020) article that anchored this research. This may be grounded by the reason that this study specifically focused on the implementation stage of innovation as opposed to the general focus by the anchor article.

Based on the outcomes of this research study, in terms of the underlying theoretical principles associated with this finding, according to the outcomes of the current research, it is claimed that inclusive engagement is also an antecedent of effective engagements. This claim was confirmed by academic literature. Although similarities to the initial insights positioned in the original literature review in Chapter 2, there was a nuance of difference in the sense that a well-defined theme of 'inclusive engagements' emerged as an outcome of the research (Brce & Kogovsek, 2020). Whereas initially at the onset of the research study, this was not the case.

On the other hand, an outcome of the research pertaining to the theoretical construct of enabling engagements is that the research theoretically discounted consistent and persistent engagement as an antecedent of enabling engagements. This was on the premise that this insight could not be found in any of the academic scholarly publications reviewed during the analysis. While it is acknowledged that emergence of this insight during the research was different to what was initially positioned in the original literature review, it is claimed that it cannot be considered as an antecedent of enabling engagements on a theoretical basis for the reason discussed above. This view is limited to the context of this research study and it has been acknowledged that there is potential for this position to be checked and confirmed by future researchers.

Notwithstanding the above, one of the outputs of the research lead to the claim that risk communication is another antecedent of enabling engagements. This claim was confirmed by academic scholars. From a theoretical perspective, the claim is that specific multi-faceted risk communication approaches and strategies contribute to effective engagements (Pidgeon, 2020). A difference that is acknowledged is that insights obtained from the original literature review were silent on the inclusion of risk or its discussion thereof being part of enabling engagements.

Lastly, based on the outcomes of research study conducted, it is claimed that conflict resolution communication is an antecedent of enabling engagements (Bonache et al. 2017). This claim has been confirmed by academic scholars. From a theoretical perspective, the claim is that conflict resolution communication and its associated techniques which include facilitation; negotiation; meditation and consensual decision making (Katz & Flynn, 2013) and arbitration contribute towards effective engagement by addressing some key causes of conflict such as poor communication, power abuses and unclear expectations (Bonache et al. 2017). The difference acknowledged between this outcome and the initial insights in Chapter 2 is that granular details preparing strategic leaders on how to deal with conflict that may emerge have now been provided. This is in

comparison with the high-level guideline about when and how to interact that was initially provided (Perry-Smith and Mannucci (2017).

POSITIVE ENABLING BEHAVIOURS

Based on the research study conducted, positive enabling behaviours is the second finding that emerged in response to Research Question 2. In terms of the underlying theoretical principles associated with this finding and according to the outcomes of the current research, it is claimed that authenticity is a leadership quality that drives positive enabling behaviours which influence innovation implementation. This claim was confirmed against existing academic scholarship literature where authenticity is embedded in a construct called 'authentic leadership' (Supriyadi et al., 2020). From a theoretical perspective, the claim is that "authentic leadership can motivate employees to improve work performance and create a positive situation in the working space." [pg.384] (Supriyadi et al., 2020). The difference acknowledged between this outcome and the initial findings in Chapter 2 is that leaders do not only influence from an architectural influence perspective as per the insights obtained from the original literature review but that they also influence through leadership qualities as well as behaviours associated with those qualities.

Lastly, based on the outcomes of research study conducted, it was initially claimed that that controlled vulnerability is a leadership quality that contributes to positive enabling behaviours that in turn influence innovation implementation. However, according to the outcome of this study, this claim could not be confirmed by academic scholars. The outcome was based on the premise that within the ambit of the current study, there was no conclusive evidence from existing scholarship material researched that confirmed or verified whether 'controlled vulnerability' is a behaviour grounded in academic theory. It is emphasized that this limitation is tentative and ringfenced to the context of this study and not generalized. To this end, this research study has positioned that further research would be required to verify whether this is a new theoretical construct or not.

Notwithstanding the above, from a theoretical perspective based on the reason that efforts to review additional literature attempted could not situate the insight within the context of academic scholarship, this study discounted the initial claim that controlled vulnerability is a leadership quality that contributes to positive enabling behaviours that in turn influence innovation implementation. The difference acknowledged between this outcome and the initial insights in Chapter 2 is that the literature review was silent on the

possibility of strategic leaders being vulnerable at any point in their attempts to influence innovation implementation.

Section 7.2: Research contribution

From a research contribution perspective, the research was conducted to explore how strategic leaders in financial services influence innovation implementation. The research submits a small proposed potential contribution to the wider body of strategic leadership literature. The research proposes the below possible extension of knowledge to strategic leadership literature in terms of how to influence innovation implementation (based on Research Question 1) and mechanisms used to influence innovation implementation (based on Research Question 2).

How to influence innovation implementation (RQ1)

The research proposes a possible extension to existing knowledge in strategic leadership theory by inclusion to the conceptual model the outcome from the research conducted that good leadership reputation is a lever of persuasion that strategic leaders can use to influence innovation implementation in organisations. Please refer to Figure 3 which depicts this inclusion onto the theoretical framework.

In addition, one of the outcomes of the research study builds onto persuasion literature by proposing a possible nuance of difference. The research identified a potential new form of decision-making enabler particularly useful in times of uncertainty, crises and ambiguity in the form of agile thinking in real-time. The extension to academic literature to incorporate this type of thinking can be used by strategic leaders to persuade for the implementation of innovation particularly in the face of difficult situations.

The second proposed possible extension to existing knowledge in strategic leadership theory was the inclusion of the insight of rethinking scope rather than compromise in negotiation engagements to the conceptual model of influencing innovation implementation as depicted in Figure 3. This follows confirmation obtained from academic literature that it enhances negotiation tactics used when influencing through negotiations.

Still on negotiation, the third proposed possible extension to exiting knowledge was the inclusion of the insight that responsible and ethical framing can be used by strategic leaders in negotiation engagements. This was included in the theoretical conceptual

model in Figure 3. The insight that framing innovations in a way that could get stakeholders to opt out of what would have been a default negative response or outcome appears to be a powerful influencing tactic that can be deployed by strategic leaders in innovation implementation negotiation campaigns.

Before proceeding to the fourth proposed extension, it is worth mentioning that in terms of the negotiation theme, a potential nuance of difference was proposed for inclusion in negotiation academic theory. This is reflected in Figure 3. The research identified a potential new form of dual interaction called accommodation. The proposed extension of negotiation literature to include this form of dual interaction found to yield sustainable influence on the stakeholders as opposed to one-way communication is one of the ways the strategic leaders can bolster their negotiations when influencing innovation implementation.

The fourth proposed possible extension to existing knowledge on the conceptual theme of resilience was the research outcome which carries the insight that resilience coaching is a preferred approach for strategic leaders to empower their teams through the deployment of resilience skills and tools that will empower innovation teams with resilience in the face of threats, challenges and failures. Please refer to Figure 3 depicting inclusion in the conceptual model.

The fifth proposed possible extension was the inclusion of resilience interventions in the context of strategic leaders building resilience into their influencing strategies. Please refer to Figure 3. The inclusion was based on the premise that strategic leaders will find ways to optimize resilience interventions through seeking ways to adopt various approaches to different scenarios and contexts.

Mechanisms used to influence innovation implementation (RQ2)

The first proposed possible extension was the incorporation of the research outcome that inclusive engagement is an antecedent of effective engagement and the creation of an effective communication environment overall as an insight to existing theory on effective engagements. This is depicted in the conceptual model for influencing innovation implementation in Figure 3.

The second proposed possible extension to the existing body of knowledge in effective engagement pertains to conflict resolution communication being an antecedent of effective engagement. Please refer to Figure 3.

Before progressing onto the final proposed extension, still on effective engagements, a possible nuance of difference was identified in the research. The research identified a potential new form of communication called risk communication. The proposal for the extension of academic literature to include this form of communication is deemed to be useful in enhancing effective engagements when influencing innovation implementation as it clarifies the topic of risk, which according to the research was found to be often avoided but has since been found that it can be used to influence, if tactfully incorporated into engagements with stakeholders.

The final proposed possible extension to the existing body of knowledge was the inclusion of authentic leadership as a positive behaviour that can be used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation. Please refer to Figure 3 depicting inclusion in the conceptual model of influencing innovation implementation.

Section 7.3: Recommendations for management

The research conclusions were amalgamated in the conceptual model presented in Section 7.2 above. The purpose of the conceptual model is to provide a guide to strategic leaders in financial services organisations on how to influence the implementation of innovation in these firms in response to the rapid innovations fintech's are introducing on the market. As indicated in Section 1.1, traditional financial services firms need to innovate faster to close the gap between themselves and fintech's.

The focus and the scope of the current research was not earmarked at understanding why traditional financial services organisations are lagging from an innovation perspective compared to their fintech counterparts. However, it emerged from the insights obtained during the research that innovation implementation in these organisations is dependent on internal stakeholder engagement, alignment and key decision makers providing the approvals. It was found that innovation implementation is dependent on convincing and influencing stakeholders across the value chain to the common goal of innovating. As the research has shown there are complexities associated and strategic leaders achieving success in influencing the value chain to implement innovation requires a strategic approach.

The objective of the conceptual model is to provide strategic leaders with the fundamental principles and understanding that they can use to develop influencing strategies that they can use to drive innovation implementation in their organisations.

Based on the conceptual model, the following recommendations are posed to strategic leaders for consideration.

First, engagements with stakeholders should focus on the risks associated with not innovating. This will require strategic leaders to prepare adequately for engagements with stakeholders by conducting prior research on associated risks and possible impact.

Second, strategic leaders should be transparent in their engagements. This includes adequately disclosing parameters of innovation projects, priority, delivery timelines, costs and expectations. Most importantly, during engagements, strategic leaders should aim to bring stakeholders into the conversation through listening with empathy and intent to deeply understand their problems, concerns as well as any ideas or suggestions that they may have on how to adequately address the problems or challenges. In doing so strategic leaders should acknowledge that innovation can come from anyone in the organisation and not be closed minded about who has the right to come up with innovation.

Third, strategic leaders should use data points in their engagements. According to research conducted, insights were presented that promoted the value of data-based decision making as opposed to opinion-based decisions. Based on research outcomes, efficient decision making is anticipated in engagements that use data points.

Fourth, strategic leaders should aim to build a good leadership reputation. This can be done in a variety of ways however according to the research, this is achieved through efficient decision making underpinned by agile thinking in emergent situations, providing stakeholders with options in during times of uncertainty and/or ambiguous situations, sticking to delivery commitments and actively creating a track record of having delivered meaningful change and innovation to the organisation. According to the research, these aspects build confidence even at board level in a strategic leader's ability.

Fifth, when negotiating, strategic leaders should provide as much information as possible to stakeholders. According to the research outcomes, the more information the strategic leader shows that the intended innovation is aligned to the wider strategy of the organisation and that the innovation will benefit the organisation, then it becomes easier for stakeholders to make decisions and have their backing.

Section 7.4: Limitations of the research

This section discusses the research limitations pertinent to the study completed. The general limitations discussed herein are within the context of the current research study processes undertaken in fulfilment of the requirements to execute the project. The limitations discussed in this section supplement the limitations discussed in Section 4.11.

Two key limitations of the research are discussed below.

The first limitation relates to the tight scope of the study where the research was focus driven at exploring insights from individuals at a strategic leadership level in financial services organisations. While it is acknowledged that the approach was pursued to uphold the integrity of the scope recommended in the research anchoring article by Samimi et al., (2020), the academic definition relied on focused on individuals in executive-level leadership occupations and excluded individuals in middle management roles whose roles also include leadership but not at an executive level. To this end, the opportunity to gather insights that bridge between operations and leadership levels may have been missed.

The second limitation relates to the conscious decision to ring-fence the research to the financial services sector. It is acknowledged that the theoretical problem would not have been impacted if the study had been broader than the financial services sector. However, to balance the theoretical problem with the business need, the study pursued to focus on the sector in which the business need was situated. Notwithstanding the above, the study could have opted to use another sector as a control and cross-referenced the theoretical principles against this sector. The result is that the research conclusions carry insights and recommendations focused heavily on the financial services sector which may limit its application or relevance to other sector stakeholders.

Section 7.5: Suggestions for future research

Suggestions for future research stem directly from the current study, processes undertaken, outcomes as well as conclusions.

The first suggestion is for future researchers to replicate this study to the remaining three stages of innovation identified by Perry-Smith & Mannucci (2017) to obtain an understanding of the differences and similarities associated with exploring this phenomenon between the four stages. Replicating the study at each of these stages

aligned to one definition or academic point of reference may ultimately produce a holistic view could benefit management in financial services organisations with similar needs.

The second suggestion for future research stems from one of the tentative findings that emerged during the course of the study. Future research is suggested to explore the validity of the claim that controlled vulnerability is a leadership quality that contributes to positive enabling behaviours that influences innovation implementation. The study would be an extension of the current study with the aim of confirming whether the insight 'controlled vulnerability' is grounded in academic theory and if this claim holds when tested from an academic perspective.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Protocols

Interview Protocol for Business Professionals

THEME 1: UNDERSTANDING OF 'INFLUENCE'

1. What is your understanding of 'influence'?

THEME 2: KEY LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS ASSOCIATED WITH 'INFLUENCE'

2. Per your understanding, what are the key leadership behaviours required by leaders in order for them to be able to influence?

THEME 3: CREATION OF OPPORTUNITIES TO INNOVATE

3. How do you create a tone in the working environment that enables innovation implementation?

4. How do you create opportunities for employees to innovate?

THEME 4: METHODS & STRATEGIES

5. What methods and strategies do you use to see innovation ideas implemented in this role?

6. Of these methods and strategies mentioned, what works well and what does not work in this role or in a role that you have previously held?

THEME 5: CHALLENGES

7. When there is resistance, tensions, differing ideas or opinions, how do you overcome and implement innovation ideas?

8. Are there any specific threats that hinder successful conversion of strategic innovation aspirations into implementation?

THEME 6: RECOMMENDATIONS

9. What are some of the insights and lessons learnt that you would like to share with the business community to assist in addressing challenges confronting other leaders in terms of influencing innovation implementation?

10. In closing, is there anything you would like to add in closing that you feel could add value to this conversation?

Thank You.

Interview Protocol for Experts

THEME 1: ROLE OF INFLUENCE IN ACHIEVING INNOVATION IMPLEMENTATION

1. What do you believe is the role of influence in achieving innovation implementation?

THEME 2: RESPONSIBILITIES & DUTIES

2. Based on your research and expertise, what would you say are the responsibilities and duties of a strategic leader in the context of strategic innovation and why?

3. To what extent do business leaders have a responsibility and duty to actively pursue opportunities to innovate?

THEME 3: LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS

4. In your view, what are the leadership behaviours required to enable successful implementation of innovation?

THEME 4: METHODS & STRATEGIES

5. Based your research, how do strategic leaders move the innovation agenda forward in organizations?

THEME 5: CHALLENGES

6. What do you believe are some of the challenges confronting strategic leaders in moving the innovation agenda in organizations?

7. Of the challenges mentioned, which one do you think is the biggest challenge they face and why?

8. In your experience, how should strategic leaders mitigate against these challenges?

9. In closing, is there anything you would like to add that could add value to this conversation.

Thank You.

Appendix 2: Code Book

Code
o A leader's track record is a driver of influence
o A risk averse environment hinders innovation
o Ability to change behaviour
o Ability to change people's opinions
o Ability to convince people
o Ability to deal with conflict is a behaviour that promotes influencing
o Ability to get a person to change and do something differently to what they would have done
o Ability to get buy in from stakeholders is a strategy for innovation implementation
o Ability to get others to achieve a goal together
o Ability to get people to align behind a goal
o Ability to get people to align in thinking
o Ability to get people to aspire to grow and develop in a similar way to yours as a leader
o Ability to get people to think differently
o Ability to get people to think more broadly & holistically
o Ability to get people to think openly and freely
o Ability to get someone to open up to something they may have not fully traversed or exposed to in the past
o Ability to get someone to do something that they haven't done before
o Ability to get things to happen when you don't have power over stakeholders
o Ability to influence across the organisation is a driver of innovation implementation
o Ability to influence at multiple levels is a sign of successful influence
o Ability to make decisions in the face of uncertainty is a behaviour that enhances innovation implementation
o Ability to mobilize and get people to move in a certain direction willingly
o Acknowledge that not everyone is an innovator when setting the tone
o Acknowledging that you do not know everything is a behaviour that promotes influence
o Adapting your style to meeting people's needs is strategy for increasing influence
o Agile thinking is a skill that supplements listening with intent to understand which in turn promotes influence
o Allocation of resources is a role of a strategic leader in innovation implementation
o Allowing for team and/or stakeholder to check and challenge is a way to overcome tension and conflict
o An agile working environment (or being an agile team) promotes innovation implementation
o Assessing the team's abilities and inabilities and delegating innovations accordingly creates opportunities that enhance innovation implementation
o Authenticity is a behaviour of that promotes ability to influence
o Being able to articulate goals clearly and negotiate promotes influence
o Being able to bring out the skills and talents that people have been hired to do promotes influence
o Being able to carefully leverage people's skills and abilities is a behaviour that promotes influence
o Being able to engage with people in a way that helps them see, understand, appreciate the change they have to make
o Being able to treat people equally and fairly is a behavior that promotes influence
o Being aspirational is a behaviour that promotes influence

Code
o Being consistent in the application of your values is a behaviour that promotes influence
o Being decisive is a behaviour that promotes influence
o Being first to market is an influence strategy
o Being inspirational is a behaviour that promotes influence
o Being knowledgeable is a behaviour trait that promotes influence
o Being non-emotional is a behaviour that promotes influence
o Being observant and learning through observing good leaders is a skill that promotes influencing
o Being open & pragmatic is a behaviour that promotes influence
o Being open about the not doing anything while the world changes is a strategy or method that influences innovation implementation
o Being open to being influenced and not only being the influencer
o Being open to people's ideas is a behaviour that promotes influence
o Being passionate is a driver of influence
o Being skilled or an SME of a particular area increases influences
o Being trustworthy is a behaviour that promotes influence
o Believing in what you are saying is a driver to influence others to also believe in what you are saying
o Changing the perspective of innovation from linear to multi dimensional is a strategy to influence innovation implementation
o Closing view for the finding section
o Coercing or forcing your way does not work for influencing
o Competing or fighting for limited resources as a challenge confronting innovation implementation
o Considering what's in it for them (stakeholders) is an influence strategy
o Controlled vulnerability is a behaviour that increases influence
o Cost-Benefit factors as a challenge confronting influence strategy
o Create an environment where the objective is to make bigger impact and best solutions for the future
o Create the space to listen in order to listen
o Creating a culture of innovation based on extrinsic factors enables innovation implementation
o Creating a culture of innovation based on intrinsic motivation factors enables innovation implementation
o Creating an environment that empowers people enables innovation implementation
o Creating a meaningful vision and purpose is a role of the strategic leader in innovation implementation
o Creating a tone of diversity and inclusion enables innovation implementation
o Creating an culture of enquiry or exploration enables innovation implementation
o Creating an environment of collaboration enables innovation implementation
o Creating an environment that acknowledges people's ideas enables innovation implementation
o Creating an environment that allows for people to learn from their mistake enables innovation implementation
o Creating an environment that celebrates innovations from the team that are successfully implemented enhances innovation implementation
o Creating an environment that encourages collective effort enables innovation implementation
o Creating an environment that encourages ideation or ideas enables innovation implementation
o Creating an environment that follows through with any innovation idea that would add value enhances innovation implementation

Code

- o Creating an environment that fosters learning ability to change enables innovation implementation
- o Creating an environment that is aware that innovation comes from anywhere in the organisation enhances innovation implementation
- o Creating an environment that is aware that there is appetite for innovation enables innovation implementation
- o Creating an environment where innovation is strongly encourages enhanced innovation implementation
- o Creating an environment where leaders are available and accessible to the team enables innovation implementation
- o Creating an environment where leaders inspire people to believe everyone has the ability to innovate enhances innovation implementation
- o Creating an environment where people have the freedom to challenge why their innovation idea is not being implemented enhances innovation implementation
- o Creating an environment where the team feels they are contributing enables innovation implementation
- o Creating an environment where you coach the team enables innovation implementation
- o Creating awareness of testing being part of the process is a strategy enables innovation implementation
- o Creating momentum towards innovation is a role of a strategic leader in innovation implementation
- o Dynamic problem solving is an output of influence
- o Elaborate process for the recommendations section
- o Escalation can be used to resolve conflict or tensions in innovation implementation
- o Escalation should be the last resort or strategy for influencing
- o Getting people and stakeholders to take accountability for exploring innovations in the market is a strategy to increase innovation implementation
- o Getting people and stakeholders to understand the importance is a strategy for influencing innovation implementation
- o Getting people to trust that what you are doing is in their best interest is a method to overcome challenges of tension and conflict
- o Getting the right people on the ground to execute the vision is a method or strategy that enhances innovation implementation
- o Getting to know and understand stakeholders is a behaviour that enhances influence
- o Giving business process re-engineering techniques is an opportunity provided to employees that enhances innovation implementation
- o Giving techniques about understanding world problems is an opportunity provided to employees that enhances innovation implementation
- o 'Hard coding' is a method that hinders innovation implementation
- o Having a clear business case is a method or strategy that enhances innovation implementation
- o Having a vision or long term position for your stakeholders is a method that enables innovation implementation at an exco level
- o Having a vision sets the tone created to enable innovation implementation
- o Having confidence is a behaviour that promotes having influence
- o Having good problem solving skills is a strategy that promotes influencing of innovation implementation
- o Having or aligning on a common vision or common purpose is a strategy useful to increase influence
- o How to create an innovation culture within an organization
- o Including recognition as part of tone of the environment or culture
- o Innovation is about continuously trying
- o Innovations in isolation might not be the most efficient way to do it in the broader ecosystem is a challenge confronting innovation implementation
- o Insistence on testing is a culture that enhances innovation implementation
- o Involving the innovation target user in co-creating the design is a method or strategy to enhance innovation implementation
- o Keeping other executives abreast is a behaviour that promotes influence
- o Lack of integrity and transparency does not work for influencing innovation implementation

Code Manager Info +

Code

- o Lack of resources as a challenge confronting innovation implementation
- o Leadership that doesn't support innovation is a challenge confronting innovation implementation
- o Length of time it takes to transform legacy systems is a threat to conversion of strategic innovation aspirations into implementation
- o Listening as a way to overcome the challenge of tension and conflict
- o Listening with empathy is a behaviour that promotes influence
- o Listening with intent to understand promotes influence
- o Making resources available is a strategy for innovation implementation
- o Managing stakeholder expectations about what percentage of their original idea will remain intact when team gets involved
- o Managing the innovation process is a role of the strategic leader in innovation implementation
- o Misaligned innovation strategies within the same organisation is a threat to conversion of innovation aspirations into implementation
- o Mobilizing people as a strategy to influence innovation implementation
- o Not adequately rewarding or remunerating people is a challenge confronting innovation implementation
- o Not being people oriented does not work in influencing innovation implementation
- o Not compromising is a method that does not work for innovation implementation
- o Not compromising on what shouldn't be compromised on creates credibility which in turn promotes influence
- o Not doing enough to rescale, attract and invest in skill is a threat to conversion of innovation aspirations into implementation
- o Not having good deadlines and targets does not work well for innovation implementation strategies
- o Not taking stakeholders on the journey does not work for influencing innovation implementation
- o Organisation level willingness to drive innovation implementation
- o Over communicating is an innovation implementation strategy
- o People not believing in themselves that they are capable of innovation is a threat to innovation implementation
- o Persistence in clarifying strategy increases innovation implementation
- o Potential outcomes of successfully implementing a culture of innovation within an organisation
- o Power in the absence of influence equals authoritative leadership
- o Prescription is a strategy or method that does not enhance innovation implementation
- o Priority is a challenge confronting innovation implementation
- o Proactive risk management that benefits stakeholders is a strategy to influence innovation implementation
- o Putting options/alternatives on the table is a strategy or method that influences innovation implementation
- o Putting yourself out there to showcase innovative solutions within the organisation is a behaviour that promotes influence
- o Reasonably meeting the needs of people is a selling point that increases your influence
- o Reminding stakeholders with buy-in leverage of the importance to move at speed to stay ahead of competitors addresses the challenge of prolonged buy-in delays and tensions
- o Resistance to change is a challenge confronting influence strategy
- o Respectfully directing the team and making recommendations when things don't go according to plan is a method that enhances innovation implementation
- o Reward as strategy used to influence innovation implementation
- o Seeing and selling the bigger picture is a strategy of influencing
- o Seeking to understand before being understood is a method that enhances innovation implementation
- o Selling the end-state is a strategy or method used to enhance innovation implementation

Code Manager Info +

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Code
o Showing and making noise about the successes of your innovation is a strategy that influences innovation implementation
o Skills gap is a challenge confronting innovation implementation
o Talking about risk and how the innovation will mitigate specific risk is a method or strategy to influence innovation implementation
o Teams providing feedback to the leader enhances innovation implementation
o The ability to negotiate is an essential requirement at very senior level in an organisation
o The leader's credibility is a driver of influence
o The use of data is an innovation influencing strategy
o Threat of job losses is a challenge that threatens innovation implementation
o Transparency is a key leadership behaviour that drives influence
o Trying to be innovative for everything and not getting the balance right does not work well for innovation implementation
o Trying to find a innovative solution when the problem is not fully understood does not work for innovation implementation
o Trying to influence about something you dont believe in does not work
o Two levels of engagement influencing strategy
o Understanding the broader ecosystem of how any innovation fits in enhances innovation implementation
o Understanding the environment before creating and fostering an environment that encourages communication and collaboration enhances innovation implementation
o Understanding the personalities of stakeholders is a strategy that increases your influence
o Use of data removes emotions and assists to address conflicting ideas and opinions
o Using ideas that have not worked in the past does not work as a strategy of influence
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Appendix 3: Consent statement



INFORMED CONSENT

I am conducting research on the topic: Influencing innovation: How strategic leaders in financial services influence innovation implementation. Our interview is expected to last approximately one hour. The interview will help us understand how strategic leaders influence innovation implementation as well as the mechanisms used by strategic leaders to influence innovation implementation. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty.

The information you will provide in this interview will be treated with confidentiality. Furthermore, no names of individuals or organizations will be requested and reported, only aggregated information will be reported and data obtained through this interview will be stored without identifiers.

By signing this letter, you are indicating that you have given permission for:

- The interview to be recorded;
- The recording to be transcribed by a third-party transcriber, who will be subject to a standard non-disclosure agreement;
- Verbatim quotations from the interview to be used in the report, provided they are not identified with your name or that of your organization;
- The data to be used as part of a report that will be publicly available once the examination process has been completed; and
- All data to be reported and stored without identifiers.