



Impact study of employee perception of authentic leadership in organisations

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Abstract

The topic of authentic leadership, ethical and unethical leadership behaviour within the corporate environment has been under tremendous scrutiny over the past few years. Every organisation has leaders who are ultimately responsible for the decision-making and successful operations that translate into profits, employee well-being and, ultimately, the success of the organisation's goals and objectives. However, several individuals spend most of their working career under direct or indirect leadership, where leadership are responsible for the development over a valuable period of their career. With the rise and fall of companies such as Enron, the impact and perception of employees of the leadership within organisations need to be assessed.

This research has been done to further understand the impact of leadership behaviour on employees within the working environment and whether leadership's actions impact the employees' perception of authentic leadership. The study assessed the perception of employees on their leadership's authenticity, accountability and organisational culture. It was a quantitative study using a survey sent out to respondents via email and WhatsApp; the total target was 200 on the high end, of which the total number of respondents was 166.

This study will using literature on authentic leadership and employee perception assess the impact with reference to theory

Keywords

Leadership

Authentic leadership

Ethics

Accountability

Trust

Ethical leadership

Unethical leadership

Positive Organisational Behaviour

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 Business Administration 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 conduct this research.

1 November 2023

1. CHAPTER 1

1.1. Introduction to the Research Problem

Leadership and its importance in today's complex world, it has been studied that it is becoming increasingly difficult for leaders to operate in an environment that is changing rapidly ([Uhl-Bien, 2021](#)). The ultimate result of successful leadership is organisational success in terms of profits and engaged, motivated followers through authentic leadership practices.

Dating back nearly two decades, there has been a continuous rise in competition, changing technology, and economic and climate changes ([Avolio & Gardner, 2005](#)). Together with increased psychological well-being and higher expectations from stakeholders, the ability of leaders to be agile, empathetic and authentic has become increasingly important; when summed up, leaders are required to be responsible ([Hague et al., 2017](#)). The above remains a hurdle in today's economic climate; top management has self-interest threats where personal financial gain is created from internally-induced crises that leaders are challenged with ([Schaedler et al., 2021](#)).

Though many leadership theories have been developed over the decades, including that of authentic leadership, the need for leaders to be purpose-driven and who can lead organisations to withstand adversity ([Saad et al., 2020](#)) while keeping to their values and leading with integrity that will ensure excellent customer service through motivated employees ([Chang et al., 2020](#)), ultimately benefiting shareholders through increasing long term shareholder value ([Battilana et al., 2020](#))

This study examined the relationship between employees' perception of authentic leadership within their current organisation and the impact of leadership behaviour on employee perception. The study further assessed dimensions and relationships of employee views on authentic leadership against accountability and organisational culture with elements of control mutuality, trust, commitment, and satisfaction. Theoretical findings on ethical/unethical leadership behaviour on authentic leadership and the relationship between them in the context of the organisational society being positive organisational behaviour will be studied through literature.

Leadership behaviours must be addressed when looking at organisational failures and employee dissatisfaction ([Villiers, 2020](#)). The need for ongoing analysis to highlight the 'lay of the land' and ensure that the employees are measuring

leadership is crucial to the purpose of this study. It should be assessed continuously and not just at a point in time. The ability to ensure ongoing accountability and assess authentic behaviour will promote changed positive behaviour and encourage employees to reciprocate the same positive behaviour ([Koon & Ho, 2020](#)).

1.2. Background to the study

Organisational success is critically linked to the calibre of managers and executives that shareholders decide on to run the day-to-day operations and drive the strategic goals of the business ([Nawaz & Tian, 2022](#)). Over the past few years, there has been an unfortunate increase in corporate scandals that have shaken industries as well as audit firms ([Lai & Gul, 2020](#)), whose downfall has been due to the unethical, financially irresponsible and self-interest behaviours of leaders and, at times, even incompetence on the part of those who make the decisions.

One of the biggest company failures due to unethical leadership often referred to is the collapse of Enron, which caught high-ranking attention; in today's terms, when a company seems to be going belly under, they call it “doing an Enron” ([Pugh, 2019](#)). The collapse of Enron was fuelled by discrepancies in the accounting practices that, in turn, resulted in the downfall of their auditors at the time, Arthur Andersen, who lost credibility within their client base when these scandals arose ([Ozdogli, 2017](#)). It can further be stated that leaders who do not act authentically abuse their power, which motivates an environment conducive to a culture of autocratic leadership due to a lack of accountability ([Fagbadebo, 2019](#)).

A study recently conducted by [Nqumba & Scheepers \(2023\)](#) it was established that prior research focused on leadership and the influence they have on employees; however, there is not enough evidence on what support employees were given to voice their views; thus, this study is an extension of employee engagement to understand the impact of employee perception on authentic leadership.

Given the growing failures of organisations and leaders, the need for further continuous research on the impact of leadership actions on staff has become critical in understanding employee perceptions (Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023). This discusses authentic leadership and what today's employees feel about their current leaders' authenticity. It also elaborates on corporate scandals based on unethical behaviour or prior studies.

The views of organisations and research have suggested that a leader's responsibility is to drive positive organisational behaviour, which is a direct consequence of authentic leadership; when looking back at corporate ethical failures, employees and societies view the role of leaders as being able to provide a sense of direction and assurance ([Luthans & Avolio, 2003](#)) in turbulent uncertain times this is again emphasised in a recent study by [Schaedler et al.,\(2021\)](#), the need for strategic leaders in times of organisational crisis.

Researched authentic leadership in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) environment to fill the research study gap of the perceptions employees have of leaders, and it was found that there is an indirect impact on employee perceptions against the genuineness of the CSR leadership in strategic decision making ([Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023](#)). This study extended this research to different industries and redirected the same authentic leadership aspect to ethical/unethical and accountability leadership within corporations. The study extended prior research to a broader layer of organisations, which brought new insights into differentiating industry areas. It was further discussed the importance of authentic leadership within CSR actions and the complexities around sustainable development ([Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023](#)); in a broader aspect, this can be readdressed as the importance of authentic leadership for the sustainability of future leaders.

1.3. Research Problem

This study aims to understand how employees within the South African context view their leadership behaviours through the lens of authentic leadership ([Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023](#)), accountability and organisational culture. High-ranking organisations and audit firms need to improve due to the negative behaviours of the leadership in charge of governance, management of the day-to-day operations and safeguarding all stakeholders' interests ([Ozdogli, 2017](#)).

The model development incorporated frameworks from prior research and additional frameworks for this study to expand the existing scholarly discussions in a South African context. [Nqumba & Scheepers \(2023\)](#) indicated that the limitations of their research and suggestions for future research would be to conduct research in specific industries and analyse the perceptions of CRS.

There is now more than before an urgent need for leaders who uphold ethical standards to change the trajectory of corporate failures and the direct implications of

these decisions on the employees and the confidence they have in those charged with leading and, in certain instances, the very difficult to correct or reverse the damage ([Schaedler et al., 2021](#)). The concept of positive leadership needed to problem solve ([Chauhan et al., 2021](#)) for the everchanging economic uncertainties, fast-paced technological advancements, and competitiveness comes with increased expectations placed leaders to be able to pivot and create hope and confidence for the organisation's stakeholders consistently ([Smulowitz & Smulowitz, 2023](#)). Researchers and experts often refer to the "old wine in new bottles" illusion when referring to positive organisational behaviour, which means that new leadership ideas may be established; however, they may already exist within a global change context ([Luthans & Avolio, 2009](#)).

This research used a survey which will pose questions related to Authentic leadership, Employee Engagement, Accountability, and organisational culture to establish the relationship between employee perception of the authenticity of leadership. The study aimed to:

- Establish the extent of the trust relationship between employees and leadership
- Establish the level of confidence employees have in the authenticity of their leaders
- Establish the level of trust employees have of the authenticity of their leaders
- The employee's perception of leadership behaviour that impacts organisational culture

1.4. Purpose of study

In today's world of uncertainty and the dynamics of doing business in a complex economy, the need for effective leadership has become of great importance to ensure that an organisation can succeed in the business environment and withstand the economic obstacles that it may be faced with at any point in time ([Schaedler et al., 2021](#)). This leads to the increased need for authentic leadership within the bigger scheme of organisations other than day-to-day management but also the organisation's long-term success ([Novitasari et al., 2020](#)). There have been prior studies which have been conducted on whether authentic leadership still exists or whether it has long past its relevance, with the need for resilience, trust, honesty and ethical conduct ([Luthans & Avolio, 2003](#)).

The purpose of this study is to understand the perception that employees have of their current leadership in the organisations they work for, within all industries, and to understand better whether there is a positive view on what employees feel their leadership behaviours entail as well as their behaviours that establish the authentic leadership view of leaders. However, some organisations have reached the point of ultimate closure due to decisions of those in charge of ensuring governance in terms of operations and success but have unfortunately fallen victim to the need for power, status and financial benefits ([Schaedler et al., 2021](#)). However, some organisations are still operating effectively, known as positive incivility and despotic leadership, which harms the employees' psychological and mental well-being ([Yang, 2016](#)). This has led to the impact on organisational culture and the influence of authentic leadership on the environment of employees, further what impact these unethical behaviours have on future leadership, which may also create power distance where there are high levels of hierarchical acceptance.

Ethical, Authentic leadership and accountability drive good behaviour and corporate governance, leading to positive follower behaviour ([Lin et al., 2022](#)) that reciprocates authentic leadership behaviour, ensuring healthy organisational culture and values. This further ensures that employees are motivated by ethical behaviour ([Al Halbusi et al., 2021](#)) that will better serve organisational short and long-term goals and, at some level, assist in minimising the risk of corporate collapse due to unethical behaviour. All these mentioned indicate that the theory is available; however, we do not know what employee views are and how the behaviour of leaders impacts the workforce ([Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023](#)). Employee well-being and psychological safety have become top of mind within organisations; however, it is not new.

1.5. Significance of study

The importance of this research is to assess the behaviour of leadership in the context of the South African corporate environment, specifically from the viewpoint of employees, regarding their trust, organisational culture, relationship, commitment and view of their organisations' leadership authenticity ([Walumbwa et al., 2008](#)). Organisations that were market leaders of their time have had the unfortunate collapse due to unethical behaviour of those charged with governance ([McLaughlin et al., 2021](#)), and the negative consequences for those citizens in their employ who have lost income, salary, pension funds, and savings due to the trust given to leaders to safeguard their money and well-being.

This study can provide leaders with insights into what employees' views and perceptions are within South African industries. As well as establishing what behaviours employees value in terms of Ethical leadership behaviour, which drives authentic leadership and the perception from staff, as well as how Authentic leadership by example impacts their behaviours. This is an extension from research done by [Ngumba & Scheepers \(2023\)](#) that studies previously focused on the influence that leaders have on staff, where the focus is now on what support is given to employees and their perceptions of support assigned; this can be found through employee surveys.

In the broader frame, the environment leaders find themselves today is nothing short of complex, with high internal and external expectations and increased stress due to stakeholder expectations that may cause unethical behaviour from leaders ([Mai et al., 2021](#)). The intense requirement to meet profit objectives combined with self-interest threats, as seen with the Harvey Weinstein scandal, where he benefited at the expense of the firm ([An & Xu, 2021](#)), leaves organisations vulnerable to unethical or even uncivil behaviour from leaders that may have dire consequences and distrust from employees.

1.6 Academic significance

This study will further contribute to the study of Authentic leadership in the context of South African entities being an emerging market, and the broad industry approach will provide a more expansive view of employee perceptions of authentic leadership. The underlying theories and frameworks contributing to further leader accountability are employee views, organisational culture, trust in leadership, employee satisfaction, employee relationships and power distance of Hofstede's theory.

With South Africa being an emerging market and the industries and environment that are unique to the rest of the world, replicating a study within a South African environment and context will create a view that will be relevant for insights into our leadership perceptions.

The power distance index of South Africa, according to Hofstede at .49, indicates that employees in the country accept hierarchical systems and believe the people senior in position are above them and are thus unequal ([Clearly Cultural, 2019](#)). The presence of Unions to negotiate between blue-collar staff and White-collar staff shows the distance between leadership and employees, which has become more

prevalent in industry-specific organisations. Thus, optimising employee engagement will assist in overcoming the complex work environment and provide psychological empowerment to employees ([Towsen et al., 2020](#))

2. CHAPTER 2

2.1 Introduction Literature review

Numerous research studies have been conducted to address various aspects of unethical behaviours of leadership and the corporate consequences that result from it ([Miao et al., 2019](#)), as well as the meaning of authentic leadership within organisations ([Gardner et al., 2021](#)). This study is an overview of research that others have covered in academic Journals, as well as the underlying theory on Authentic leadership, ethical and unethical leadership behaviours and the consequences thereof. Further, there is an ongoing need within corporates to ensure employee engagement to understand their perception of their current leadership ([Lin et al., 2019](#)) for transparency, accountability, commitment and employee satisfaction. There is an increased organisational need for continuous assessment and accountability of leadership behaviours.

This chapter will start with defining the construct of Authentic leadership over the decades and the evolution of the definition and further connect to corporations, both successful and unsuccessful, and the decisions that leadership took which led to the organisations' success or demise due to unethical decision making. This will then lead to defining and establishing theoretical and practical traits of ethical/ unethical behaviour and positive incivility and the impact on employee psychological safety and perceptions based on studies done previously. The second construct is that Employee perceptions and views on their leaders cannot be studied on a historical basis only, and the need for continuous revisits and refining of theory and outcomes is vital to keep leadership behaviour in line with the changing environment of business as well as doing self-analysis and reflection on their behaviours. A quote by Peter Drucker, “The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence; it is to act with yesterday’s logic.” in the same breath, we need to adapt this to the changing lens of leadership.

Part A: Construct 1

2.2 Authentic Leadership

In understanding the phases and the relationship between leadership behaviours and their impact on staff, this section will define the critical phases in isolation and how one leadership behaviour impacts the employees' view of their leadership ability.

2.2.1 Authenticity

Dating back to the ancient Greek period, the word authenticity split into auto, meaning 'self, and hence, meaning 'doer' indicates a person who acts autonomously, in other words being true to themselves and ensuring they positively use their capabilities ([Walumbwa et al., 2008](#)). Experts, on the other hand, have broadened the definition to traits such as high ethical behaviour and self-awareness, which can incorporate these abilities to leverage and create an environment for employees that promotes trust and well-being ([Novitasari et al., 2020](#)).

Positive leadership in changing times is what currently defines authenticity; the environment has changed, rules of engagement and economic and regulatory rules have changed, and the context changes as such, the rules set out change

2.2.2 Leadership

With the definition of leadership and the quality of a leader becoming increasingly challenging to lay down, the evolution of it has been called 'adjectival leadership' as types of leadership started increasing, such as supportive leadership, controlling and other types ([Crawford, 2012](#)). [Bass \(1997\)](#) defined leadership as a leader's ability to steer the organisation towards its objectives together with the employees through influence. While carrying skills, values, and culture through the organisation, it can be complex ([Dinibutun, 2020](#)).

The table below indicates how different researchers have defined leadership and how the definition has evolved from 1911 being the role of one individual, to 1948 changing to a relationship between a group and an individual, to 1961, the concept now changing to the ability to influence, to 1978 where the definition is expanded to transformation, goals, mobility, engagement than in 2007 goes back to influence with Jung defining leadership as the motivation of employees to achieve goals, ([Dinibutun, 2020](#)), the below is an interesting perspective of the extreme different lenses of leadership definitions from researchers:

Figure 1: ([Dinibutun, 2020](#))

Researchers	Definition of Leadership
Blackmar (1911)	It is the centralization of effort in one person.
Bernard (1927)	It focuses the attention of group members into the desired direction.
Copeland (1942)	It is the art of influencing.
Knickerbocker (1948)	It consists of a relationship between an individual and a group.
Stogdill (1950)	It is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group in its effort toward goal setting and goal achievement.
Bennis (1959)	It induces a subordinate to behave in a desired manner.
Bass (1961)	It is an individual's effort to change the behavior of others.
Tannenbaum (1961)	It is interpersonal influence toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals.
Katz and Kahn (1966)	It is an influential increment over and above compliance with the routine directives of the organization.
Burns (1978)	It transforms followers, creates visions of the goals that may be attained and articulates for the followers ways to attain those goals. Leadership persons mobilize resources to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of followers.
Pondy (1989)	It is a form of social influence.
Schein (1992)	It is the ability to start evolutionary change processes that are more adaptive.
Bass (1994)	It is an interaction and leaders are agents of change whose acts affect other people more than people's acts affect them.
Drucker (1998)	It needs a leader. The only definition of a leader is someone who has followers.
Vroom and Jago (2007)	It refers to a potential or capacity to influence others.
Jung (2013)	It is the alignment of subordinates' activities and their motivational activation for goal attainment.

2.2.3 Authentic Leadership

Studies have extensively focused on defining authentic leadership and understanding the concept of authentic leadership and related theories ([Samwel Muguna, 2022](#)). It has been found that this is a quality that some have more of than others ([Gardner et al., 2021](#)). Once-off training is insufficient to ensure managers change their day-to-day outputs to incorporate introspection and reflection ([Gardner et al., 2021](#)). Understanding the world that leaders find themselves in today and

ensuring that leaders conduct themselves ethically and always have the interests of the people and organisations they serve, as well as the underlying repercussion or lack thereof for any transgressions and reasons for lack of accountability, is still a phenomenon in terms of meaningful research for future change.

There have been numerous takes on what authentic leadership is as a concept, where one of the Greek philosophies states it very simply as “Know thy self” by Greek aphorism ([Kharabsheh et al., 2017](#)).

Historical literature has defined authentic leadership as an act that encompasses profound individual values which build on the view of others towards the leader with an increased view of trustworthiness, respect, and confidence ([Avolio et al., 2004](#)). Recent studies indirectly create a transparent work environment between employees and leaders, where staff feel empowered and free to voice their views ([Kim et al., 2022](#)).

Below are the aspects of Authentic leadership defined by Walumbwa et al. (2008), which has four measurement aspects: self-awareness, Relational Transparency, Balanced processing and Internalised moral perspective. These four pillars enable the study to navigate between different leadership traits for a more profound understanding. Balanced processing is used as an element of employee perception.

Figure 2: Summary of authentic leadership perception categories ([Walumbwa et al., 2008](#)).

4 Aspects	Definitions
Self-awareness	Individuals’ ability to analyse themselves by viewing and understanding themselves in the world, being aware of shortcomings and strengths and the impact it has on others (Walumbwa et al., 2008).
Relational Transparency	Ability to be transparent and express views, emotions, values, feelings and opinions, which then allows people around to develop a sense of trust(Walumbwa et al., 2008).
Balanced processing	The ability of the leaders to view information objectively with the consultation of those around for their view and the leaders' openness to receiving opposing views (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Internalised moral perspective	Individuals' ability to control themselves according to their values, morals and belief systems that align with those of the community, company or group shows the awareness that whatever is said may impact the next. (Walumbwa et al., 2008).
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2.2.4 Ethical Leadership Behaviour

In literature, there is a direct connection between employee perception and behaviour of the leadership in terms of ethics; however, there is an ambiguous topic on what leadership traits can be linked to perceptions of ethical leadership and conversely with unethical behaviour ([Marquardt et al., 2020](#)).

The definition of ethical leadership, as stated by ([Brown et al. \(2005\)](#)), is “The demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making”. The demonstration element indicates that followers’ perception of ethical leaders will demonstrate behaviours that elevate trustworthiness, care, and equality; the ‘normatively appropriate would depend on the context in which the cultural element exists ([Brown et al., 2005](#)).

The view of literature is that to be in a space where leaders are perceived to be ethical by followers, two social learnings are relevant: the moral manager and the moral person ([Jensen et al., 2022](#); [Brown & Treviño, 2013](#)). In terms of ethical leadership behaviour, the moral manager encompasses the leader’s ongoing effort to ensure they strive towards ethical behaviour from self as well as the employees within an organisation ([Jensen et al., 2022](#); [Brown et al., 2005](#)) and ensuring that this is effective by providing reinforcement tools such as rewards for those who uphold ethical behaviour as well as implementing conduct accountability measures ([Jensen et al., 2022](#); [Belle & Cantarelli, 2017](#)), the moral person incorporates how the leader conducts themselves outside of the work environment in terms of social and personal life ([Jensen et al., 2022](#); [Belle & Cantarelli, 2017](#)) which in effect establishes that the leader has social power who has positive actions to ensure actions always for the good of society ([Kalshoven et al., 2010](#))

2.2.5 Unethical Leadership Behaviour

The elements that give the perceived view of unethical behaviour have become an essential factor within corporate organisations, as the slightest deviation in a specific behaviour can result in a substantial shift in its impact ([Marquardt et al., 2020](#)). There is an increase in employees and leaders who seem to have a reduced moral compass to feeding their self-interests within organisations; this is an element known as workplace cheating behaviour in which dishonesty, conning and dishonesty is the nature of investing in the self-interest ([Mitchell et al., 2018](#)). Unethical behaviour is an individual action that goes against society's view on what is morally correct, a norm, or lawful ([Belle & Cantarelli, 2017](#)).

The reactions from employees to negative unethical behaviour, absenteeism, insubordination, unproductive or reduced output, and emotional or psychological trauma by way of lowered self-esteem and self-efficacy ([Schyns & Schilling, 2013](#)) have become a great cause for concern about what impact not only on perceptions of employees but also the indirect impact of employee psychological safety and wellbeing within their organisational space ([Potipiroon & Wongpreedee, 2020](#)). Followers, by observation, will learn what is appropriate and acceptable or inappropriate and unacceptable within an organisation by how leaders are recognised and rewarded or reprimanded and disciplined for ethical or unethical behaviour ([Jensen et al., 2022](#); [Mayer et al., 2012](#)).

The underlying aspect of lousy behaviour seems to stem from a lack of accountability in many instances and the lack of accountability measures ([Fagbadebo, 2019](#)) within organisations that will also protect employees and their rights. The critical question would be, 'Do organisations hold leaders accountable for poor performance?' ([Lundgren et al., 2021](#)). Leaders who actively take accountability and seek to engage with employees on areas of improvement create a trustworthy environment; honest work environments indicate good leadership that allows for good performance and innovation ([Khalfan et al., 2022](#)).

2.2.6 Corporate Risk

When we look at unethical leadership or unethical leadership behaviours, we assess what impact this has on the businesses, industries, employees, and the overall reputation of such businesses, where companies need to ensure their brand is protected and ensure "responsible business" practices ([Das et al., 2019](#)). The need

for business sustainability and, most importantly, profit-making is why most businesses operate, and there is a growing need for leaders to meet the expectations of investors that invariably will benefit them in terms of monetary rewards.

In Britain, it was instigated that five banks had changed their business culture from customer-centric to Sales-orientated; this, however, seemed to immediately shift the organisation leaders into becoming untrustworthy and reckless for the sake of greed and self-interest ([Kunz & Heitz, 2021](#)). This is addressed further by a study on 'the Dark side of Incentives', which addresses the example of the car industry where dealers are incentivised to commit fraud by advising buyers that the quality of the vehicle is better than it is ([Ehmke et al., 2019](#)) which eventually leads to distrust for the brand and reputational damage when caught out.

2.3 Safeguards organisations can put in place to endure transparency to mitigate unhealthy work environments and impact on employees

The concept of motivational and goal orientation to reduce unethical behaviours has been considered one of the avenues that can be implemented by encouraging leaders to bring their values into the workplace, which involves having to make business decisions with a moral lens ([Ripoll, 2019](#)). It was found in the study conducted by Ripoll (2019) that when organisations provide transparent, clear goals to employees, then Public Service Motivation (PSM) tends to increase, which brings Public values into the spectrum of moral identity.

2.4 Transformational leadership

In the context of authenticity, leaders can positively influence the organisational society by allowing employees to expand and grow within the environment in which they operate, giving employees the space to develop over and above their current capabilities ([Scheuer et al., 2021](#)). The positive connotation of increased performance and freedom of innovation and the direct sharing of knowledge from leadership ([Scheuer et al., 2021](#)) will have a positive influence on the perceptions of employees and increase confidence in leadership ability and authenticity ([Thacker, 2016](#)), which will allow leaders to gain confidence on their perceived authenticity while at the same time developing team and organisational achievement ([Scheuer et al., 2021](#)).

2.5 Positive Leadership Incivility

The consequences of leadership abusing their power or unfair treatment, in effect, have negative impacts on the perceptions of employees; these negative behaviours include unfair treatment, office politics, uncertainty, and reaction from employees, including defiance, exiting the organisation or causing emotional trauma ([Ali et al., 2022](#)). Health, well-being as well and workplace trauma are the significant effects of destructive leadership behaviour, whether active or passive from the side of the leadership actions ([Yao et al., 2021](#))

2.6 Employee well-being

The psychological safety of employees in South Africa and the need to ensure that high levels of trust exist between leadership and employees are on the rise and involve risk through the decisions made by those in charge regarding how others perceive leadership ([Maximo et al., 2019](#)). Rising inflation and interest rates, increased cost of living and high employment rate make this study significant.

2.7 Role Theory

This theory identifies that behaviour can be tied to the specific role that one has within the organisation and the ever-changing ([Paterson & Huang, 2018](#)) and moral expectations that are linked with each role and perception from employees, and whether employees perceived their role to needed to be included in the aspect of behaving ethically ([Paterson & Huang, 2018](#)). A concept from Paterson & Huang ([2018](#)) introduced role-ethicality, which is a relationship between ethical leadership and unethical employee behaviour; the study was to determine the impact of the actions of leadership regarding speaking out on ethical matters and ethical role requirements and the perceived effects of the behaviour of leaders who portray unethically and that there was a definite link between the two.

Role Morality is directed more toward professionals or individuals ([Paterson & Huang, 2018](#); [Radtke, 2007](#)); role ethicality is organisational specific and stems from the experiences that staff go through within the environment ([Paterson & Huang, 2018](#)).

2.8 Power distance

Lord John Acton stated, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." What is being said above is that as a person's power or authority

increases, their moral sense reduces ([Dictionary, 2019](#)). Does ethical leadership influence unethical behaviour? Within organisations, leaders' undue influence is a direct consequence of their position, title and power. According to social learning theory, leaders indirectly influence employees through role modelling and even mere observation of behaviours ([Miao et al., 2019](#); [Eva et al., 2019](#)).

The impact of power distance due to authority, power and abuse cannot be ignored in the dimensions of effectively analysing the organisational society's perceptions of authentic leadership. The primary basis of the power distance concept is what society perceives as normative as agreed by society and the expectations ([Neubert et al., 2021](#)). [Yao et al. \(2022\)](#) state that power distance in the view of the employee where leaders have power over the employees influences the degree of emotion that the employee will have over the actions of the leader, further the acceptance from the employee of this type of power distance and an employee with high power distance is more likely to accept any behaviours whether negative or positive and will thus comply with any demand whether ethical or unethical and perhaps at the consequence of not knowing any better.

In Western countries, power distance may be low in a South African context; a score of 49 on the Hofstede power distance index indicates that the South African workforce accepts that leaders are higher than they are ([Paigedale, 2013](#)). This can be linked to values instilled from cultural disciplines that will follow through to the work environment ([Hofstede, 2013](#)). This would be a cause for concern as the fear that these employees will be a natural behavioural element will impact what they perceive as authentic leadership behaviour, and the power distance may wrongfully or instead naively be accepted as correct.

Social learning theory indicates that followers are more inclined to imitate the behaviours of leaders who suggest behavioural principles to staff ([Moon & Christensen, 2021](#); [Philipp & Lopez, 2013](#)). Understanding how followers respond to their leaders' behaviour is ongoing, hand in hand with the extent to which observation of human behaviour is influential, including the motivational factors that will encourage the need to mimic ethical behaviour ([Wellman et al., 2018](#); [Banwellmura, 1977](#)).

3. Social Exchange Theory

Often, organisational leadership behaviour, whether good or viewed as unethical, can impact the organisation financially and affect the perceived view of staff on their leadership and the indirect influence of employees to either frustration or change their behaviour towards the organisation ([Marquardt et al., 2020](#)). The concept of social exchange theory in the context of the employee and leader relationship, which makes the elements of trust and appreciation valuable for both leader and employee, is beneficial ([Henderson et al., 2021](#)). However, when the actions of one or the other are adverse, this will harm the other party, being either leader or subordinate.

The impacts of negative or perceived unethical behaviour are two-dimensional, the first being rejection of the behaviour from the leader, where followers feel a sense of betrayal regarding their social exchange expectations and, at times, may return the same negative behaviour. The second is the follower's unfortunate view to accept the leader's actions as they admire the leader, where the followers may obtain specific incentives whether received unethically or not ([Toader & Kunze, 2021](#)). This brings about the question regarding the impact of leadership behaviours, especially when such behaviours are harmful; the impact on future leadership and the deemed unethical behaviours based on what can be gained and the perception that this is normal will have a detrimental impact on future leadership as well as the organisations they will be representing.

This brings on the focus of not the disapproval of negative leadership but also the ever-increasing approval and attraction towards hostile leaders, which, according to (e.g., [Toader & Kunze, 2021](#); [Thoroughgood et al., 2012](#)), has been on the rise from ongoing research. If anything, this should be one of the most critical concerns in society encompassing the social identity theory due to personal identification towards the leader ([Thoroughgood et al., 2012](#)).

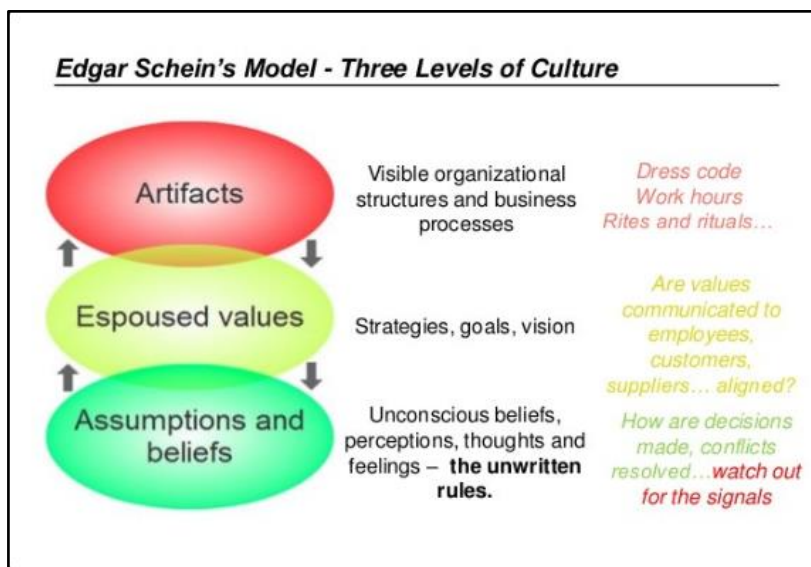
Leader behaviour can impact organisational staff in various directions; leaders set the tone of the corporate culture and are seen as the individuals who take the first step, and the employees who observe these steps move as per the leader's decisions ([Amore et al., 2022](#)). The concept of 'Leading by example' is an indication that leaders can influence organisational staff to follow them via their actions ([Hermalin, 1997](#)); the types of activities which can be demonstrated by leaders who can portray ethical behaviour through actions will motivate employees to behave their dealing in the same way ([Amore et al., 2022](#)) thus reducing the intentions of

employees to act in an unethical manner ([White & Lean, 2007](#)). Conversely, leadership actions will have the opposite impact when unethical behaviour comes into play, negatively impacting the perceptions of leadership or the authenticity thereof.

4. Organisational Culture

Culture determines the environment of an organisation to ensure how employees and organisations adapt and provide a toxic-free culture. Edgar Schein Culture framework assists in guiding organisations on what the requirements are to develop and maintain a positive work culture and how to identify areas of concern and how to fix them, as well as being able to identify timeously when a positive work culture is turning into toxic culture, ([Midgette, 2019](#))

Figure 3: ([Midgette, 2019](#))



Scandals within the corporate organisation have become rampant over the past few years, where the impacts of leaders acting within their interests or due to pure gross negligence have driven several leaders to change the trajectory of their organisation's ethical frameworks and re-establish trust from followers within the organisation ([Lee et al.F 2019](#)). The substance that is viewed as holding an organisation together is a mixture of the company's values, way of working, and social narrative, referred to as organisational culture ([Kharabsheh et al., 2017](#)).

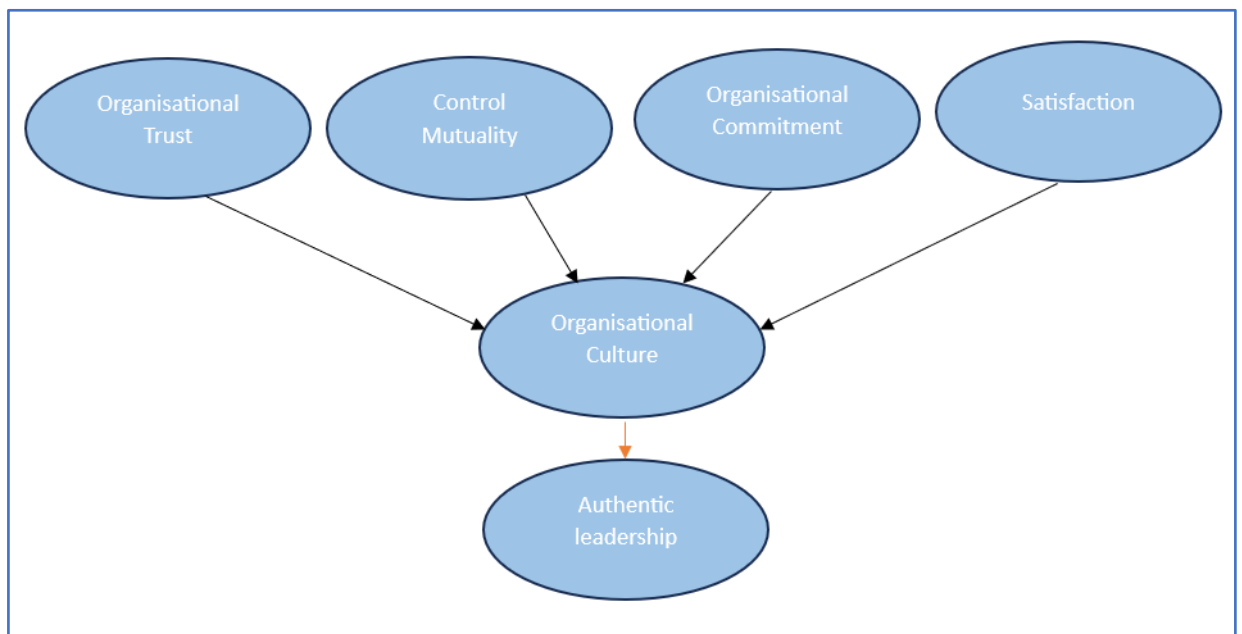
This will indicate that if the culture is toxic, the authenticity of the leaders will be low, and if the culture is one of trust and doing the right thing, authentic leadership will accelerate, and perceptions will be positive. This can be summed up by a statement

by [Gruenert and Whitaker \(2015\)](#), “The culture of any organisation is shaped by the worst behaviour the leader is willing to tolerate.” It all starts and ends with the leader.

This study has included organisational culture as a variable to be measured against which covered elements of the survey respondents were required to complete. The results of the survey were then correlated against authentic leadership.

Further additional respondent results were reviewed on commitment and trust, which are sub-components of organisational culture, however valuable to review in isolation.

Figure 4: Researcher visual diagram of employee perception and organisational culture



4.1 Trust

The organisational definition of trust is vulnerability towards the other, and the person intends to ensure a safe psychological environment where leaders' engagements with employees are open and honest, creating a safer trust environment for employees ([Qiu et al., 2019](#)). Trust in leadership and the organisations in which employees work ultimately positively influences fostering fruitful relationships; this includes loyalty to staff and providing the platform to take risks ([Maximo et al., 2019](#)).

4.2 Control Mutuality

The degree to which ranking and hierarchy are used to gain respect and power over another is where organisations will be dominant, which is not necessarily a healthy dynamic to have; mentorship, career guidance and joint relationships should be where leaders would want their organisations to go ([Methot & Cole, 2021](#)), and not gain followers purely based on level of authority and power. This also comes into play when looking at gender biases and the concept of females being overpowered by male leaders in terms of decision-making and that the opinions of females are not to be listened to, which shows resistance from males to adhere to or implement policies for women advancement, ([Lee, 2022](#)).

4.3 Commitment

The organisational expressive long-term commitment to the future of employees, the leadership of today has a higher responsibility to ensure organisational commitment managing employee retention ([Haque et al., 2017](#)), which indicates to the employee that the organisation values the relationship and that, in turn, a sense of loyalty from the part of the employee. An organisation's ability to employ and retain top talent is crucial in ensuring the organisation can function on continuous knowledge development ([Fernández-Mesa et al., 2019](#)), which is critical for business experience. However, this is not an explicit contractual agreement; it is a psychological contract in many instances.

4.4 Satisfaction

The element of career fulfilment when assessing against authentic leadership is essential for any person in corporate rendering services and thus should be equally important for the organisation, where an employee feels appreciated, has a sense of purpose, is excited and at the same time learning and developing current and new skills, ([Chang et al.2020](#)).

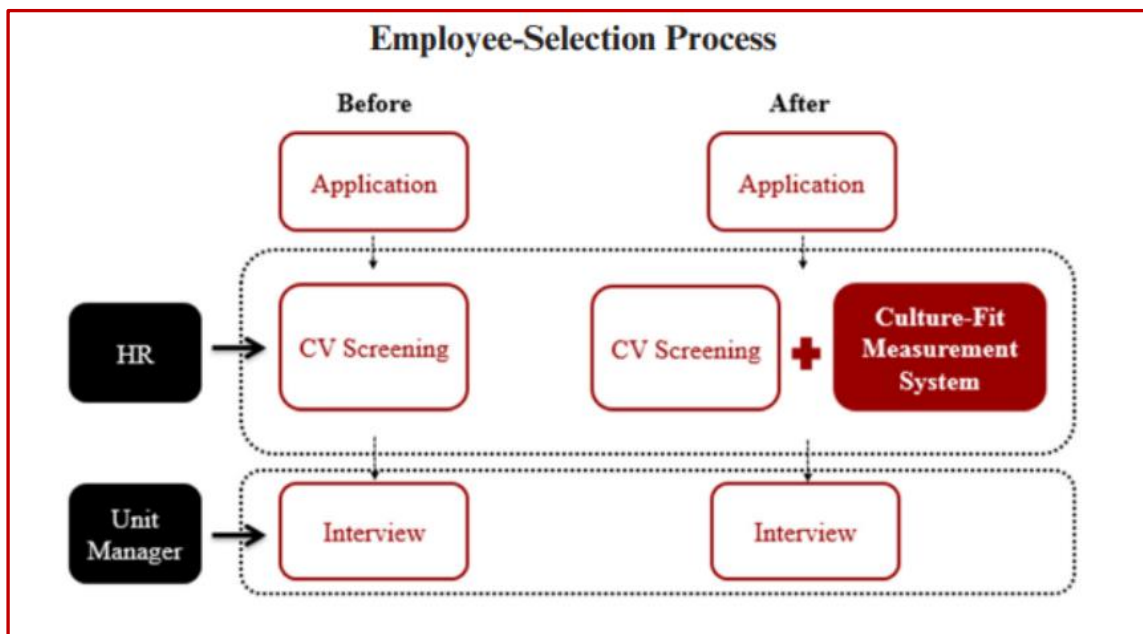
Scandals in corporate are increasing, and leaders have realised that the Trust between employees and followers needs to be restored, that responsible behaviour is to be enforced and that leading by example encourages servant leadership and follower behaviour ([Lee, 2022](#)). The concept of servant leadership is well-researched. The overlap to authentic leadership places in leadership characteristics that are transparent, open mindset, and the ability to change and adapt, ensuring the employees and organisation can thrive ([Lee, 2022](#)). This is where servant leadership

meets transformational leadership, a recipe for the future and the overall success of organisations, employees, stakeholders and leaders as a collaborative.

[Schein \(1986\)](#) stated in his theory that perhaps the only thing that leaders should do that is of utmost importance is to create and manage culture; the reason he noted this is that if leaders do not manage culture, it will start managing the organisation, leaders and employees, without even being aware of it.

As organisations grow or decentralise, it becomes harder to manage and maintain an organisational culture, which is still an area which has not been well established, although in recent research, the element of measurement which is being introduced is that of 'Culture fit', which occurs at recruitment stage, this culture fit measurement, below figure 6 shows the process before interview and after, this is for leaders to assess whether applicants are aligned to the companies values that leaders need to maintain ([Cai, 2022](#)).

Figure 5: ([Cai, 2022](#)).



Continuous alignment between an organisation's values and employees is crucial in shaping the organisational culture ([Cai, 2022](#)). Leaders bear the responsibility of fostering a trustworthy and transparent work environment. A culture that encourages employees to voice their thoughts and feel appreciated leads to heightened performance and motivation, benefiting both parties in the long run. Considering the diverse sectors and industry dynamics, each with varying output and customer significance, evaluating and establishing a culture best suited for the specific industry

in which the organisation operates is essential. For instance, the 'aged-care' sector transitioned its organisational culture from a care-focused one to a 'happiness culture', ultimately cultivating a culture of excellence ([Miller et al., 2019](#)).

Part B: Construct 2

2.9 Employee Perception

Employee perception is vital in establishing how the workforce feels ([Fennell et al., 2023](#)); whether it is job-specific, leadership, culture, changes, or organisational results, the view of the staff executing the day-to-day tasks is essential.

The organisation's dynamics stem from employees and leaders, with employees behaving in a particular manner based on leadership behaviour. How employees perceive leadership and the organisation impacts behavioural patterns and feelings, such as how they conduct themselves, engage with others, job satisfaction, and growth opportunities ([Tafolli & Grabner-Kräuter, 2020](#)). Negative employee perception can cause the feeling of being unappreciated, victimisation, and inconsistency with rules and treatment, which may be unfair ([Yao et al., 2021](#)) and can indirectly result in poor performance that then filters through to loss of revenue, quality or customers.

2.9.1 Psychological safety

The term ethical climate is often used in organisations on the perception of employee psychological safety within their work environment in which employees feel free and safe to call out any unethical behaviour, misconduct, or wrongdoing without fear of reprisal or victimisation ([Potipiroon & Wongpreedee, 2020](#)). Within a psychologically safe environment where respect and trust are of high importance together with freedom of expression, this is to ensure the safeguarding of the organisation's best interests, which then further extends workplace authenticity through authentic expression; however, where this is low the employee runs the risk of criticism which will cause conflict with relationship with managers or those they speak out against ([Gardner & Prasad, 2022](#))

2.9.2 Follower behaviour

Employees often mirror behaviour within corporate settings, whether it be competitive behaviour, firm behaviour, or authoritative behaviour ([Wang et al., 2023](#)); however, other behaviour, such as authentic behaviour within the workplace, can impact employee perception and further influence follower behaviour to promote trust, organisational citizenship and commitment ([Peyton et al., 2023](#)).

Recent studies have highlighted the need for follower-centric leadership theory, where leaders can assess how their behaviour is perceived in the view of employees

([Wang et al., 2023](#)); this brings interesting insights to this study, as stated in Chapter 1 of employee perception regarding leadership behaviour. However, there has also been a study conducted where 343 full-time staff completed the same survey two weeks apart; within this time, leaders started empowering the staff; when the results came from the second survey, the employee trust indicator increased versus the last survey ([Rai & Kim, 2021](#)).

The element of destructive leadership and the impact not only on their perception but also on their behaviour was found that volatile leadership behaviour could drive employees to cause financial harm to the organisation ([Mackey et al., 2018](#)). What this does is it brings about negative workplace behaviour together with defiance; this may bring about the rising ethical scandals, which should then be that employees and leaders key in their moral self, which will advance ethical leadership and follower behaviour tapping into moral identity ([Gerpott et al., 2019](#)).

2.9.3 Employee Empowerment

As stated in 2.9.2, empowering employees positively impacts employees' perceptions of leadership from the prior study conducted and is influenced by participative and transformational leadership ([Rai & Kim, 2021](#)). However, there is a different view on ambidextrous leadership which argues that employees are reliant on leaders to provide them with information to enable them to carry out their function, as well as clarity on the requirements of their function the ambidextrous leader may unintentionally add work stress on the follower ([Wang et al., 2020](#)). This may negatively impact an impact of employee's perception of their leadership.

There is also the factor of over-empowerment, which could open doors for unethical behaviour coupled with the risk of abuse of power due to the information they now have access to ([Adler et al., 2021](#)). The empowering leadership goal is to ensure employee motivation by promotion of power-sharing; however, this comes with an element of risk based on employees that may search for ways to gain, which then places leaders in a position of being cautious to avoid losses or potential risk ([Han et al., 2023](#)). Given the above, it is clear that employee empowerment, given the context of motivational work and perception of authentic leadership, is not as easy as leadership models tend to express it when there could be costly risks from employee empowerment.

2.9.6 Workplace Accountability

An organisation comprises different levels of staff, and all employees, regardless of position, should have their views and concerns raised and expressed. [Roberto Frega \(2021\)](#) presented the importance of staff being involved being one of the keys to ensuring organisational transparency and fairness. Individuals should be held to account for their actions and the impact, whether direct or indirect, that this has on an organisation and its employees, as overall employees' employment conditions are to behave in the best interest of the organisation as well as its stakeholders ([Goncharenko, 2022](#)).

[Goncharenko \(2022\)](#) established an increased need for information transparency to staff who are not necessarily within leadership positions as most organisations restrict this information to certain levels of management; this will encourage employees to take accountability for the financial as well as social performance of the organisation.

2.9.5 Power Distance and Social Learning Theory

2.9.5.1 Power Distance (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions)

The theoretical framework of Hofstede's Cultural dimensions model will focus on one pillar, the Power Distance Index (PDI), as a view of employee perception, which indicates whether employees accept hierarchical power.

Figure 6: ([Innovation, 2023](#))



The relationship between Power distance and authentic leadership prior studies have put a lot of research and emphasis on this dimension of Hofstede's model as it dramatically impacts organisational culture. A study by Zhang et al. (2021) found that when power distance was high, authentic leadership was lower, and employees' perceptions increased when Individualism was lower. With South Africa's diverse culture, we cannot ignore these power dynamics' impact on the work environment.

2.9.5.2 Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is when employees learn by observing leadership behaviours and leading by example, which will cause followers to imitate the same to their subordinates to encourage creativity ([Zhao et al., 2023](#)). Ethical leadership has been shown to be positive in terms of the perception of employees, thus motivating employees to meet their performance obligations. Furthermore, where staff have high moral standards, they tend to be drawn closer to leaders who share the same values; however, this depends on the conditions within the organisation (Hussam Al Halbusi et al., 2023).

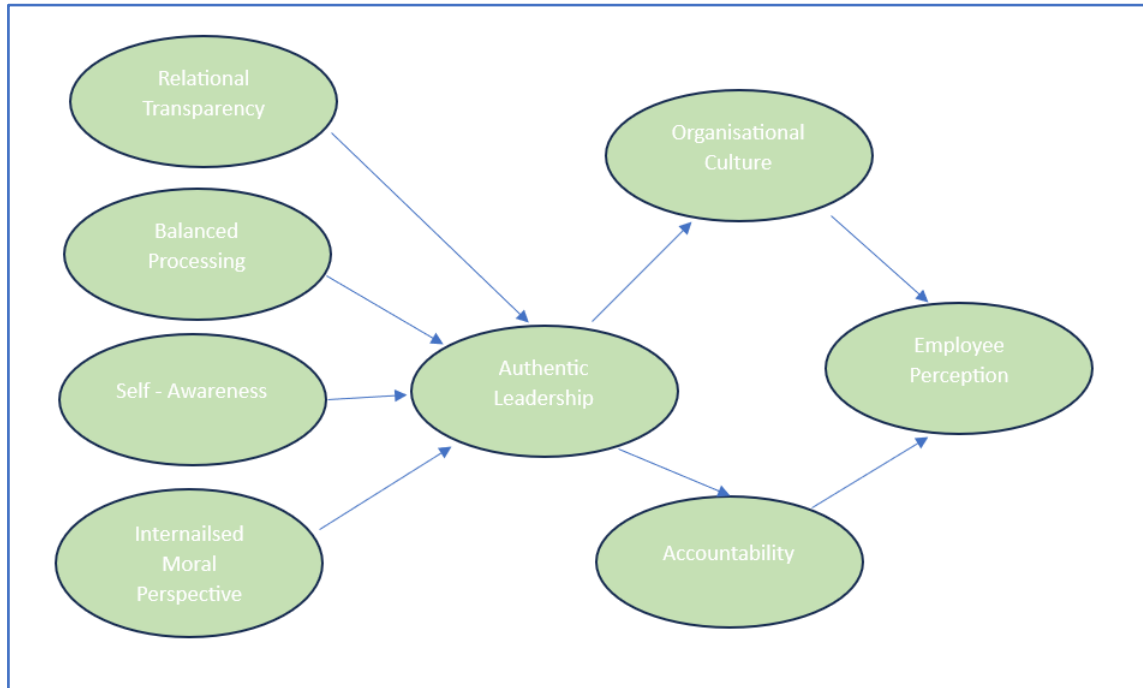
Conclusion

The literature provided together with the underlying theories provides some insights as to the different underlying elements of Ethical behaviour, Unethical behaviour, Leadership power, and social learning theory and how these aspects connect in the perceived outcomes of employees within organisations given unethical leadership behaviour and the impact on how the development of people may be negatively impacted, however together with incorporating work environments into the authentic leadership sphere links the ethical and transformational leadership ([Kharabsheh et al., 2017](#)), which indicates that the elements are well connected for a working formula.

While authentic leadership and the importance thereof is vital to research, they are underlying building blocks that are important in understanding human behaviour, organisational cultures and how they are set, the implications of roles and responsibilities of employees regardless of hierarchy and ultimately, the power and influence that leaders have that shape perception, confidence and reduce the ever-increasing unethical behaviour as well as the critical role current leadership have on future leadership within South Africa.

Figure 7 below is a diagrammatic view of Authentic leadership and employee perception, the two constructs on which this research is based, the additional independent variable being Accountability and Organisation culture.

Figure 7: Researcher diagram



5. CHAPTER 3

Introduction and Hypotheses

The objective of the research is to understand further the impact of unethical behaviour of organisational leaders and the confidence in authentic leadership in the view of employees around the constructs of authentic leader leadership and employee perception where insights provided from employee engagement surveys and involves insights into organisational culture, power distance and social theory.

Research Objectives

To understand the impact of leadership behaviour and the perception of such behaviour on employees in today's economic environment. The basis of this research is to assist in understanding the following, which is a replica study:

Research Objective: Does leadership behaviour impact the perception of employees on authentic leadership?

Whether employees' views, based on leadership positivity, impact organisational culture and what they feel leadership behaviour makes them think about the organisation.

Research Objective: What is the current perception of leadership authenticity based on behavioural aspects by employees within their work environment that impact accountability?

Based on the survey results, how do the behaviours of leadership affect the perception of employees when it comes to accountability and authentic leadership?

Research Objective: Do the power distance and organisational culture directly influence perceptions of authentic leadership?

Whether employees' views, based on authentic leadership, impact organisational culture and power distance, whether they are trustworthy and committed, as well as the level of power distance between employees and leaders and what they feel leadership behaviour makes them think about the organisation.

Model development

The model development incorporated frameworks from prior research and additional frameworks for this study to expand the existing scholarly discussions in a South African context. [Ngumba & Scheepers \(2023\)](#) indicated that the limitations of their research and suggestions for future research would be to conduct research in

specific industries and analyse the perceptions of CRS. However, the change in this study would be from CSR to an authentic leadership view across industries over the entire organisation and exploring organisational climate. This research method allows for a continuous assessment of leadership perception even though, at a point in time still, it is a more recent assessment on a much broader database in terms of industries and levels of employees in the organisation.

Research Hypotheses

The study examines the behaviour of leadership and the impact of this behaviour, whether ethical or unethical, on the perception of employees on the authenticity of leadership.

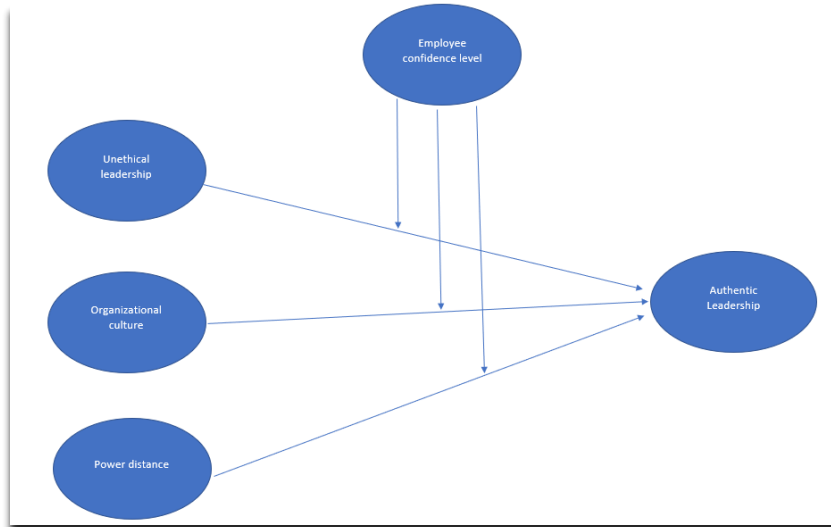
What is the current perception of leadership authenticity by corporate employees? How will authentic leadership assist with accountability to drive change and improve confidence in leadership based on theoretical models and frameworks and the business environment?

There are three objectives which will be looked at: First would be to test whether the actions of leaders directly impact the perception of employees, thus affecting the perception of authentic leadership. The second objective is whether the accountability of leaders affects the perception of authentic leadership, and the third objective is whether the power distance and organisational culture directly influence perceptions of authentic leadership.

Null Hypothesis H0 - The actions and behaviours of leaders do not have any correlation with the perceptions of employees within the corporate organisational environment regarding ethical behaviour

H1 - The actions of leaders do impact the perceptions of employees within the organisation on authentic leadership

Figure 8: Authors' Model Hypotheses



Recent research has brought to light the spirit of Ubuntu's philosophy that the leaders should connect with society and that these community interactions will build authentic authority within leadership ([Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023](#)), and further input is provided that the humane elements of the concept make for worthy authentic leadership leading to below hypothesis ([Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023](#)).

First Hypothesis

H₀ – Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is not impacted by unethical leadership behaviour (Accountability Index)

H_a - Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is impacted by unethical leadership behaviour (Accountability Index).

Second Hypothesis

H₀ – Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is not impacted by organisational culture due to power distance

H_a – Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is impacted by organisational culture due to power distance.

Third Hypothesis

Ho, the actions of leaders do not impact the perception of employees within corporates regarding authentic leadership.

Ha, the actions of leaders do impact the perception of employees within corporations regarding authentic leadership.

Organisational culture and its complexity need to be managed closely by leaders to ensure the employees' ability to operate from a place of psychological safety in terms of trust, transparency ([Galpin et al., 2015](#)), growth and interaction with leaders; this leads to below hypothesis:

6. CHAPTER 4

4.1 Overview of Research Methodology and Design

Introduction

This chapter will focus on the research methodology used to answer the research question. A quantitative analysis has been adopted to answer the research dilemma for this study. Elements of the research design are discussed in detail below.

Research Method

The research method selected is suitable for this study, similar to a study by [Nqumba & Scheepers \(2023\)](#) in which they observed social phenomena through the lens of managerial practice.

A questionnaire in the form of a survey was used as the instrument for the collection of data from respondents. The research philosophy conducted was Positivism ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)), where the evidence was gathered from a survey completed by participants within corporate environments. This philosophy allowed for evidence to be gathered that interprets findings from employees within their current corporate social environment with measurable findings. This quantitative data collection was used to understand better the impact of authentic leadership and the perception of followers and allowed for data to be analysed to determine the extent of the relationship between multiple variables involving hypothesis testing.

Researching the past and the future terms of understanding the history of leadership and the events that occurred and decisions taken will result in research of the law of cause and effect ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)) to better understand the potential underlying reasons for leadership failure in organisations and the view of research participants (employees) regarding the issue.

This research was based on a previous study that investigated the influence of authentic leadership (Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023) but is applied in a different geographical context to test the original study's generalisability. The proposed study seeks to respond to the same call in the literature ([Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023](#)) to assess what could be changed to positively shift the trajectory of leadership and follower outcomes in organisations. This is of great importance in the current economic climate and environment of business as well as the expectations that leaders and managers find themselves in, thus putting pressure on leaders mentally

and performance-based and what pressure may influence their decision-making, whether good or bad.

A more recent study by ([Cooper et al., 2020](#)) gave rise to the additional element of persuasion: a leader needs to convince employees to take the leader's advice when executing tasks. This additional element shows the significance of the leader's social credibility and the need to lead by example and determine the different leadership styles via theory.

Approach

The study followed a deductive approach with hypothesis testing; a survey was sent out, and the answers to the questionnaire determined whether the respondents' answers supported the hypothesis.

Methodological choices

In understanding how the research questions were answered, mono methods of collecting data, which is quantitative data collection and analysis, were used, namely primary and secondary data from prior research studies, to assess further whether the narrative on authentic leadership differs within different industries as well as over after some time this strengthens the argument and provides a comprehensive approach to the study.

Purpose of research design

In answering the hypotheses, a quantitative approach has been followed, which allowed a broader scope and generalizability of the study's findings and breadth by assessing multiple variables of authentic leadership through statistical analysis, including accountability, employee experience and organisational culture. This study across multiple industries provided a comprehensive, broader view and understanding of how employees on various levels feel about their current leadership. A few recent research designs in literature have used a qualitative approach with multinational corporations (MNCs) formulating ethical tools within the organisation and used the data to compare similarities regarding ethical issues ([Khaled & Gond, 2020](#)). This study, however, did not assist in evaluating the current state of unethical behaviour and the perception of employees. In order to gain a deeper understanding of where the corporate world is right now, the chosen research design used to determine this is a descriptive, causal research design. This approach

worked by analysing a group of individuals' results based on the data collected to understand whether decisions made by leaders affect respondents' views on authentic leadership.

The research covered a broader spectrum of participants across industries and organisational levels. An online survey using statistical analysis techniques was chosen as the preferred method to answer the research question. The survey gathered data from a broader population range, which provided scalability; respondents were spread far and wide across industries and geographical areas, thus a larger sample size. Using a survey as a way of data collection ensures consistency as it uses structured closed-ended questions of which the results or responses thereof were used for statistical analysis. Examining patterns and relationships between variables was the best way to achieve this.

Strategy

A survey was conducted via a questionnaire administered virtually to the chosen sample group.

Time horizon

Given the time constraints of the MBA research project, this study was conducted on a cross-sectional basis. In other words, it reflected a moment in respondents' corporate leadership experience.

4.2 Population and sample

Due to the impracticality of collecting data on the total population, a sample data collection process was followed ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)). Therefore, a sample was taken from a targeted population suitable for this research, namely:

- Full-time employees
- At any level (entry-level and executive) within an organisation
- Any industry, e.g., retail, medical, Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), logistics and audit firms, as an example.
- Target population through email and WhatsApp.
- JSE-listed and unlisted organisations

The questionnaire was sent to individuals who were employed in South Africa. Prior to the questionnaire being sent out, a test was done with three colleagues to ensure that the questionnaire could be accessed, completed and submitted successfully.

Feedback on items on the questionnaire which were not functioning correctly online was subsequently corrected before being forwarded through email and WhatsApp to the target population.

Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis are employed individuals on a micro level and organisations across industries is the unit of observation on a meso level.

Variables

Several independent variables provided a more in-depth analysis of the study. The control / independent variables were accountability, employee experience and organisational culture based on the questionnaire, and the dependent variable was authentic leadership. Moderating variables are organisational culture and power distance. The relationship was analysed through the ordinal regression statistical technique ([Saunders et al., 2016](#)). Using hypothesis testing and statistical analysis to ascertain whether the hypothesis will be accepted or not, a significance level of 0.05 was used to assess acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis.

Sampling method and size

The sample selection assumed that being able to sample everyone is impossible; therefore, non-probability sampling techniques were used as the total population list could not be obtained ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)). The ideal technique for this research was quota sampling based on the type of questions the questionnaire had within the selected populations ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)).

The analysis spanned a broad spectrum of professionals, as no specific industry was immune to power struggles, unethical behaviour, or self-interest in determining the relevant categories, which will be a broad group of individuals in organisations ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)). Having various responses on different levels and relating them to the categories enabled analyses of reaction patterns and deviations on a broader spectrum.

The population group in this study were corporate employees at any level, which increased the target population size based on the number of respondents. The research was conducted across various sectors and employees within corporations and was not limited to a specific industry; therefore, the sample size is significant as it provides a broader scope and geographical coverage and ensures that the findings from the study were generalised over the population group.

The research had multiple variables tested, and the casual study direction would have needed a larger population sample. However, due to constraints such as respondents needing more time and not being obligated to complete the survey, the feasible sample size was limited to 200 on the high-end with a minimum low-end requirement of 130, and the final respondents closed off at 166. The latter figure allowed credible statistical testing and consequent generalizability of the findings. Considering the sampling method of corporate individuals across industries was imperative as the impact of bad decisions as well as corruption, by default, affect an employee's perception of leadership; it became apparent, as stated in the literature, that organisations may develop unethical cultural behaviour, the research on the organisations' ability to institutionalise fraudulent behaviour is yet to be taken seriously ([Cooper et al., 2013](#)).

In considering the sample size, the following was taken into account to decide on the sample size:

- Practicality of the survey reaching participants and what limitations may impact the reach to participants.
- The study required a smaller Margin of error
- Time constraints in having the participants complete the survey

Using the descriptive design, the respondents were measured once. Given that the intended research design employed a broad heterogeneous sample, it was anticipated that there would have been a fair degree of variability in participants' answers to the research questionnaire. This was the intended result of the quota sampling approach discussed in Section 1.4.

[Measurement Instrument / Data collection process](#)

The measurement scale was reflective, in which the variables examined the underlying construct of Authentic Leadership and what qualities built on authentic leadership, as well as leaning on literature. A questionnaire/self-administered survey (Appendix 1) was distributed using Google Forms via social network platforms such as WhatsApp and email addresses, where respondents were requested to complete questions to gather data via closed-ended questions to understand better where employees stood regarding authentic leadership, ethics, power distance, social learning behaviours, accountability, accountability, organisational culture and self-awareness.

Respondents received an email or WhatsApp with a link to the survey where they could access the questionnaire and answer. Anonymity was included on the cover letter, as well as no obligation to complete the survey and that if they did not want to continue, they could stop at any point.

Respondents were presented with a range of questions and answer selections to the questions they could select from. Statistical measures used, categorical, ranked, and 5-point Likert scale measurements were used, similar to [Nqumba & Scheepers \(2023\)](#), who used 16 items scale for measuring four constructs to enable ranking of the data received from range 0 = not at all to 4 = frequently. This study included five selection criteria from strongly agree to disagree strongly: Opinions on the subject matter, feelings toward the questions asked, and how they may behave given certain statements. Likert-scale questions are typically easier for respondents to understand and simplify the subsequent task of researcher analysis. A downside is that respondents tend to use the neutral middle ground answer in the data gathering ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)), as seen in Figure 22.

([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)) explains that quantitative study data collection uses a questionnaire in which respondents are asked to answer questions precisely and in the same sequence. This enables greater researcher insight regarding respondents' assessment of current leadership confidence and areas of concern or satisfaction by enabling assessments of variations and similarities of the survey questions. The questionnaire was distributed via WhatsApp and email, where the respondent could view the survey on their mobile phone, handheld tablet, laptop, or PC.

The questionnaire was distributed anonymously using Google Forms.

The overall benefit of the online questionnaire is:

- Cost-effective,
- No ambiguity in the questions as there was an answering mechanism which made use of scaling from 1 being strongly disagreed to 5 being strongly agree
- Reach a broader range of people, increasing the population size, which provided more credibility to the data gathered.

Adapting this process assisted with ensuring that as many participants were reached answering the same standardised questions, allowing them to answer freely without

intimidation and anonymously. The standardised questions were used to assist in answering the research hypotheses ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)). The benefit of the survey is that it was cost-effective, and less time was spent commuting to face-to-face interviews, saving on fuel costs.

[Analysis approach / statistical analysis](#)

Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were measured for variability, which measures central tendency ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)). Using both statistical methods will enable in-depth data analysis and allow possible variations in the perception of authentic leadership to emerge. The results were analysed based on the respondents' answers to the questionnaire and other data, which included years of working experience, age, industry, and whether they were employed in the public or private sector. Comparisons were made to identify whether there were any significant deviation frequencies, as well as the use of charts, graphs, and tables, which provides a visual analysis of data analyses.

The analysis tool used to analyse the data was Statistical Package for the Social Sciences SPSS. To determine the normality of the measuring instruments, Kolmogorov- Smirnov, as a sample size greater than 100, was used to determine if the variables used are normally distributed. Since the variables are not normally distributed, a non-parametric test was done using Spearman's.

The below additional testing was done to compare respondents' answers:

- analysed the difference between Industries, age profiles, public vs private sector, or any company size.

The above additional testing allowed for analyses of relationships between variables, which will open up various angles in which the respondents' answers could be viewed and provide a more in-depth understanding of the data collected.

The above was suitable to gain a deeper understanding of respondents' perspectives on leadership and the manifestations and practice of future authentic leadership in organisations regarding employee feelings. This approach integrated the business contribution of the study with the theoretical contribution as existing practice, and proposed future practice will be compared to the study's theory base to obtain findings for academia and management ([Avolio & Gardner, 2005](#)).

Once the data gathering and statistical analysis were completed, a systematic process of deductive reasoning was applied to compare the data obtained to the authentic leadership and organisational culture frameworks provided in the literature. This took a diagnostic approach where leaders were perhaps found to have a culture of dominance.

Hypothesis Testing

There were a few independent variables to provide a more in-depth analysis of the study; these control variables' independent variable was employee perception, and the dependent variable was authentic leadership. Moderating variables are organisational culture and power distance. The relationship between the variables was analysed through the statistical technique of multiple regression (Saunders et al., 2016). Using hypothesis testing and statistical analysis to ascertain whether the hypothesis would be accepted, a significance level of 0.05 was used to assess acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis.

There were three objectives which were looked at: First would be to test whether the actions of leaders directly impact the perception of employees, thus affecting the perception of authentic leadership. The second objective is whether accountability affects authentic leadership. The third objective is whether the power distance and organisational culture directly influence one another, thus impacting perceptions of authentic leadership.

Quality controls

This concept related to the processes that the researcher placed to ensure that the data which was being collected was precise and of appropriate quality ([Bhandari, 2020](#)).

Mitigating strategies to ensure the limitations of the questionnaire included:

- Ensuring that multiple platforms are available to enable potential respondents to complete the survey where it best suits them and is easily accessible via email or link on WhatsApp can assist in reducing the risk of insufficient respondents.
- Through data validation checks that can identify outliers
- An increased sample size ensured the reach was more expansive and allowed diverse responses to be analysed ([Formplus, n.d](#)).

- To assess errors in the data and biases, sensitivity analysis was performed by changing the headings of the themes, such as accountability, into sections 1, 2 and so on to identify the overall impact on the results ([Saunders et al., 2016](#))

Reliability

Refers to consistency in the process when measuring the same data repeatedly ([Saunders et al., 2016](#))

Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was the statistical analysis software used to process the data. Therefore, the result remained the same no matter how often the data was processed. The causal inference was then applied to enable a conclusion from the analysis.

How did one ensure that the data received from the survey was of good quality?

- ensuring the accuracy of the measurement ([Saunders et al., 2016](#)).

Validity

The accuracy of the measure and whether the result represented what was to be measured ([Saunders et al., 2016](#)).

How was the data coordinated?

- By ensuring that the sample was sufficient – 200 full-time employees on the high-end with a minimum low-end requirement of 130 (refer to section 1.4) drawn from multiple industries at all levels (entry-level to executive), all departments within an organisation, and all regions a total of 166 responses were received.

How was the data received to be safeguarded?

- The survey was anonymous (No names, No Identity numbers)
- The POPI Act is a South African regulation legislated on 1 July 2020 and requires that personal information be protected and safeguarded to regulate how personal information is managed and processed. With international standards and established conditions to protect individuals' rights and remedial processes in their personal information ([POPIA, 2021](#)), this survey will not have any form of personal identification, such as names and identity numbers.

- The data is securely stored on an external hard drive, archived for ten years, and then deleted. The data was secured through password protection.

Limitations

- The self-completed questionnaire modality provided no room for probing the sample or engaging in quality dialogue.
- There were only so many questions that can be asked.
- May have had the problem of not getting enough respondents to assess data effectively ([Saunders & Lewis, 2018](#)); this was not the case as it exceeded a minimum of 130 respondents.
- Anyone accessing the link could answer, which could have contaminated the sample. Cleaning the data was critical in ensuring duplications or multiple accesses were picked up and isolated.
- At this study was conducted, rolling electrical blackouts were likely to occur continuously. Due to technical malfunction, this would have inhibited respondents' ability to complete the questionnaire.
- Respondents may have completed the survey when they were not in the best mental space to do so if they had a negative occurrence with their manager, which would then have them complete the form based on emotion instead of reasoning. This could have caused the survey not to be completed, and biases in responses could have affected reliability.

Conclusion

This chapter covered the methodology that was used for the research as well as the statistical methods chosen. Chapter 6 will now discuss the results of the survey.

7. CHAPTER 5

5.1 Introduction and Results

This chapter will focus on the findings of the statistical tests performed to assess the hypothesis findings as well as the data to support the findings. Each Hypothesis will be presented and presented based on the findings from the survey. Demographic data will be presented in addition to the analysis of the hypothesis and findings. The survey results were analysed, and the Employee engagement survey and the Authentic leadership questions from the survey were compared.

5.2 Data collected

A questionnaire was sent out to the sample population, and the target audience was working individual, non-industry specific, regardless of hierarchy or occupational level. The questionnaire was sent out via email and WhatsApp groups to request individuals currently employed to complete it. The survey had 59 compulsory questions for the respondents to answer, which were divided into ten sections to isolate the underlying themes and headings of the questions being asked; the headings below:

- **Authentic leadership index**

Section 1: Self-awareness

Section 2: Relational transparency

Section 3: Internalized Moral Perspective

Section 4: Balanced processing / Employee perception

Section 5: Accountability Index

Section 6: Employee Experience Index – which indicated power distance questions

- **Organisational Culture**

Section 7: Trust

Section 8: Control Mutuality

Section 9: Commitment

Section 10: Satisfaction

The responses received were 166, above the lower-end requirement of 130 but below the higher-end requirement of 200.

A summary of the questionnaire can be found in the appendix

5.2.1 Authentic Leadership Perception

The perception of authentic leadership was measured by posing 14 questions under four headings, which were not shown on the questionnaire to avoid undue influence or biased pre-conceived assumptions for the respondent; thus, the below themes in the survey were replaced with Section 1 to Section 10, to enable honest feedback and responses without the narrative/topic in place, the following four headings were used for authentic leadership measurement:

Figure 9: Researcher summary of Survey Sections on Authentic leadership [Huang \(2001\)](#)

Section	Actual survey heading
1	<p>Self-awareness</p> <p>refers to the awareness of members about their shortcomings and abilities and their impact on circumstances and individuals (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Self-aware members pursue self-development and ongoing improvement through self-assessment (Glowacki-Dudka & Griswold, 2016). It concerns understanding one's strengths and weaknesses and the leader's attention to his / her impact on others Huang (2001)</p>
2	<p>Relational transparency</p> <p>ensures that members are truthful and frank about their contact and relations with others (Kernis, 2003; Northouse, 2013) and communicate by exchanging open knowledge about their opinions, emotions, and feelings (Walumbwa et al., 2008). It is also related to presenting one's true self to others, helping to build trust and cooperation, and encouraging teamwork between colleagues (Iqbal et al., 2020). In addition, it means maintaining the authenticity of interpersonal interactions, recognising errors and maintaining open, transparent communication with others Huang (2001)</p>
3	<p>Internalised moral perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - e refers to a leader who retains coherence between expressed core principles and judgments and demonstrates justice and a strong level of professional practice. It also notes that the leader is motivated by internal ethical values and uses them to self-regulate his or her actions. A leader with these characteristics

	will integrate his or her values and actions under internal moral values (Walumbwa et al., 2008).
4	Balanced processing / Derived as employee perception Balanced processing refers to collecting information and impartial reviewing of all pertinent evidence before making any decision. Leaders who take advantage of this behaviour tend to emphasise internal knowledge and externally generated information (Gardner et al., 2005). On the other hand, it also demonstrates how the leader acknowledges various stakeholder opinions when making decisions by using factual and subjective knowledge Huang (2001)

5.2.2 Accountability (Section 5 of the survey)

This section of the survey adapts the employees' view on whether leadership take responsibility for concerns raised by staff as well as financial reviews

5.2.3 Employee Experience (Section 6 of Survey)

Employee perception was further measured by posing 20 questions that assess the overall Employee experience with their leaders in Section 6 of the survey.

5.2.4 Organisational culture

A vital element of this study was establishing the employee's view of their current Organisational culture, which is ultimately an extension of the environment that leadership creates based on their actions. This was measured by posing 21 questions; section 7 to section 10 defined as organisational culture is split into four dimensions:

Figure 11: Student-adapted summary [Huang \(2001\)](#)

Section	Organisational Culture
7	Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure healthy work environment relationships where integrity, confidence, collaboration, teamwork, and honesty are all parties believing that there is a healthy, balanced relationship with the other parties. Further Dimensions to trust below: Huang (2001)
8	Control Mutuality

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refers to power balance or imbalance within organisations and the degree to which one has implied influence or dominance over another, Huang (2001)
9	<p>Commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is based on how much one believes that maintaining, continuing, or spending time with the other party is worth it. This is ideally an emotional orientation to another party, which consists of affective commitment and continuance commitment, Huang (2001)
10	<p>Satisfaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where a person in the relationship feels positive towards the other as the cost of being in the relationship is lower than the benefits, which has more weighting as well as the acceptance of the other party's actions in the view that it is positive, Huang (2001)

5.3 Data Analysis

5.3.1 Normality Test

Analysis on the variable was performed on the average of the response. As a result, a test for normality was done to check if the mean of each variable follows a normal distribution. In order to determine which model to use for hypotheses testing. SPSS test was used to perform a test for normality. Since our sample size is greater than 100 we used a Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality for each variable used.

Table 1: Data distribution check Authentic leadership and Accountability

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Authentic_Leadership	.134	166	<.001	.942	166	<.001
Accountability_Index	.133	166	<.001	.959	166	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The normality was checked for two variables being Authentic leadership and Accountability. Kolmogorov was used to show the P-value and was calculated at <0.001 which is less than 0.05, thus making this statistically significant. The variables are not normally distributed.

Table 2: Data distribution check Authentic leadership , Organisational Culture and Power distance

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Authentic_Leadership	.134	166	<.001	.942	166	<.001
Organisational_Culture	.123	166	<.001	.939	166	<.001
Power_Distance	.121	166	<.001	.926	166	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The normality was checked for three variables being Authentic leadership and Organisational culture and Power Distance. Kolmogorov was used to show the P-value and was calculated at <0.001 which is less than 0.05, thus making this statistically significant. The variables are not normally distributed.

Table 3: Data distribution check Authentic leadership Employee perception(Balanced processing)

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Authentic_Leadership	.134	166	<.001	.942	166	<.001
Balanced_Processing	.254	166	<.001	.888	166	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The normality was checked for two variables being Authentic leadership and Balanced Processing. Kolmogorov was used to show the P-value and was calculated at <0.001 which is less than 0.05, thus making this statistically significant. The variables are not normally distributed

5.3.2 Scale reliability

Table 4: Cronbach coefficient alpha for Authentic leadership

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.955	14

The correlation coefficient is greater than 0.7 which is close to 1, which indicates that the scale used for authentic leadership is reliable.

Table 5: Cronbach coefficient alpha for Accountability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.869	4

The correlation coefficient is greater than 0.7 which is close to 1, which indicates that the scale used for Accountability is reliable.

Table 6: Cronbach coefficient alpha for Employee perception

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.966	20

The correlation coefficient is greater than 0.7 which is close to 1, which indicates that the scale used for Employee engagement is reliable.

Table 7: Cronbach coefficient alpha for Organisational Culture

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.976	21

The correlation coefficient is greater than 0.7 which is close to 1 which indicates that the scale used for Organisational culture is reliable.

5.3.3 Hypothesis testing

In determining whether there is a correlation between Authentic leadership and the employee engagement survey the test of Normality as seen above was statistically significant thus the Pearson r correlation test could not be used. Where there is an absence of normal distribution Non parametric Spearman's correlation is used to test the hypothesis.

First Hypothesis

H0 – Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is not impacted by unethical leadership behaviour (Accountability Index)

Ha - Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is impacted by unethical leadership behaviour (Accountability Index).

Table 8: Relationship between Authentic leadership and Accountability

Nonparametric Correlations				
Correlations				
		Authentic_Leadership		Accountability_Index
Spearman's rho	Authentic_Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.597**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
		N	166	166
	Accountability_Index	Correlation Coefficient	.597**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
		N	166	166

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The p- value is less the 0.05 at <.001 we reject the null hypothesis, thus we conclude that employee confidence is impacted by unethical behaviour (Accountability Index).

There was a significant positive correlation between respondents on Authentic leadership (AL) and Accountability, $r_s(164) = .59$, as the coefficient number is a

positive number and is closer to 1 this indicates that it is a positive correlation where AL increase as AI increases

Second Hypothesis

H0 – Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is not impacted by organisational culture due to power distance

Ha – Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is impacted by organisational culture due to power distance.

Table 9: Relationship between Authentic leadership , Organisational Culture and Power distance

Nonparametric Correlations					
Correlations					
			Authentic_Leadership	Organisational_Culture	Power_Distance
Spearman's rho	Authentic_Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.735**	.779**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001	<.001
		N	166	166	166
	Organisational_Culture	Correlation Coefficient	.735**	1.000	.791**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.	<.001
		N	166	166	166
	Power_Distance	Correlation Coefficient	.779**	.791**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	.
		N	166	166	166

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The p-value for all is less than 0.05 at <.001; we reject the null hypothesis; thus, we conclude that employee confidence is impacted by organisational culture due to power distance.

There was a significant positive correlation between respondents on Authentic leadership (AL) and Organisational culture, $r_s(164) = .73$, as the coefficient number is positive and is closer to 1; this indicates that it is a positive correlation where AL increases as Organisational Culture increases, similarly,

There was a significant positive correlation between respondents on Authentic leadership (AL) and Power Distance, $r_s(164) = .779$, as the coefficient number is

positive and is closer to 1; this indicates a positive correlation where AL increase as Power Distance increases.

Third Hypothesis

Ho the actions of leaders do not impact the perception of employees within corporates regarding authentic leadership.

Ha the actions of leaders do impact the perception of employees within corporations regarding authentic leadership.

Table 10: Relationship between Authentic leadership and employee perception

Nonparametric Correlations				
Correlations				
		Authentic_Leadership		Balanced_Processing
Spearman's rho	Authentic_Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.786**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	166	166
	Balanced_Processing	Correlation Coefficient	.786**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	166	166

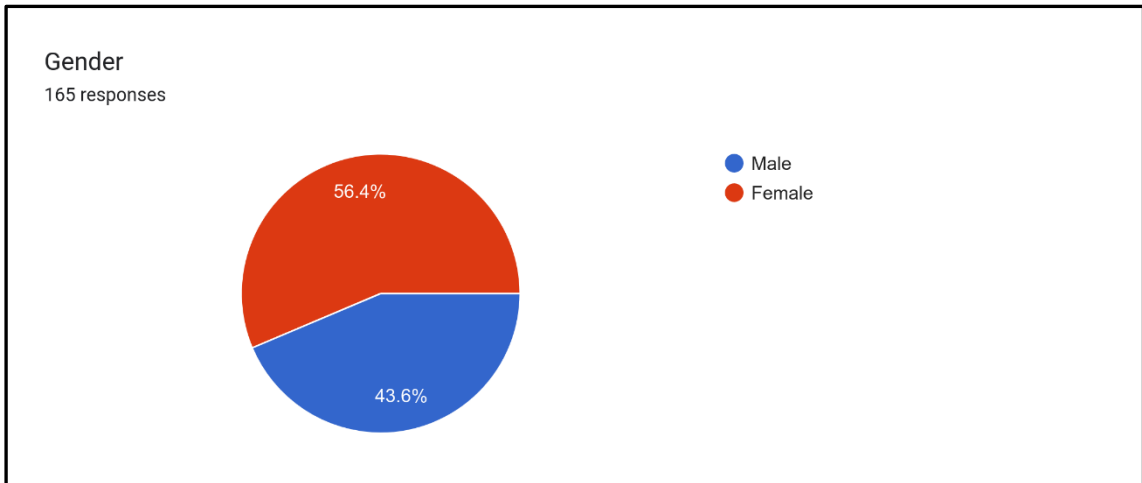
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The p-value is less than 0.05 at <.001; we reject the null hypothesis; thus, we conclude that the actions of leaders do impact the perception of employees regarding authentic leadership.

There was a significant positive correlation between respondents on Authentic leadership (AL) and Balanced processing, $r_s(164) = .786$, as the coefficient number is positive and is closer to 1, this indicates that it is a positive correlation where Authentic Leadership increase as Balanced Processing increases.

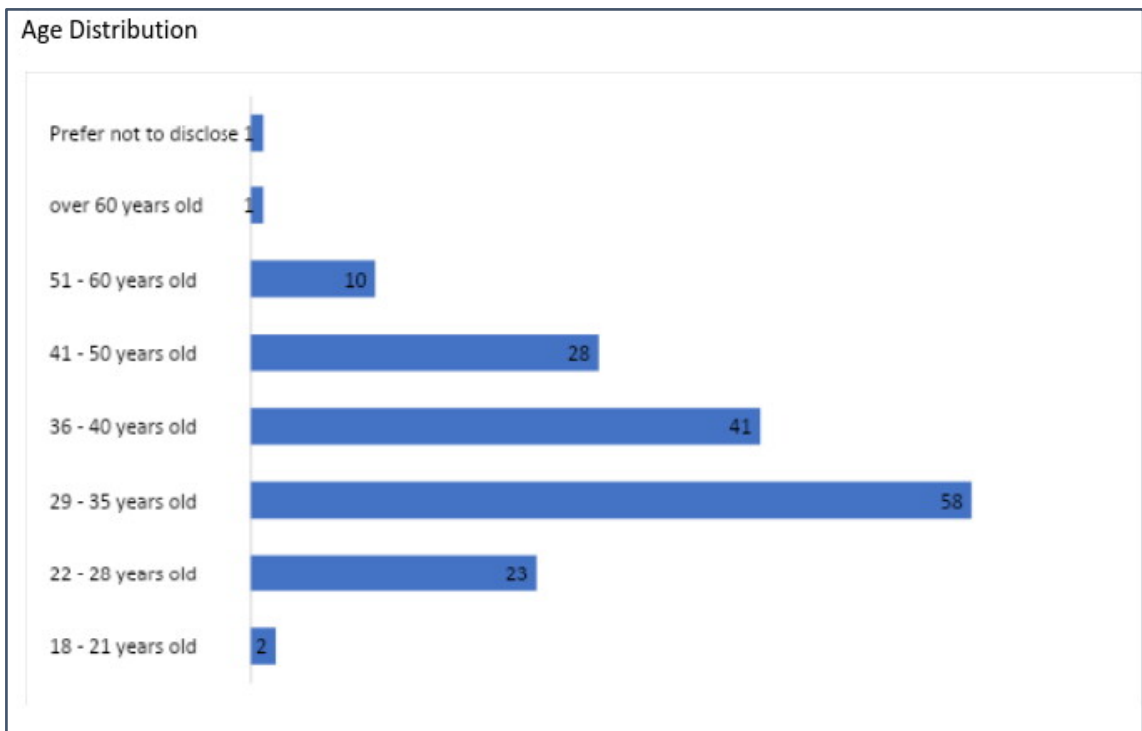
5.3.4 Demographic Information

Figure 9: Gender Chart



Regarding gender, overall respondents, 56.4% were female, with 43.6% male.

Figure 10: Age Chart



Majority of the respondents were between the ages of 29 to 35 years old

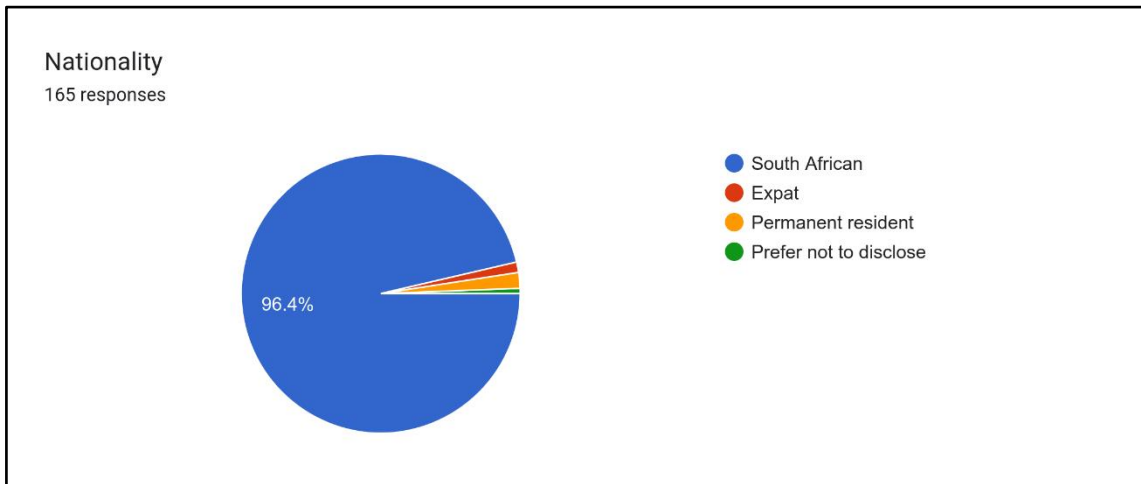
The age categories of the respondents ranged from 18 years of age and up

Age respondents from high to low in percentage:

- 35.2% of the respondents are between the ages of 29 – 35; this is the highest age categorical respondents with 58 individual respondents.
- 25.5% of the respondents are 36 – 40 years old, with 40 individual respondents.

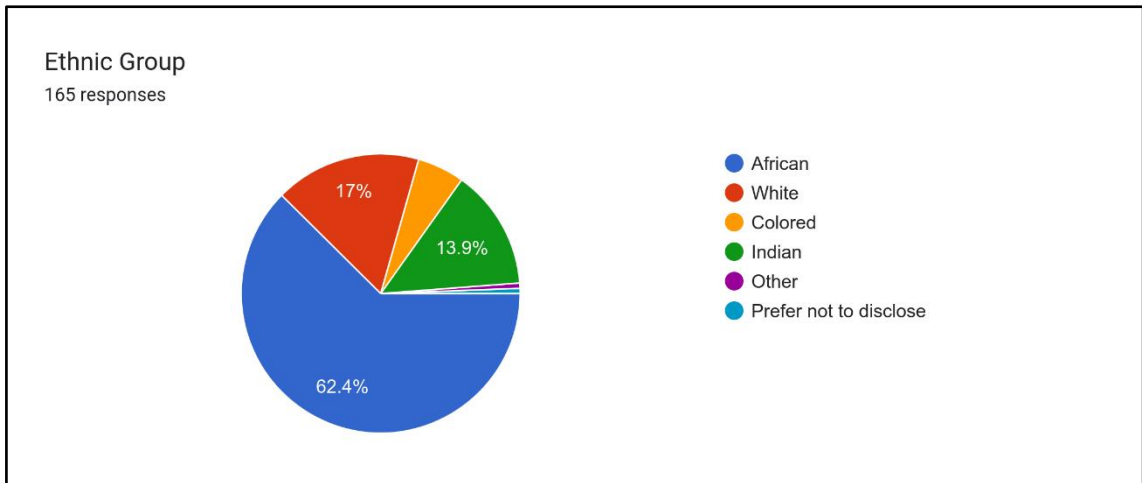
- 17% of the respondents are between the ages of 41 – 50, with 28 individual respondents.
- 6.1% of the respondents are between the ages of 51 – and 60 years old with 10 individual respondents.
- 1.2% of the respondents are between the ages of 18 – 21 years old, with 2 individual respondents.

Figure 10: **NATIONALITY**



- The 96.4% of respondents are South African (159 individuals),
- Permanent residents 1.8% (3 individuals)
- Expat responses 1.2% (2 individuals)
- 1 person preferred not to respond which is 0.6% of total 165 respondents.

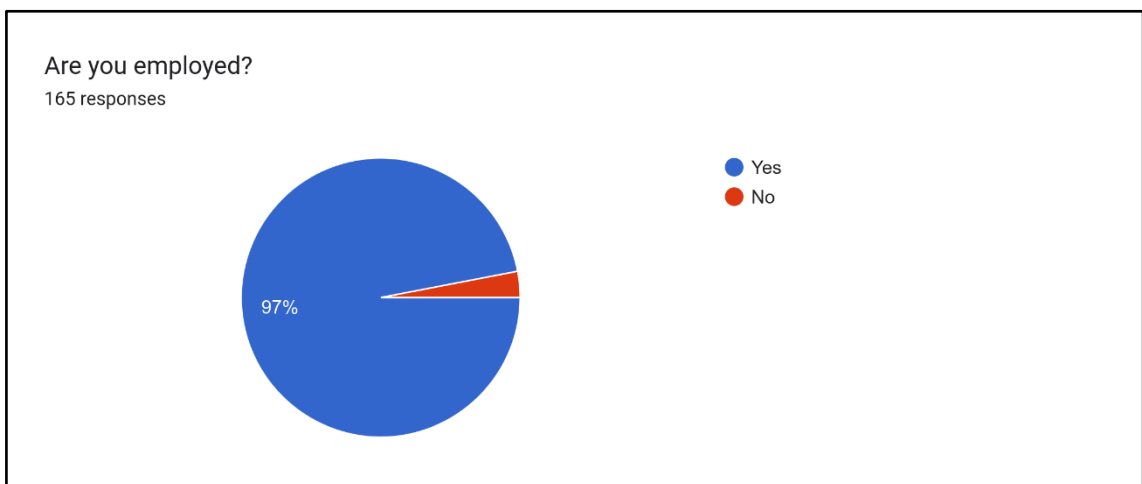
Figure 11: **ETHNIC GROUP**



The respondents based on ethnic differentiation are split below:

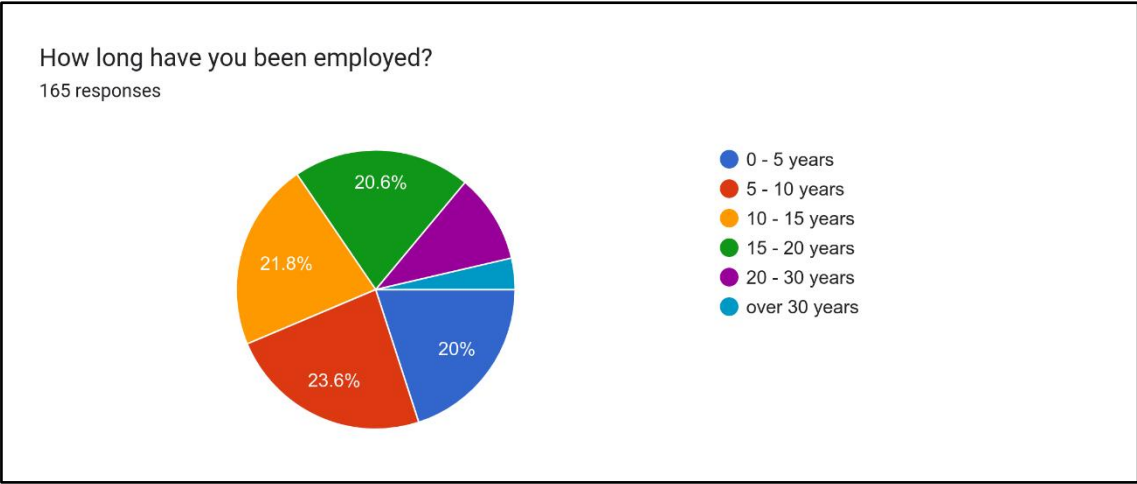
- 62.4%, 103 of respondents were African.
- 17%, 28 of respondents were White.
- 13.9%, 23 of respondents were Indian.
- 5.5%, 9 of respondents were colored.
- 0.1%, 1 of respondents were other.
- 0.1%, 1 of respondents were prefer not to disclose.

Figure 12: **EMPLOYED?**



Of the 165 respondents 97% (160 individuals) are currently employed and 3% (5 individuals) currently unemployed

Figure 13: **YEARS EMPLOYED**

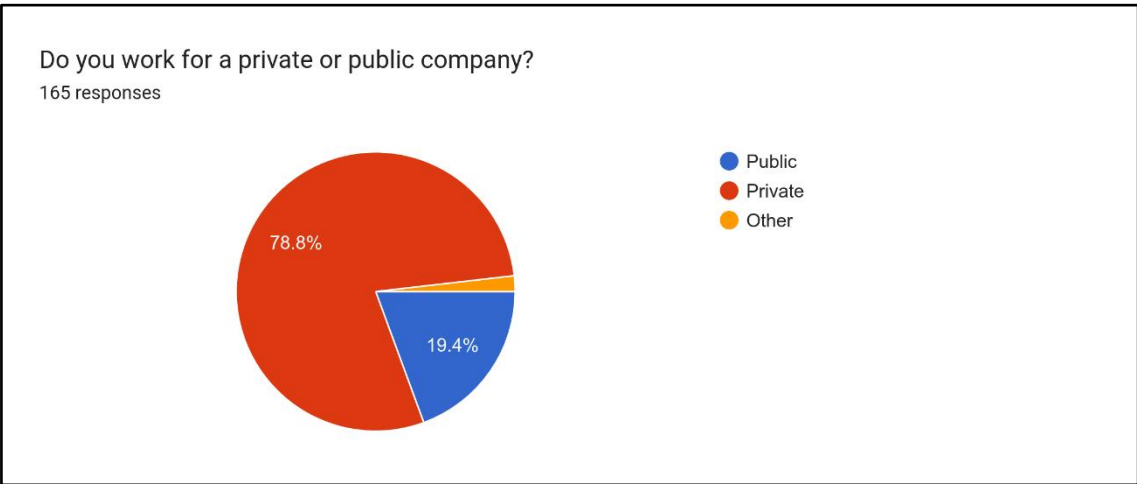


Respondents work experience along the ranges of zero to over 30 years

There is a similar trend in work experience across with most ranging around the 20 percent.

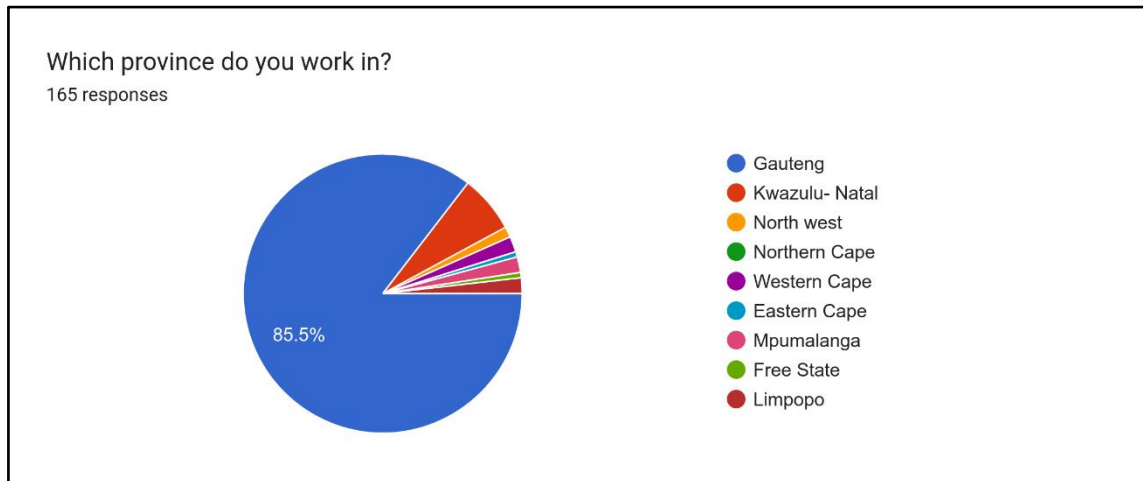
5 – 10 years	23.6%
10 – 15 years	21.8%
15 – 20 years	20.6%
0 – 5 years	20%
20 – 30 years	10.3%
Over 30 years	3.6%

Figure 14: **PUBLIC OR PRIVATE**



Majority of the respondents work within the private sector (78.8%; 130 respondents); Public sector (19.4%; 32 respondents); with remainder selecting 'Other' which could indicate own business or in between jobs (1.8%; 3 respondents).

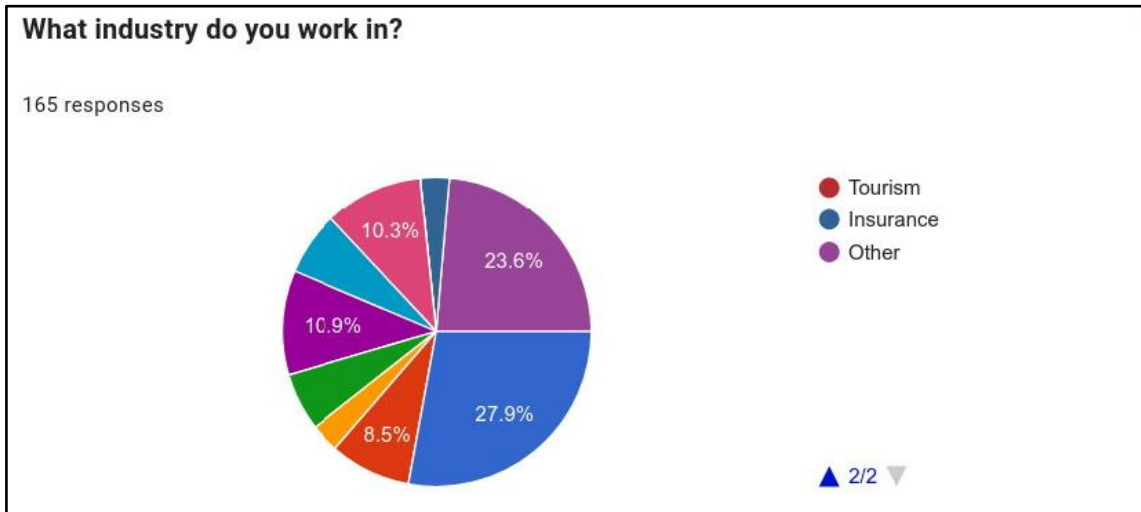
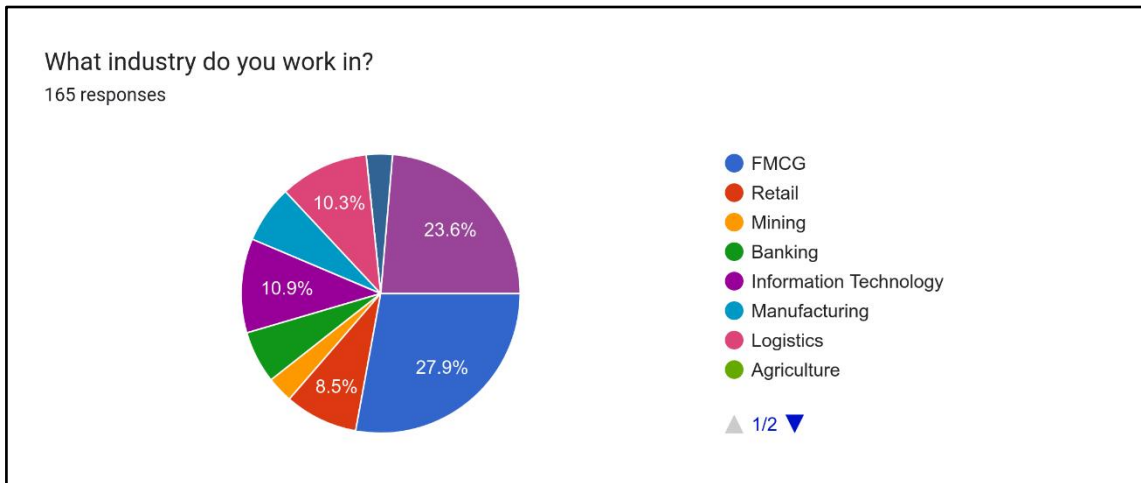
Figure 15: **PROVINCE**



Geographical spread of the respondents were majority from Gauteng below split:

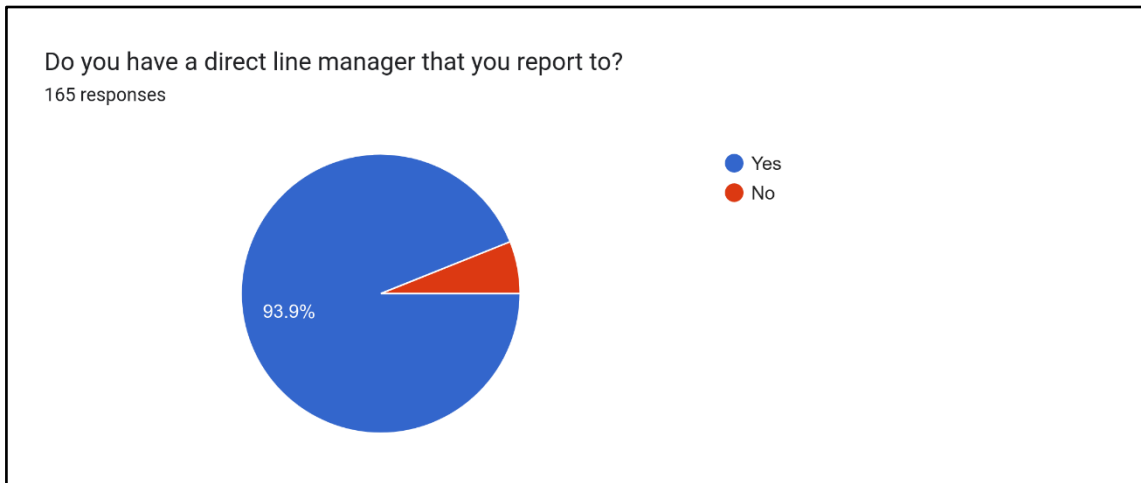
Gauteng	85.5%
KwaZulu Natal	6.7%
North west	1.2%
Northern Cape	0%
Western Cape	1.8%
Eastern Cape	0.6%
Mpumalanga	1.8%
Free state	0.6%
Limpopo	1.8%

Figure 16: **INDUSTRY**



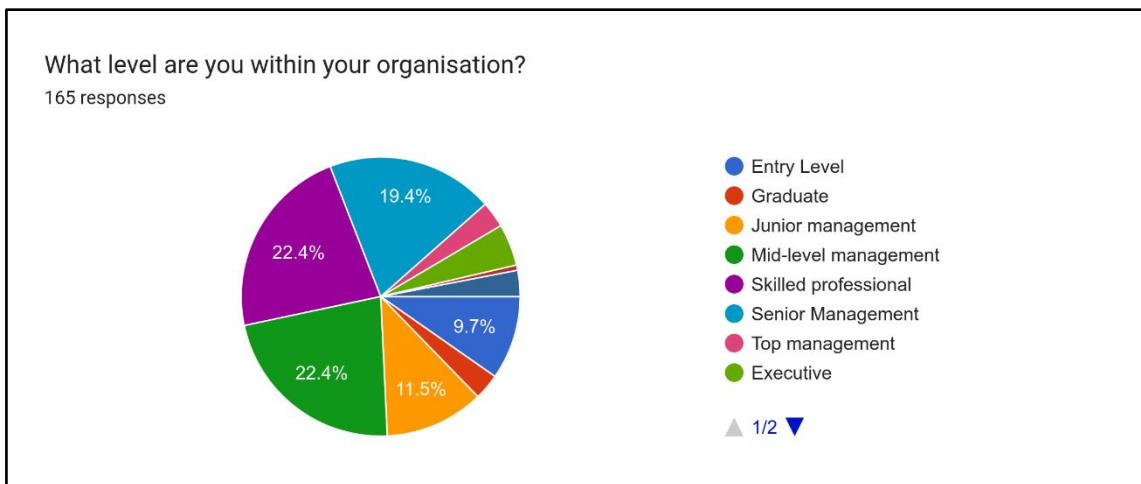
Top 5 industries that the respondents work in are FMCG (27.9%), Information Technology (10.9%), Logistics (10.3%), Retail (8.5%), and Manufacturing (6.7%), other (23.6%), will relate to any other industry that is not specified in the questionnaire.

Figure 17: **LINE MANAGER**



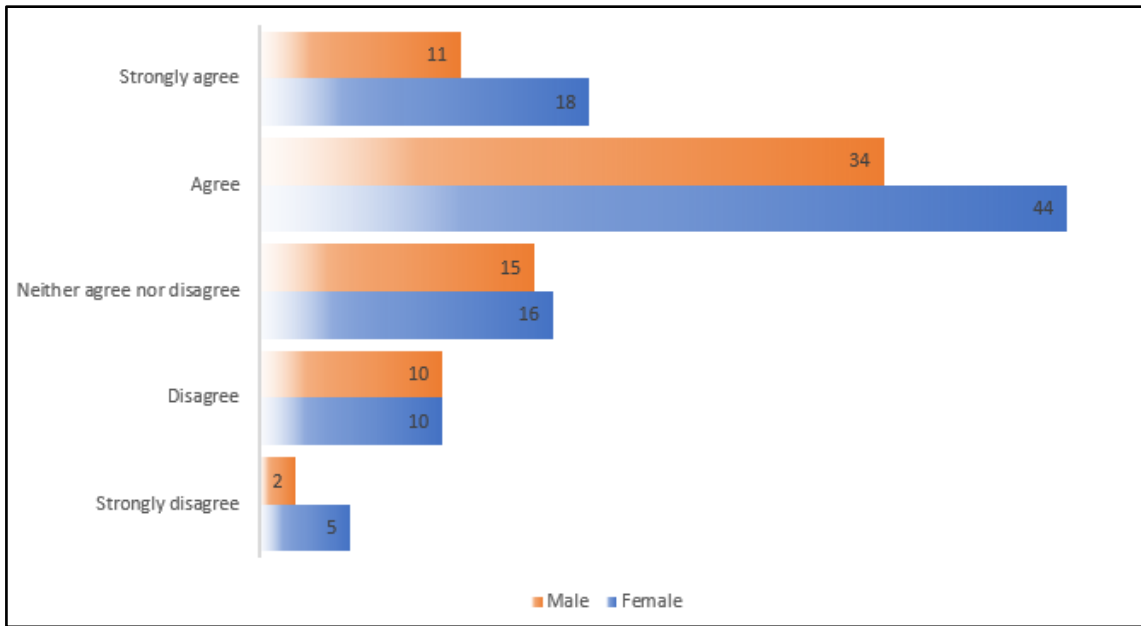
154 respondents report directly to a line manager

Figure 18: **ORGANISATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL**



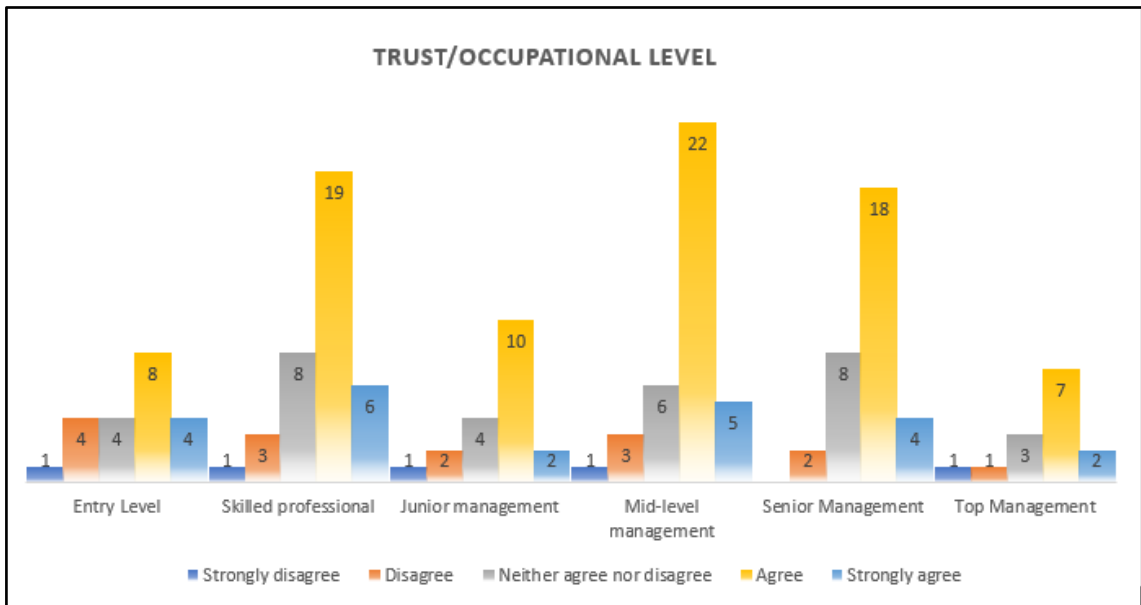
The top 3 respondents in terms of level were Executives, Skilled professionals and Senior managers.

Figure 19: Commitment Responses



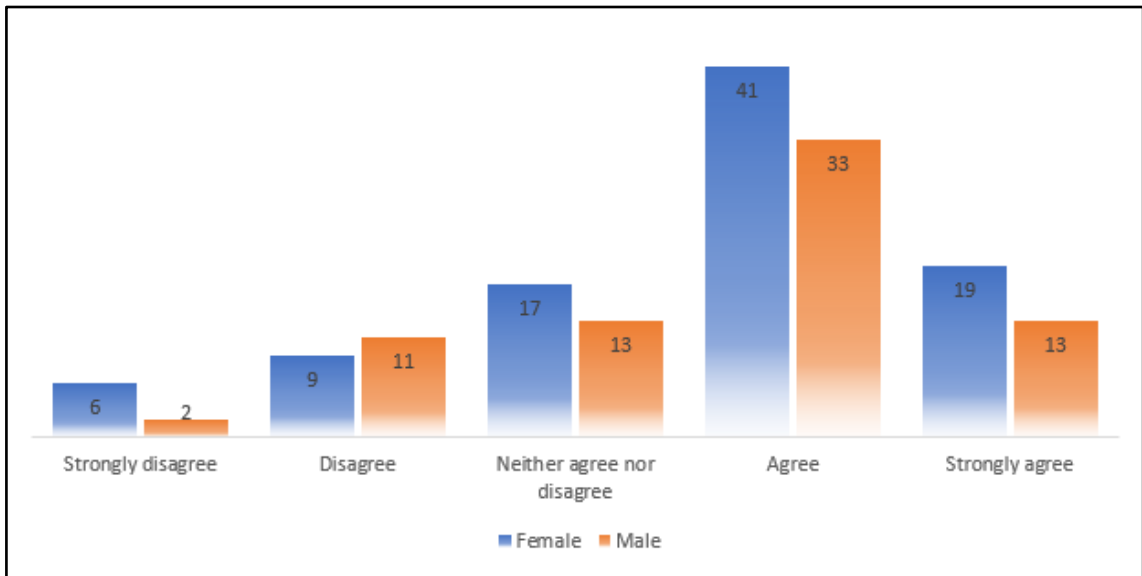
Majority of respondents were positive about their leaders and organisations commitment to them as an employee, which indicated a feeling of being valued and in turn loyal to organisation.

Figure 20: Trust Responses



Majority of the respondents have high levels of trust from their organisations indicating confidence in leadership and well being of employees is rated well.

Figure 21: Trust Responses



Majority of respondents feel that their leadership are aware of the impact they have on their decisions and the impact of staff as well as knowing their capabilities, however 34.9% fall within the Strongly disagree and Neither agree nor disagree range

8. CHAPTER 6

6.1 Introduction and discussion of results

Chapter 6 will present a discussion around the findings presented in Chapter 5. In answering the research question, xxxx. This will include examining the Hypothesis and the statistical data results. Each Research Hypothesis, which was derived in Chapter 3, will be discussed given the set of results from the sample collected as well as the relevant literature

6.2 Motivation for the study

The research objective is to assess how the current employees feel about their leadership in the context of authentic leadership—the relationship between organisational culture, leadership accountability and employee engagement. With the complexities of the corporate climate being impacted by the uncertain economy, many leaders need to maintain stakeholder confidence, and the means to keep this in the short term may not always be done ethically and authentically.

Though there have been prior studies conducted on Authentic Leadership, this has been done at a point in time, and the need to continuously engage with employees on their perceptions regarding leadership to ensure transparency and hold leaders accountable is essential. It may assist in minimising the risk of corporate failures such as Enron ([Pugh, 2019](#)).

6.3 Sample

6.3.1 Population

The sample population respondents, all employed individuals, received 166 responses, with the initial requirement within the research design being 200 on the high end and 130 on the low end. After cleaning the data, the sample size remained at 166, translating to an 83% response rate. Due to the type of survey and the sample size, the results were not normally distributed due to the 5-point Likert scale used in survey data, which data usually from such a sample size would have deviations.

6.3.2 Demographics

This study spanned all regions and provinces to maintain a broader range of sampling and was not limited to industry or level within any organisation.

6.4 Hypotheses Discussion

6.4.1 Hypotheses 1

H₀ – Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is not impacted by unethical leadership behaviour (Accountability Index)

H_a - Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is affected by unethical leadership behaviour (Accountability Index).

There is a strong correlation between authentic leadership and accountability; the correlation is 0.59, which, according to Saunders and Lewis, is reasonably strong between authentic leadership and accountability. This finding supports the alternative hypothesis that employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is impacted by unethical leadership behaviour using (the Accountability Index), with the null hypothesis being rejected. It is worth noting that due to the importance of accountability in the workplace to ensure that staff are being given the platform to be heard, the correlation should be higher to provide a more satisfying correlation of above 0.7 that employees' confidence is impacted by leadership behaviour and their accountabilities for their actions are brought to task.

This is confirmed by the literature stating that unethical behaviour and lack of accountability shift the impact of authentic leadership even with the slightest variation ([Marquardt et al., 2020](#)). When employee engagement concerns are addressed, this reduces the self-interest perception of leaders within organisations ([Mitchell et al., 2018](#)), leadership showing proactive actions in listening to what employees say and actively addressing any concerns that may arise. This, in turn, assists an alarm bell if the correlation is weak, as this would indicate that leaders ignore any items being addressed by staff who may only have this engagement platform to highlight the behaviour of leadership that is not in the best interest of stakeholders, that will impact the brand of the organisation and ensure leadership is running through responsible business practices ([Das et al., 2019](#)).

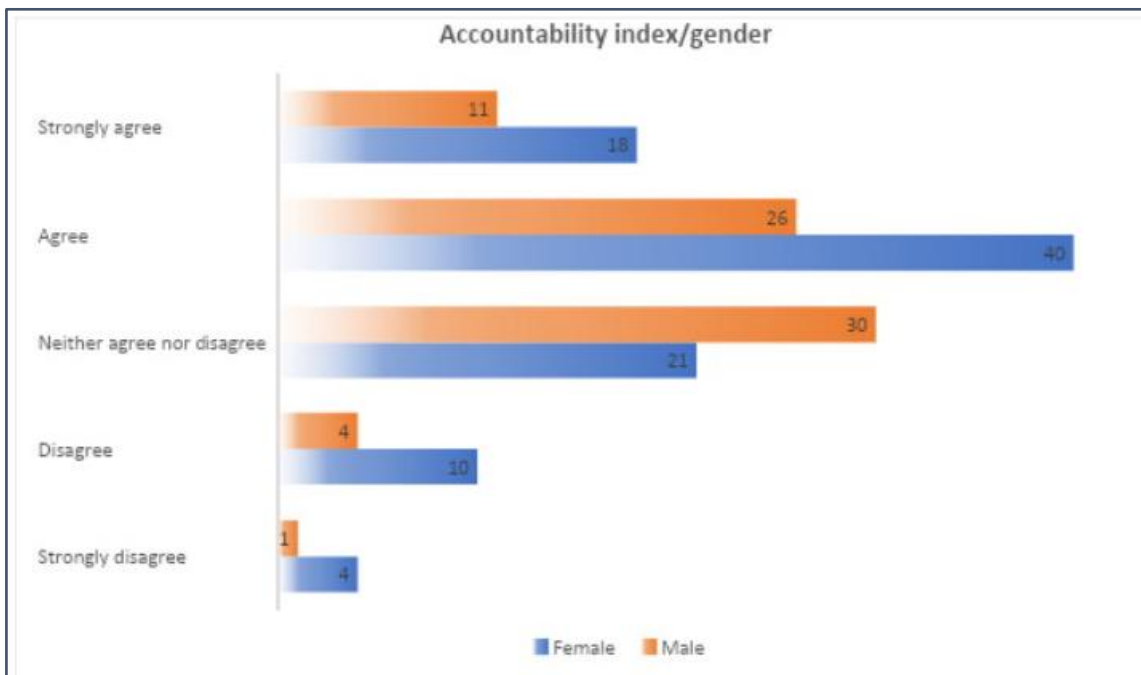
There have not been many studies conducted on authentic leadership and accountability and the relationship between the two variables; this could be a suggestion for further research as accountability drives good behaviour, reducing the

risk of unethical leadership behaviour, which will have adverse consequences for employees.

A similar study concluded that creating engagement platforms that will generate Social Accountability Initiatives may assist with ensuring leaders are held accountable through a review of practices to assist in the direction and well-being of employees through social audit initiatives ([Vivier, 2023](#))

As shown by Figure 19 below there is 51 out of the 166 respondents neither agree nor disagree that their leaders are accountable, thus impacting their confidence in authentic leadership.

Figure 22: Gender View on the perception of Accountability



There are huge gaps between leaders and the rest of the organisation's employees, where the workforce does not have a voice to express themselves or a platform to be heard ([Goncharenko, 2022](#)) on an ongoing basis enough to have an impact. The critical need for 'workplace democracy' is essential in ensuring that accountability, whether between leader and employees, between peers or among the broader staff complement, is increased and strengthened ([Goncharenko, 2022](#)).

6.4.2 Hypotheses 2

H0 – Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is not impacted by organisational culture due to power distance

Ha – Employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is impacted by organisational culture due to power distance.

According to Saunders and Lewis, there is a strong correlation between authentic leadership, organisational culture and power distance; the correlation is 0.74, which is a strong correlation between authentic leadership and organisational culture. This finding supports the alternative hypothesis that employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future is impacted by organisational culture, with the null hypothesis being rejected. Likewise, there is a strong correlation between authentic leadership and power distance; the correlation is 0.78, which, according to Saunders and Lewis, is a strong correlation between authentic leadership and power distance. This finding supports the alternative hypothesis that employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future is impacted by power distance, with the null hypothesis being rejected.

There is great emphasis on organisational culture as an indication of authentic leadership, and the impact that leaders have on culture, whether negative or positive, will reflect in how employees perceive their work environment ([Amore et al., 2022](#)), given the correlations from the data results this is confirmed.

Organisational Culture / Power distance survey was split into four dimensions:

1. Trust/ Power Distance

Establishing trust in an organisation requires leaders to be open and vulnerable with their employees, creating a secure and transparent environment, (Qiu et al., 2019). trust in leadership and the organization is essential for creating a safe and trusting workplace atmosphere; this fosters loyalty and encourages calculated risks, ultimately leading to beneficial relationships between staff and the organization,(Maximo et al., 2019).

The findings from the survey indicated that the level of fairness and equal treatment was well received by respondents, who indicated that 106 out of the 166 respondents trust leadership (Figure 21).

2. Control Mutuality

Organizational dominance can result from the excessive use of ranking and hierarchy to assert authority and control over others. This can be counterproductive and detrimental to the overall functioning of an organisation. As an alternative, leaders should strive for mentorship, career guidance, and collaborative relationships within their organisations, as Methot and Cole advocate (2021). This approach stresses the significance of acquiring followers based not only on one's authority and power but also on merit, in addition, it exposes issues of gender bias, whereby male leaders can sometimes overpower their female counterparts in decision-making processes; this resistance from males to adopt or enforce policies that facilitate the advancement of women has been brought to light, by Lee (2022).

3. Commitment

The leadership is responsible for securing organisational commitment and managing employee retention, which is a long-term investment in their future (Haque et al., 2017). Showing employees that an organization highly values their partnership fosters a reciprocal sense of loyalty from the employee. An organisation must be skilled in recruiting and retaining top-tier talent to ensure continuous knowledge development, which is a pivotal factor in enhancing business performance (Fernández-Mesa et al., 2019). Note that this commitment is not typically outlined in a formal contract but represents a psychological contractual understanding between leaders and employees within an organisation.

4. Satisfaction

When assessing authentic leadership, it is essential to consider the aspect of career satisfaction for individuals working in corporate roles; this aspect should be equally important for the organization itself as it involves creating an environment where employees feel appreciated, have a sense of purpose, feel enthusiastic, and are simultaneously engaged in learning and improving both existing and new skill (Chang et al., 2020).

There needs to be ongoing alignment between organisational values and employee values, which will define the organisation's culture (Cai, 2022); leaders are tasked

with ensuring the environment in which employees operate is trustworthy and honest. A culture conducive to employees expressing themselves where they feel heard and valued will ultimately lead to increased performance and motivation that both will benefit from for a long-standing relationship. Given the various sectors and industry dynamics that require a vast variety of output and different levels of importance regarding customers that organisations serve, thus creating a culture that is best suited for the industry that the organisation operates in should be assessed, where the industry of 'aged-care' defined their organisational culture being in the healthcare space from care culture to 'happiness culture', thus creating a culture of brilliance ([Miller et al., 2019](#)).

"Culture is how employees hearts and stomachs feel about Monday morning on Sunday night". Bill Marklein

6.4.3 Hypotheses 3

Ho, the actions of leaders do not impact the perception of employees within corporates regarding authentic leadership.

Ha, the actions of leaders do impact the perception of employees within corporations regarding authentic leadership.

According to Saunders and Lewis, there is a strong correlation between authentic leadership and accountability; the correlation is 0.78, which is strong between authentic leadership and employee perception (balanced processing). This finding supports the alternative hypothesis that employee confidence in authentic leadership and the future thereof is impacted by unethical leadership behaviour using (Balanced processing), with the null hypothesis being rejected.

Self-awareness, relational transparency and internalised Perspective underpinned the authentic behaviour measurement with Balanced Processing indicating employee perception.

The researcher summarised ([Walumbwa et al., 2008](#)).

4 Aspects	Definitions
Self-awareness	Individuals should self-reflect to understand their impact on others.
Relational Transparency	Being honest about emotions and opinions builds trust.
Internalised moral perspective	Individuals who align their values, morals, and beliefs with those of the community, company, or group demonstrate awareness that their words may have consequences.
Balanced processing	Leaders should consult with others and be open to opposing views to view information objectively.

9. CHAPTER 7

Conclusion and recommendation

7.1 Limitations

Limitation 1

As with most surveys, this is done at a point in time and does not allow for review of an updated view of survey feedback regularly to establish whether data has shifted or to highlight significant concerns areas for organisations when the need arises.

Limitation 2

Though the sample size was reasonable for this study at 200 with a low-end value of 130 as defined in Chapter 4, when comparing it to the broader population of employed staff, the results may be significant and establish more confidence in findings with more extensive population size.

Limitation 3

The sample was not aimed at a specific organisation; thus results of this study are very broad; this is also because organisational confidentiality of results from employee perception may be difficult as this may later become public news and negatively highlight the organisation.

Limitation 4

The sample was not directly aimed at a specific region, making it a broad study.

Limitation 5

The findings of this research are not limited to a specific level of employees, for example, blue-collar, skilled or middle management; for example, narrowing the particular group of individuals may enable the research to provide a more in-depth view of a specific employee group.

Limitation 6

The survey participants needed access to the Internet, and the population group who did not have access to the Internet were excluded.

Though for this study, the sampling choices were defended in Chapter 4, it would benefit the population to be narrowed down in terms of level within the organisation, region and organisation.

7.2 Questions and Answers

7.2.1 What did I study, and why does it matter?

The main objective of this research was to study the impact of leadership behaviour on employees and the perception of authentic leaders from an employee perspective of such behaviour. Additionally to the above, the relationship between authentic leadership and employee perception, employee perception and accountability and authentic leadership and organisational culture and power distance.

This research aims to evaluate the leadership behaviour in the South African corporate environment, particularly from employees' perspective, regarding their trust, organisational culture, relationship, commitment, and perception of their organisation's leadership authenticity ([Walumbwa et al., 2008](#)). It is essential to note that some organisations, once market leaders, have collapsed due to the unethical conduct of their governance officials ([McLaughlin et al., 2021](#)). The consequences of such collapses have been disastrous for the employees who have lost their income, salaries, pension funds, and savings, which they entrusted to their leaders. Therefore, this research aims to identify and analyse the factors that contribute to effective leadership and prevent unethical behaviour among the leaders of organisations.

7.4.1 What was the research context, and why does it matter?

This research study aimed to understand how employees in South Africa perceive leadership behaviour through the lens of authentic leadership ([Nqumba & Scheepers, 2023](#)), accountability, and organisational culture. The leadership in charge of governance, day-to-day management, and safeguarding the interests of stakeholders has exhibited negative behaviours, and as a result, high-ranking organisations and audit firms need to improve ([Ozdagli, 2017](#)).

7.2.2 What did we already know/not know?

The theory has suggested that authentic leadership and the actions of leaders impact employees' perceptions of leadership and that if leaders act authentically, the perception from employees is positive. The hypotheses reflected a relationship between employee perception and authentic leadership, and the data results from the survey of this study confirmed this.

Though there is limited theory covering employee perception and accountability, studies have suggested that leaders often are not accountable for their actions, thus leaving room open for leaders not to change behaviour to a more authentic ethical approach. This study, therefore, set out to establish using the survey data whether employees viewed leadership as accountable within their organisations, thus establishing authentic leadership through accountability.

The theory also suggested that authentic leadership positively impacts organisational culture. The hypotheses reflected a relationship between authentic leadership and corporate culture, and the data results confirmed this.

7.2.3 What specific questions did I answer?

With reference to Chapter 3 of this study, there were 3 objectives:

- Does leadership behaviour impact the perception of employees on authentic leadership?
- What is the current perception of leadership authenticity based on behavioural aspects of employees' perception within their work environment impact accountability?
- Whether the power distance and organisational culture directly influence one another, thus impacting employee perceptions of authentic leadership.

7.2.4 How did I answer these questions? I.e., research methodology?

To answer the hypotheses, a quantitative approach was followed to assess relationships between multiple variables, the dependent variable being Authentic leadership.

The sample was expanded to all employees across any organisation, all levels, and geographical regions within South Africa. This provided a broader range of respondents to assist with scalability.

An online survey was used to administer the research data, deductive approach was followed.

The results from the questions presented in the survey from respondents were then used to determine whether the hypotheses were supported.

Using inferential statistics, the Hypotheses were tested by using the first Normality test to test for equal distribution from the survey data; the result of the normality test indicated that the distribution was not normal; thus, Pearsons could not be used, based on distribution not being normal, Non-parametric Spearmans Correlation was used to determine the relationship between:

- Authentic Leadership and employee perception
- Authentic leadership and Unethical leadership using accountability
- Authentic leadership and organisational culture and power distance

7.2.5 What did I find, and how did I interpret what I found?

The results from the study showed that the relationship between authentic leadership and employee perception was significant, the relationship between authentic leadership and accountability was significant, and the relationship between authentic leadership and organisational culture was significant. Literature confirms the significance of the relationship between authentic leadership and employee perception and of authentic leadership and organisational culture; however, there is not much literature to confirm authentic leadership and accountability; this is also identified in previous studies as and with reference to Chapter 2 literature discussing accountability of leadership was a challenge.

7.2.6 How does this add to the current scholarly debate,i.e., relevance/contributions?

Regarding the three objectives, there are few to no studies on authentic leadership and accountability; this should be added to the debates as a measure of how organisations deal with unethical behaviour that directly impacts authentic leadership and employee perception.

What are the processes in place to stop or discipline unethical behaviour?

7.2.7 What is the practical / business relevance of the study findings?

This study may provide leaders of South African industries with insights into the views and perceptions of their employees. The research focused on identifying the ethical leadership behaviours employees value and how authentic leadership, by example, impacts their behaviours. This extends the previous research done by [Nqumba & Scheepers \(2023\)](#) that focused on the influence of leaders on staff. The current study focuses on the support given to employees and their perceptions, which can be determined through employee surveys.

7.2.8 What are the suggestions for future research?

Recommendations

Given the summary of findings in 7.1 of this Chapter, this brings the section of the study to recommendations.

Recommendation 1:

This study contributes to the relationship between accountability and authentic leadership, which has not been done much in prior studies. Thus, further research should be done to assess the impact of employee perceptions on authentic leadership from an accountability perspective. This also stems from the limited literature that is not available, indicating that the accountability of leadership in its broader aspects has not been studied extensively; this could also provide knowledge to organisations and stakeholders on the consequences if leadership is perceived not to be accountable for their actions.

Recommendation 2:

Though there is extensive research on the relationship between authentic leadership and employee perception, organisations should start examining these relationships on an ongoing basis and audit firms should review these organisational findings; it may be stated that most times, the problem will not be found in the numbers directly, but one person from an anonymous survey could save a company from great downfall.

Recommendation 3:

Further research could also assess value by surveying the same sample over a few years.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Research Survey / Questionnaire

Online respondent form of consent

Dear Participant, I am conducting research on what employee perceptions are on leadership and the impact on authentic leadership. To that end, you are asked to complete a survey regarding your leadership as well as your feelings on how leaders behave and make you feel. This will help us better understand what impact leadership has on you and what your perception is of authentic leadership. The questionnaire should take no more than 20 minutes of your time. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. Further, your participation is anonymous and only aggregated data will be reported. By completing the survey, you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.

Researcher name : 22963678

Email : 22963678@mygibs.co.za

Research Supervisor :

Email :

Link to survey: <https://forms.gle/MkJ5mPAFMKySLNUR9>

Questionnaire
Authentic Leadership Index
Self-awareness
My leader describes accurately the way others view his/her abilities
My leader shows that he/she understands his/her strengths and weaknesses
My leader is clearly aware of the impact he/she has on others
Relational transparency
My leader clearly states what he/she means
My leader openly shares information with others
My leader expresses his/her ideas and thoughts clearly to others
Internalized moral perspective
My leader shows consistency between his/her beliefs and actions
My leader uses his/her core beliefs to make decisions
My leader resists pressures on him/her to do things contrary to his/her beliefs
My leader is guided in his/her actions by internal moral standards
Balanced processing

My leader asks for ideas that challenge his/her core beliefs
My leader carefully listens to alternative perspectives before reaching a conclusion
My leader objectively analyzes relevant data before making a decision
My leader encourages others to voice opposing points of view
Authentic Leadership Total
Accountability Index
As a leader, I took action based on the results from last year's Employee Engagement Survey.
My workgroup reviewed the results from last year's Employee Engagement Survey.
The person I report to took action based on the feedback from last year's Employee Engagement Survey.
I personally take action to support employee engagement in my workgroup.
Accountability Index Total
Employee Experience Index
<i>(Power Distance)</i>
Sharing different ideas and perspectives is encouraged here.

Employees in my work group are encouraged to share ideas and suggestions.
The person I report to takes time to get to know me.
I understand how my work supports company objectives.
The person I report to supports a balance between work and personal life.
My commitments outside of work are respected by the person I report to.
The person I report to trusts that I can make good decisions regarding my work.
The person I report to supports involvement in our local community.
I feel good about the customer experience we deliver.
I trust my team members to make decisions in the best interest of the company.
Teamwork is encouraged within our workgroup.
The person I report to facilitates collaboration with other workgroups.
We make time to celebrate successes.

I know where to find resources at the company that will enhance my career.
The person I report to positively impacts my professional development.
The person I report to provides valuable feedback to improve my performance.
Our workgroup is committed to wellness, health, and safety.
The person I report to demonstrates consistency between words and actions.
We treat each other with dignity and respect.
The company is a socially and environmentally responsible organization.
Employee Experience Index Total
Organizational Culture
Trust
My company treats people like me fairly and justly
Whenever my company makes an important decision, I know it will be concerned about people like me
My company can be relied on to keep its promises

I believe that my company takes the opinions of people like me into account when making decisions
I feel very confident about my company's skills
My company has the ability to accomplish what it says it will do
Control Mutuality
My company and people like me are attentive to what each other say
My company believes the opinions of people like me are legitimate
My company really listens to what people like me have to say
The management of my company gives people like me enough say in the decision-making process
I believe people like me have influence on the decision-makers of my company
Commitment
I feel that my company is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me
I can see that my company wants to maintain a relationship with people like me

There is a long-lasting bond between my company and people like me
Compared to other companies, I value my relationship with my company more
I feel a sense of loyalty to my company
Satisfaction
I am happy with my company
Both my company and people like me benefit from the relationship
Most people like me are happy in their interactions with my company
Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship my company has established with people like me
Most people enjoy dealing with my company
Organisational culture Total

Questionnaire
Authentic Leadership Index
Self-awareness
My leader describes accurately the way others view his/her abilities
My leader shows that he/she understands his/her strengths and weaknesses
My leader is clearly aware of the impact he/she has on others
Relational transparency
My leader clearly states what he/she means
My leader openly shares information with others
My leader expresses his/her ideas and thoughts clearly to others
Internalized moral perspective
My leader shows consistency between his/her beliefs and actions
My leader uses his/her core beliefs to make decisions
My leader resists pressures on him/her to do things contrary to his/her beliefs
My leader is guided in his/her actions by internal moral standards
Balanced processing
My leader asks for ideas that challenge his/her core beliefs
My leader carefully listens to alternative perspectives before reaching a conclusion
My leader objectively analyzes relevant data before making a decision
My leader encourages others to voice opposing points of view

Authentic Leadership Total
Accountability Index
As a leader, I took action based on the results from last year's Employee Engagement Survey.
My workgroup reviewed the results from last year's Employee Engagement Survey.
The person I report to took action based on the feedback from last year's Employee Engagement Survey.
I personally take action to support employee engagement in my workgroup.
Accountability Index Total
Employee Experience Index
<i>(Power Distance)</i>
Sharing different ideas and perspectives is encouraged here.
Employees in my work group are encouraged to share ideas and suggestions.
The person I report to takes time to get to know me.
I understand how my work supports company objectives.
The person I report to supports a balance between work and personal life.
My commitments outside of work are respected by the person I report to.
The person I report to trusts that I can make good decisions regarding my work.
The person I report to supports involvement in our local community.
I feel good about the customer experience we deliver.

I trust my team members to make decisions in the best interest of the company.
Teamwork is encouraged within our workgroup.
The person I report to facilitates collaboration with other workgroups.
We make time to celebrate successes.
I know where to find resources at the company that will enhance my career.
The person I report to positively impacts my professional development.
The person I report to provides valuable feedback to improve my performance.
Our workgroup is committed to wellness, health, and safety.
The person I report to demonstrates consistency between words and actions.
We treat each other with dignity and respect.
The company is a socially and environmentally responsible organization.
Employee Experience Index Total
Organizational Culture
Trust
My company treats people like me fairly and justly
Whenever my company makes an important decision, I know it will be concerned about people like me
My company can be relied on to keep its promises
I believe that my company takes the opinions of people like me into account when making decisions

I feel very confident about my company's skills
My company has the ability to accomplish what it says it will do
Control Mutuality
My company and people like me are attentive to what each other say
My company believes the opinions of people like me are legitimate
My company really listens to what people like me have to say
The management of my company gives people like me enough say in the decision-making process
I believe people like me have influence on the decision-makers of my company
Commitment
I feel that my company is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me
I can see that my company wants to maintain a relationship with people like me
There is a long-lasting bond between my company and people like me
Compared to other companies, I value my relationship with my company more
I feel a sense of loyalty to my company
Satisfaction
I am happy with my company
Both my company and people like me benefit from the relationship
Most people like me are happy in their interactions with my company

Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship my company has established with people like me
Most people enjoy dealing with my company
Organisational culture Total

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