

**Gordon Institute
of Business Science**
University of Pretoria

**Surviving middle managers: A critical component to enhancing a
restructuring process**

Ashanti Mabena
23236397

A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science,
University of Pretoria, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Business Administration.

18 January 2017

Abstract

Restructuring processes have increasingly become an adopted business strategy solution which is often implemented in order to manage the financial difficulties facing organisations in the current economic climate. While significant research has been conducted into understanding the effect such restructuring processes have had on surviving employees, very little is understood about how the implementation and execution of such processes may impact surviving middle managers. It was observed that business leaders do not always consider how remaining middle managers are affected by such processes and how this may, in turn, affect the successful implementation of a organisational restructure and the achievement of the financial goals. This study explored how surviving middle managers' feelings, behaviours and perceptions were affected by the restructuring process and how possible changes in these areas influenced their trust, commitment and loyalty to the organisation.

A qualitative, exploratory study was performed in order to gain new insights into the affect a restructuring process has on surviving middle managers. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with middle managers who had experienced and survived a restructuring process. Through the use of quota and snowball sampling, 17 middle managers from organisations listed on the JSE, which had gone through a restructuring process in the past four years, were selected to be interviewed. The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed and analysed through coding and thematic analysis.

The key findings of the study observed that surviving middle managers were negatively affected by the restructuring process, and as a result they had a negative perception of the organisation following the process. Surviving middle managers trust, commitment and loyalty towards the organisation were lowered. Parallels were drawn between the key findings and existing literature on surviving employees however, it was further identified that surviving middle managers were more analytical in their assessment and interpretation of each of the various aspects of the restructuring process. For that reason, specific aspects of the process, which were considered to have contributed to the negative feelings, and perceptions, emerged from the findings as well as factors and subsequent actions to address these aspects. This culminated in a structured approach, 'Actions Towards an Improved Restructuring Process' which enabled a

better understanding of the necessary steps business leaders can take to ensure better acceptance, implementation and execution of a restructuring process.

Keywords: surviving middle managers, restructuring, feelings, attitude, behaviours, perceptions, trust, loyalty commitment, moderating effects

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 carry out this research.

Ashanti Mabena
18 January 2017

Contents

Abstract.....	i
Declaration.....	iii
List of Tables.....	viii
Table of Figures.....	ix
Chapter 1: Introduction to Research Problem.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Research Problem.....	3
1.3 Purpose of the Research.....	5
1.3.1 Contributions to Research.....	5
1.3.2 Benefits to Business.....	5
1.4 Selection of Management Level to be Researched.....	6
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	8
2.1 Introduction.....	8
2.2 General Effects of the Restructuring Process on Surviving Employees.....	8
2.3 Employee Survivor Syndrome.....	10
2.4 Positive Effects of the Restructuring Process.....	12
2.5 Other Factors Contributing to the Effects of the Restructuring Process.....	14
2.5.1 Communication Throughout the Restructuring Process.....	14
2.5.2 Commitment to the Organisation.....	15
2.5.3 Perceptions of Fairness and Justice.....	16
2.5.4 Remuneration and Benefits.....	18
2.5.5 Loss of Skilled Employees due to the Restructuring Process.....	19
2.6 Psychological Contract.....	20
2.6.1 Perception of the Organisation.....	22
2.7 Job Insecurity.....	22
2.7.1 Training and Skills Development.....	24
2.7.2 Duration of the Restructuring Process.....	25
2.8 Trust and Loyalty.....	26
2.8.1 Factors that Break Trust During the Restructuring Process.....	26
2.8.2 Factors that Build Trust During the Restructuring Process.....	27
2.9 Implementing the Restructuring Process and the Loss of Skilled Employees.....	28
Chapter 3: Research Questions.....	31

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Design	33
4.1 Introduction	33
4.2 Research Methodology and Design	33
4.3 Population	34
4.4 Sampling	34
4.4.1 Sampling Method.....	34
4.4.2 Unit of Analysis.....	35
4.4.3 Sample Size	35
4.4.4 Sample Consideration	36
4.5 Data Collection Tool.....	38
4.6 Pilot Interviews.....	40
4.7 Data Collection.....	40
4.8 Data Analysis	41
4.8.1 Data Analysis Tool.....	41
4.8.2 Interview Transcript Preparation.....	41
4.8.3 Method of Analysis	42
4.9 Data Validity and Reliability.....	43
4.9.1 Conformability.....	43
4.9.2 Dependability.....	44
4.9.3 Credibility.....	44
4.9.4 Transferability	44
4.10 Research Limitations	44
Chapter 5: Results	46
5.1 Introduction	46
5.2 Brief Discussion of the Participants and the Interview Method.....	46
5.2.1 Details of the Interviewed Participants.....	47
5.2.2 Interview and Transcribing Process.....	49
5.2.3 Understanding the Development of the Constructs	50
5.2.4 The use of the Words, Restructuring and Restructuring	50
5.2.5 Issue Identified from the Introductory Questions	51
5.3 Presentation of Results.....	54
5.4 Results for Research Question One	55
5.4.1 Participants Thoughts on the Restructuring Process and How it was Carried out.....	55
5.4.2 How the Participants were Affected by the Restructuring Process.....	62
5.4.3 Effects of Changes to the Participants' Positions or Roles	67

5.4.4	How the Participants were Affected by the Act of Retrenching Employees and Setting up New Departments.....	70
5.4.5	Feelings on the Restructuring Process.....	76
5.4.6	Conclusion for Research Question One	80
5.5	Results for Research Question Two	81
5.5.1	Feelings and Attitude Towards their Job Before the Restructuring Process.....	82
5.5.2	Participants' Feelings Towards their Job	82
5.5.3	Participants' Attitude Towards their Job	85
5.5.4	Conclusion for Research Question Two	87
5.6	Results for Research Question Three.....	88
5.6.1	The Participants' Manner of Leading Before the Restructuring Process.....	88
5.6.2	The Participants' Manner of Leading During the Restructuring Process.....	90
5.6.3	The Participants' Manner of Leading After the Restructuring Process.....	92
5.6.4	Conclusion for Research Question Three.....	93
5.7	Results for Research Question Four.....	93
5.7.1	Perceptions of the Organisation	94
5.7.2	Feelings and Perceptions of the Participants Security Within the Organisation.....	100
5.7.3	Conclusion for Research Question Four.....	105
5.8	Chapter Conclusion.....	105
Chapter 6:	Discussion of Findings	106
6.1	Introduction	106
6.2	Issue Identified From the Introductory Questions.....	106
6.2.1	Issues with the Process of Designing a New Departmental Structure	106
6.3	Discussion of Findings for Research Question One.....	107
6.3.1	Thoughts on the Restructuring Process and How it was Carried Out 107	
6.3.2	How the Participants were Affected by the Restructuring Process 109	
6.3.3	How the Participants were Affected by Changes in their Positions or Roles.....	111
6.3.4	How the Participants were Affected by the Act of Retrenching Employees and Setting up New Departments.....	113
6.3.5	Participants General Feelings on the Restructuring Process	114
6.3.6	Conclusion on Research Question One	117

6.4	Discussion of Findings for Research Question Two.....	118
6.4.1	Participants Feelings Towards their Job.....	118
6.4.2	Participants' Attitude Towards their Job	119
6.4.3	Conclusion to Research Question 2	120
6.5	Discussion of Findings for Research Question Three	121
6.5.1	Participants' Manner in Leading their Subordinates During the Stages of the Restructuring Process.....	121
6.5.2	Conclusion for Research Question Three.....	123
6.6	Discussion of Findings for Research Question Four	124
6.6.1	Participants' Feelings and Perception of the Organisation	124
6.6.2	Feelings and Perception of the Participants' Security of their Jobs 127	
6.6.3	Conclusion for Research Question Four.....	129
6.7	Overall Conclusion	129
Chapter 7:	Conclusion	131
7.1	Introduction	131
7.2	Key Findings	131
7.2.1	Observations on Middle Managers' Behaviour	131
7.2.2	How Surviving Middle Managers were Affected by the Restructuring Process.....	132
7.2.3	Aspects of the restructuring that negatively affect managers	135
7.2.4	Actions to Moderate the Negative Effects of the Restructuring ..	135
7.2.5	Actions to Moderate the Negative Effects of the Restructuring ..	138
7.3	Recommendations for Business Leaders.....	139
7.4	Research Limitations.....	139
7.4.1	Sampling Bias.....	139
7.4.2	Researcher Bias	139
7.5	Recommendations for Future Research	140
7.6	Conclusion	140
8	Reference List.....	142
Appendix 1:	Details of Participants.....	151
Appendix 2:	Interview Guideline.....	156
Appendix 3:	Interview Consent Form	158
Appendix 4:	Ethical clearance	160

List of Tables

Table 1: The Role and Location of Participants at Commencement of the Restructuring Process	36
Table 2: The Patterson Job Grading System (Paterson & Husband, 1970, p. 23)	37
Table 3: Research Questions and Interview Questions Mapping	39
Table 4: Role Played in the Restructuring Process	51
Table 5: Participants Thoughts on the Restructuring Process	56
Table 6: General Effect of the Restructuring on the Participants	63
Table 7: Effect of Chang in Job Positions or Roles on the Participants	68
Table 8: The Effects of Retrenching People and Setting up a New Structure	70
Table 9: Feelings on the Restructuring Process	76
Table 10: Participants' Feelings Towards their Job Before the Restructuring	82
Table 11: Participants' Feelings Towards their Job During the Restructuring	83
Table 12: Participants' Feelings Towards their Job After the Restructuring	84
Table 13: Participants' Attitude Towards their Job Before the Restructuring	85
Table 14: Participants' Attitudes Towards their Job During the Restructuring	86
Table 15: Participants' Attitudes Towards their Job After the Restructuring	87
Table 16: Participants' Manner of Leading Before the Restructuring	88
Table 17: Participants' Manner of Leading During the Restructuring	90
Table 18: Participants' Manner of Leading After the Restructuring	92
Table 19: Perceptions of the Organisation Before the Restructuring	94
Table 16: Perceptions of the Organisation During the Restructuring	96
Table 17: Perception of the Organisation After the Restructuring	98
Table 22: Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security Before the Restructuring	100
Table 19: Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security During the Restructuring	101
Table 24: Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security After the Restructuring	103

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Codes to theory model (Saldana, 2012, p. 12).....	42
Figure 2: Number of New Codes Created During Data Analysis.....	46
Figure 3: Summary of Participant Details.....	48
Figure 4: Overview of Structure and Response to Research Question 1	55
Figure 5: Thoughts of the Communication and Resultant Outcomes	57
Figure 6: Negative Effects of a Restructuring on the Surviving Middle Managers	133
Figure 7: Aspects of the restructuring which negatively affect surviving middle managers	135
Figure 8: Actions to mitigate the negative aspects of the restructuring process	136
Figure 9: Actions towards an improved restructuring process.....	138

Chapter 1: Introduction to Research Problem

1.1 Introduction

As a result of the global economic climate, organisations have had to explore and initiate cost cutting measures to improve profitability, increase their competitive advantage and improve efficiencies within their respective organisations. One of the actions often taken to achieve this is the reduction of human capital (Florah, Nyagol & Oluoch, 2013; Luan, Tien & Chi, 2013; Parzefall, 2012; Rai & Lakshman, 2014). Empirical evidence suggests that executives believe they can “improve organisational efficiency, effectiveness, and overall financial performance” through adopting a strategy of reducing their workforce (Gandolfi & Hansson, 2015, p. 185). This has resulted in restructuring processes being a constant and regular feature of the working world (Datta, Guthrie, Basuil & Pandey, 2010).

When organisations find themselves in financial difficulties, corporate executives take business decisions to implement cost cutting measures, restructure their value chain, implement new business strategies, and reduce human capital, in order to improve financial performance, productivity and competitiveness of the organisation (Datta et al., 2010; Gandolfi & Oster, 2009; Guthrie & Datta, 2008; MacLean, 2009). The reduction of human capital, through cost cutting measures, has become a common occurrence in business globally and is exacerbated by the dramatically changing environment and global economic recession, the resulting outcome for the global economy is a staggering increase in job losses (Datta, et al., 2010; Uen, Chen, Chen & Lin, 2016). The reduction of human capital through restructuring has not only affected the global market, it has also affected various sectors within the South African market, such that the formal employment sector shrank by 67 000 jobs in the second quarter of 2016 (Southern African Development Community (SADC), 2016; Statssa, 2016).

According to Gandolfi and Hansson (2015), the reduction of human capital in organisations is done for many reasons and despite it being common practise in business, there is little evidence on the success of such actions from the financial, organisational and human resource perspectives. Evidence does however suggest that the process has multiple consequences for organisations and its employees. Since most corporate executives are opting for cost cutting measures that involve the reduction of human capital, the consequences of such measures on the organisation make it a topic of significant relevance for study (Gandolfi & Oster, 2009; Magan-Diaz & Cespedes-Lorente, 2012). Restructuring processes have implications on the

organisation which affect the employees who lose their jobs, the victims, as well as those who survive the restructuring process and retain their jobs (Parks-Yancy, 2011). A view is upheld that adequate research has been dedicated to examining the causes and consequences of the restructuring process on the victims; however, there is inadequate or little research that has been conducted for the purpose of understanding the effects of the restructuring processes on the feelings, attitude and behaviours of the surviving middle managers (Grunberg, Anderson-Connolly and Greenberg, 2016; Rai & Lakshman, 2014).

Through the review of existing studies, it was found that restructuring processes are posed to have negative effects on the surviving employees' trust towards management, a decrease in employees' job performance, lower levels of job satisfaction, and decreased commitment towards their job and the organisation (Bragger, Evans, Kutcher, Summer & Fritzky, 2015; Carbery & Garavan, 2005; Kalyal, Bernston, Baraldi, Naswall & Sverke, 2010). It is further supported that surviving employees may withdraw psychologically (reduced trust and loyalty, withholding of effort, and reduced involvement) or physically (increased absences or voluntary turnover), as a result of the restructuring process (Datta et al., 2010). However, the effects of the restructuring process on surviving middle managers have not been adequately explored and as such the resulting attitudes and behaviours are unidentified. The implications on business is that they may not be able to take the necessary actions to mitigate or moderate the negative effects to ensure a successful implementation of the restructuring.

The focus on middle managers in the study was prompted by Grunberg, Anderson-Connolly and Greenberg (2016) who argued that there is limited systematic research that illustrates how the restructuring process affects different employees in different levels of seniority and that this should be an area of focus as restructurings are no longer limited to junior employees, but, now affect managers as well. Gandolfi and Hansson (2015), did however find that managers and executives tend not to anticipate how surviving employees will be affected by the restructuring process, and therefore when the effects become apparent, they operate in a crisis mode and become ineffective in their long-term planning for the organisation.

Datta et al., (2010) also illustrated that research studies offer ambiguous findings on the relationship between the level of employee responsibility and the effect the restructuring process has on the employees, indicating that there is no definite

empirical evidence which clearly indicates how managers will react or how they will be affected by the restructuring process.

1.2 Research Problem

Waraich and Bhardwaj (2012) put it forward that since workforce reductions are happening all over, it is crucial for organisations to study the effects on the frame of mind of the surviving employees, and more specifically middle managers, who have survived a restructuring process. This study does not aim to look at the frame of mind through a lens of the study of psychology but rather through the confines of this definition.

An individual's frame of mind is defined as, "the mood that someone is in, which influences their attitudes or feelings" and mood refers to their emotions (Macmillan Dictionary, 2007). Attitudes in turn, are defined as "a feeling or opinion about something or someone" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017). Therefore, the term 'frame of mind' will be used in this study, when referring to the sum of feelings, emotions, attitudes and behaviours of individuals or groups. Furthermore, reference is made to attitude and behaviours, for attitude are influenced by the state of mind and one may exhibit certain behaviours as a result of their feelings and/ or attitude.

Organisations depend on these surviving employees to continue operations and the managers, who are also affected by the restructuring are tasked with ensuring the remaining employees are motivated and continue to perform. The frame of mind of the employees who survive the restructuring can affect the success of the process as well as the financial performance of the organisation post the restructuring (Lee & Corbet, 2006). Florah et al. (2013) observed that organisations do not contemplate or factor in the surviving employees frame of mind when they are considering the expected benefits of the restructuring process, often resulting in the organisation performing poorly during and after the restructuring process. Furthermore, they suggest that research should be conducted on how the surviving employees' frame of mind is affected by the process and what actions can be taken by organisations to minimise the negative effects of the restructuring process. As a result, this study aims to explore how the surviving middle managers' frames of mind are affected by the restructuring process and what can be done to minimise any negative consequences and ensure better implementation and acceptance of the restructuring plan.

It has been established that surviving employees may exhibit a negative frame of mind as a result of the restructuring process, which can be clustered under the banner of survivor syndrome (Travaglione & Cross, 2006). This negative frame of mind created by negative feelings, emotions, behaviours, and attitudes, include but are not limited to, guilt, anger, stress, anxiety, increased job insecurity, lack of trust, decreased motivation, decreased morale, decreased job satisfaction, absenteeism, increased propensity to leave the organisation and actual increase in turnover (Datta et al., 2010; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011; Hansson, 2015; Lakshman, Ramaswami, Alas, Kabongo & Pandian, 2014; Levitt, Wilson & Gilligan, 2008; Parks-Yancy, 2011). Gandolfi, (2008) also observed that there is limited research on how surviving employees adjust to the new organisational environment, develop new competencies, and handle their new roles and responsibilities after the restructuring process.

The existing research on how the restructuring process affects surviving employees' frame of mind, focuses on general employees without much consideration for middle managers specifically. Gandolfi and Hansson (2011), in their review of existing literature on the implementation and impact of restructuring processes, acknowledge that there is extensive research on how the restructuring process affects the frame of mind of the employees who survive a restructuring process. They point out however, that what is lacking is further research on how the implementers are affected. Implementers are senior employees or consultants who are responsible for decisions concerning the restructuring process, including the planning, implementation and evaluation of the restructuring process (Gandolfi, 2007; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011). The existing, yet limited literature on implementers focuses on executives, senior managers and human resources practitioners; it does not specifically focus on middle managers who are also involved in the implementation of the process, thus supporting the need to consider how the process affects the surviving middle managers (Ashman, 2015; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006). There has not been much focus on how the restructuring process affects the middle managers, as employees who survived the restructuring and as implementers of the restructuring process. A clear gap therefore exists in the literature, as suggested by Dewitt, Trevino and Mollica (2003), and Waraich and Bhardwaj (2012), who state that an in-depth study taking only the middle level managers in to account, could be conducted in order to understand how their frame of mind is affected by the restructuring process.

1.3 Purpose of the Research

1.3.1 Contributions to Research

Although a number of studies have been conducted on the subject of the various elements of restructuring processes, there is inadequate evidence detailing the conditions that may influence the effectiveness of restructuring plans (Guthrie & Datta, 2008). A study on how the restructuring process affects the surviving middle managers' frame of mind, may provide insight on the factors that negatively affect the success and effectiveness of restructuring plans. A better understanding of such factors may further provide insight on the measures that minimise the negative effects and behaviours associated with the restructuring process and enhance the positive effects and behaviours that foster the acceptance of the restructuring process.

This study aims to explore how a restructuring process affects the surviving middle managers in relation to changes they may experience in their frame of mind and perceptions of the organisation during the restructuring process. The research will further explore the key drivers of these potential changes to the frame of mind, and how these influence the resulting perceptions and behaviour towards their work and the organisation as a whole. Lastly, the research aims to determine factors which may moderate or mitigate these key drivers that result in changes in the frame of mind.

It must be noted that there is a distinction between a retrenchment and a restructuring plan. Although both may have the same end result, being the reduction of human capital, the distinguishing factor is the focus and intention of the organisation. Cascio (2002) notes that with restructuring, the organisation focuses on reducing inefficiencies by changing the use of its people. However, restructuring may result in the reduction of human capital through "...attrition, early retirements, voluntary severance agreements, or layoffs (retrenchments)" (p. 7). On the other hand, with retrenchments, the organisation has a clear and direct strategy of cost reduction which is achieved by reducing the cost of labour, with the intention of retaining the minimum required human capital in order to run the organisation (Cascio, 2002). For the purposes of this study, organisations which had a reduction in human capital will be considered, regardless of whether they followed a retrenchment or restructuring plan.

1.3.2 Benefits to Business

It has been established that the act of reducing human capital due to the current economic climate, has become an acceptable business practice, and it is becoming an

institutional norm giving legitimacy to the organisations that practice it (Datta et al., 2010; Magan-Diaz & Cespedes-Lorente, 2012). Executives need to make decisions that will be beneficial to the organisation and produce exceptional financial results through the increase of performance and productivity, even when there are limited human resources. Therefore, it would be beneficial for organisations which are planning to institute a restructuring processes to understand how a restructuring affects surviving middle managers in order to ensure that actions and practices are implemented with a view to improve the organisational environment, reduce the negative effects, and promote acceptance of the process, thereby fostering commitment, enhancing morale and increasing productivity and performance (Datta et al. 2010).

The key objectives for this study are to establish how the surviving middle managers are affected by the restructuring process; what causes surviving middle managers to experience or exhibit the negative and/ or positive effects associated with the restructuring; and what can be done to moderate the negative effects associated with the restructuring process.

1.4 Selection of Management Level to be Researched

The study focused on middle management as Dewitt, Trevino and Mollica (2003), and Waraich and Bhardwaj (2012) suggested that an in-depth study could be undertaken taking into account only the middle management level in order to understand their reaction to the restructuring process as their reaction may be associated with their frame of mind and perception of the organisation which may affect their relationships or performance within the organisation.

The need to explore and understand middle managers' reactions and possible changes in their frame of mind during a restructuring process was justified by the observations that their frame of mind, can affect the reactions and perceptions of the surviving employees to the restructuring process and how they behave towards the organisation. Therefore, the middle managers' frame of mind may negatively or positively affect the implementation and fulfilment of the organisation's plans and goals (Dewitt et al., 2003; Kowske, Lundby & Rasch, 2010). It is further argued that middle management are in a unique position, as they are the link between executive and senior management and the rest of the employees. They also have a simultaneous role of being in control of operations and the execution of the tactical strategy (Dewitt et al., 2003; Rai & Lakshman, 2014). Middle management can therefore, be considered as the connection

between the decision makers within the organisation and the employees who execute those decisions and their perceptions and behaviours may affect the behaviour and performance of their subordinates. Patterson job grading system was used to better define the category on middle management (Paterson & Husband, 1970).

Considering that middle managers' behaviour and perception of the organisation can influence the perception and behaviour of their subordinates; and that they have insights into employee morale and needs within a larger organisation, understanding how restructuring processes may affect their frame of mind, may be beneficial to an organisation during times of transition (Farrell, 2014). Conducting a study on middle managers is deemed appropriate as it will add to the existing body of literature, and offer business insight into how middle managers are affected by the restructuring process, and how this may in turn affect the performance of the organisation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

When organisations face financial difficulty as a result of the economic conditions, executives resort to reducing labour costs by instituting restructuring programmes to ensure survival and sustainability of the organisation (Uen, Chen, Chen & Lin, 2016; Waraich & Bhardwaj, 2012). The employees who then survive the restructuring process are expected to be highly productive and committed to the organisation, in order for the organisation to achieve its operational and financial goals; however, this is not always possible as surviving employees tend to be negatively affected by the restructuring process, leading to negative feelings, attitudes and behaviours towards the organisation (Uen et. al., 2016).

The negative feelings and behaviours experienced by the surviving employees, such as guilt, anger mistrust, and low levels of productivity, can be classified as survivor syndrome (De Muse & Dai, 2013). Organisations have ignored the emotional elements associated with restructuring programmes as well as the effects they may have on the surviving employees, albeit, the understanding of such elements may enable organisations to better manage the restructuring process to ensure the success of cost cutting measures (Mayton, 2011). For the attitudes and behaviours of the surviving employees can affect the success of the restructuring process as well as the financial performance of the organisation post the restructuring (Lee & Corbet, 2006).

2.2 General Effects of the Restructuring Process on Surviving Employees

The restructuring process has been associated with both positive and negative effects on the surviving employees' individual emotions, attitudes and behaviour, or frame of mind, which have been found to affect their relationship networks, trust, loyalty and performance (Datta et al., 2010; Gandolfi, 2008; Uen et al., 2016).

Existing literature indicates that surviving employees may withdraw psychologically (reduced trust and loyalty, withholding of effort, and reduced involvement) or physically (increased absences or voluntary turnover), as a result of the restructuring process (Datta et al., 2010). This is supported by several empirical studies (Bragger, Evans,

Kutcher, Summer & Fritzky, 2015; Carbery & Garavan 2005; Kalyal, Bernston, Baraldi, Naswall & Sverke, 2010) which found that restructuring processes tend to have negative effects on the surviving employees' trust towards management, as well as a decrease in employees' job performance, lower levels of job satisfaction, and decreased commitment towards their job and the organisation.

Restructuring processes have a negative effect on the wellbeing and motivation of the surviving employees, due to feelings of powerlessness and increased stress levels arising from an increase in work load and responsibilities, as a result of the loss of human capital (Boyd, Tuckey & Winefield, 2014). The surviving employees who experience feelings of powerlessness are also likely to feel that they are not in control of their jobs (ability to retain their jobs), thus enhancing the feeling of job insecurity and decreasing their levels of the job satisfaction (Ashman, 2015; Boyd et al., 2014; Lee & Corbet, 2006). A decrease in the surviving employees' job security negatively affects their motivation, job security and level of job satisfaction, thus affecting their overall productivity and job performance. Gunberg, Moore and Greenberg (2006), noted that the degree of impact the restructuring processes have may affect the surviving employees' work performance and their level of job security, but this is dependent on how they consider their employability; that is whether they have employment options within the external job market.

The negative effects associated with a restructuring process can however, be moderated through enhancing the employees' perception of the organisation, improving their level of trust in management, and by ensuring a sense of fairness through adequate, transparent communication and consistency when carrying out the restructuring process (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Hart et al., 2016; Hanson, 2015; Florah et al., 2013; Kowske et al., 2010; Lakshman et al., 2014). By taking the action to moderate the effects of the restructuring process, organisations can ensure that the surviving employees do not necessarily experience all the negative emotions, attitudes and behaviours associated with the restructuring process.

Managers and human resources practitioners are given the responsibility of implementing restructuring plans, which as previously stated, often result in the reduction of human capital. The action of reducing human capital and the process of having to decide on which employees should be retrenched, has additional emotional and physiological effects, such as anxiety and stress, on the managers executing the plans. These emotional and physiological effects are enhanced when the managers do not believe that the restructuring process is in the best interest of the organisation and

thereby increase their negative feelings associated with the restructuring process (Ashman, 2015; Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Gunberg et al., 2006; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006).

In summation, the restructuring process has been found to have negative effects on the surviving employees, which may negatively affect their perception of the organisation, their commitment and trust toward the organisation, and ultimately their level of job security, their performance and their productivity. However, these negative effects can be moderated through the implementation of fair processes, adequate communication and maintaining a relationship of trust between the employees and management.

The effects of the restructuring process on the surviving middle managers have not been fully established in literature, so it cannot be stated with certainty that the surviving middle managers will be affected by the restructuring process in the same manner as the surviving employees, hence this study explores how the surviving middle managers are affected by the restructuring process.

2.3 Employee Survivor Syndrome

It is widely accepted that the restructuring process can have negative effects on the surviving employees. It can drastically affect employee morale, often leaving organisations populated with surviving employees who exhibit negative attitudes and behaviour patterns (Florah et al., 2013; Travaglione & Cross, 2006). Employees who have survived a restructuring process have been known to exhibit dysfunctional work attitudes, behaviours, and emotions which tend to be detrimental to the overall performance of the organisation; these attitudes and behaviours can be clustered under the concept of survivor syndrome (De Muse & Dai, 2013; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011; Gandolfi, 2008; Hanson, 2015; Levitt et al., 2008).

Several authors have summarised literature that addresses the negative emotions, behaviours and attitudes that are exhibited by surviving employees who suffer from survivor syndrome. These emotions, behaviours and attitudes include, but are not limited to, guilt, anger, stress, anxiety, increased job insecurity, decreased motivation, decreased morale, decreased job satisfaction, increased propensity to leave the organisation and an actual increase in turnover (Datta et al., 2010; Florah et. al., 2013; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011; Grunberg, Anderson-Connolly & Greenber, 2016; Travaglione & Cross, 2006).

Additional studies on survivor syndrome go on further to detail a myriad of attributes linked to survivor syndrome, those being; guilt, lowered productivity levels, decreased work performance, reduced work quality and efficiency, deteriorated levels of competence, lowered commitment, mistrust towards management, increased levels of conflict, lowered speed of conflict resolution; and increased absenteeism and focus on oneself (Datta et al., 2010; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011; Grunberg e al, 2016; Hanson, 2015; Lakshman et al., 2014).

One of the recurring emotions around survivor syndrome is guilt. Surviving employees may feel guilty for having retained their employment whilst their colleagues or friends were retrenched (Parks-Yancy, 2011). On the other hand, the emotion of guilt may arise as a result of feeling anxious, stressed and conflicted as the surviving employees are unable to deal with the conflicting emotions of relief and joy for having retained their jobs, and sadness and distress for the loss of their friends and/ or colleagues losing their jobs (Shook & Roth, 2011).

In addition to guilt, surviving employees are also filled with anger and fear (Parks-Yancy, 2011). Waraich and Bhardwaj (2012) observed that fear arises from the employees' realisation that their jobs are not secure, which also gives rise to their propensity to leave the organisation. They further found that anger, coupled with stress, fear and anxiety, can lead to a lack of employee commitment or reduced commitment, and lowered levels of performance and productivity within the organisation. Reinardy (2011) however states that the fear of job loss can cause an unexpected reaction where the surviving employees feel that they need to demonstrate their value and worth to the organisation, thus causing them to take on more work, duties and responsibilities (Reinardy, 2011).

A decrease in the level of job satisfaction, is also likely for the surviving employees, for they are susceptible to feelings of depression, fear, stress and powerlessness. These feelings result in higher levels of absenteeism, lower involvement in the organisations future plans, a decrease in work efficiency, lower quality of work, and have an increased propensity to leave the firm (Hanson, 2015; Iverson & Zatzick, 2011; Luan, Tien & Chi, 2013; Lakshman et al., 2014; Neves, 2014; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2005). It has also been noted that although the surviving employees have retained their jobs, they are not necessarily happy or grateful but instead they experience feelings of stress and frustration due to the increased work load, and they are then not willing to work harder than warranted, and they eventually disconnect with the organisation (Levitt et al., 2008).

Survivor syndrome is a recognised consequence of restructuring, hence, the emphasis that it is imperative that organisations give attention to the survivors' behaviour and their adjustment post the restructuring (Waraich & Bhardwaj, 2012). This is more crucial to middle managers as they are strategically positioned and are considered to be the link between senior management and company executives and the lower level staff. Their reactions may affect the financial success of the organisation and the fulfilment of the organisations strategic goals (Waraich & Bhardwaj, 2012).

Although Travaglione and Cross (2006) support the notion of survivor syndrome, they have also acknowledged that there is a contradicting view on survivor syndrome as studies have also shown that not all restructuring processes result in surviving employees experiencing survivor syndrome. Datta et al. (2010) agreed that restructuring processes do not always result in the negative effects of survivor syndrome. The attitudes, behaviours and emotions associated with survivor syndrome are caused by several factors, amongst them being the actual experience of the restructuring process, the manner in which the restructuring was carried out, the perception of fairness and justice, and the level of transparency and communication exhibited by managers and executives during the process (Florah et al., 2013; Lakshman et al., 2014; Levitt et al., 2008; Monippally, 2003; Parks-Yancy, 2011). Therefore, as much as surviving employees experience survivor syndrome, there are actions which can be taken by the organisation to moderate the feelings, attitudes and behaviours associated with survivor syndrome.

Hanson (2015) and Lakshman, et al., (2014), have noted actions and steps that can be taken by the organisation to moderate the negative feelings associated with survivor syndrome. These include increasing the perception of fairness and justice, job security, management trustworthiness, offering surviving employees some certainty regarding their jobs and the organisations future plans, and providing training. When good reasons are given for the implementation of the restructuring process and it is carried out in a good manner, then it positively affects the employees' perceptions of fairness and justice, and it lessens the breach of the psychological contract (Hanson, 2015; Lakshman et al., 2014).

2.4 Positive Effects of the Restructuring Process

Although much literature has indicated that restructuring processes result in negative attitudes and behaviours associated with survivor syndrome, it has also been argued that empirical studies have not conclusively established that all restructuring processes

result in the surviving employees experiencing the negative effects of survivor syndrome (Datta et al., 2010; Maertz Jr, Wiley, LeRouge & Campion, 2010).

In support that not all employees experience the negative effects of survivor syndrome, Petzall, Parker and Stoeberl (2000) have observed surviving employees who work harder post the restructuring process in an effort to maintain their own position, and exhibit an attitude of positive and high energy. Guo and Giacobbe-Miller (2012), found that surviving employees who deemed the changes in the organisational structure to be positive and associated their future growth with the financial success of the organisation, also often performed well, thus exhibiting enhanced performance and commitment to the organisation. Furthermore, it has been noted that surviving employees may exhibit positive feelings and attitudes such as feelings of increased security in their job, feeling energised, being more hopeful, and feeling optimistic. Thus, there is an increase in their work effort and they show no change in their attitude towards their job and the organisation (Lakshman et al., 2014; Neves, 2014)

As with other researchers who have noted moderators of the effects of the restructuring process, Parzefall (2012) also found that when the surviving employees feel that the restructuring process was executed in a fair manner and considered procedural fairness, then they were also likely to exhibit positive attitudes and behaviours towards the organisation. This supports the notion that suggests that the negative behaviour associated with survivor syndrome is not as a result of the restructuring itself, but rather as a result of the manner in which the restructuring was carried out (Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011). It further suggests that the perception of fairness is critical during a restructuring process as it has the potential to trigger negative or positive attitudes associated with survivor syndrome in the surviving employees.

As much as the fact that employees work harder post the restructuring process is being used to support that not all employees suffer the negative effects associated with the restructuring process, this may not necessarily be a true indicator of not suffering from survivor syndrome. It has been evidenced that the surviving employees' motivation to work hard and put more time and energy into their jobs, thus increasing their productivity and performance, was because of feeling insecure in their job and being afraid of losing their jobs in the present or in the future, should another restructuring process occur (Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006; Tzafrif & Eitam-Meilik, 2005; Waraich & Bhardwaj, 2012). Tzafrif and Eitam-Meilik (2005) also noted that feelings of guilt can get the surviving employees to work harder, whereby they attempt to address the

feelings of guilt for getting the job instead of someone else. The perceived inequity of their survival thus making them work harder and improves their performance.

At times, the feelings of guilt and inequity of their survival are not necessarily triggered by the surviving employees' process of reflection. They are triggered by senior executives who make the survivors feel guilty by telling them that they should be grateful for having jobs, which also results in the surviving employees working harder and improving their job performance (Noronha & D'Cruz, 2005). However, although they work harder, their motivation for working hard is driven by guilt and fear and this causes them to develop feelings of resentment towards the organisation. Their increased performance is then not sustainable as the fear and guilt eventually wears off (Noronha & D'Cruz, 2005).

Since there is no absolute conclusion or guarantee on how the surviving employees will be affected by a restructuring process, it is worth exploring how surviving middle managers will be affected by the restructuring process.

2.5 Other Factors Contributing to the Effects of the Restructuring Process

2.5.1 Communication Throughout the Restructuring Process

Noronha and D'Cruz (2006) witnessed that senior management tends to decrease communication during the restructuring process because they believe that employees do not need to know the complete restructuring plans, and receiving distressing news will negatively affect their morale, motivation and performance. However, the contrary seems to be true. The lack of open and honest communication makes the surviving employees feel like the organisation does not care about them, and they tend to have no confidence in the leadership; as a consequence, they have low morale, low motivation, mistrust and a negative perception of the organisation (Iverson & Zatzick, 2010; Levitt et al., 2008; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006). Limited communication further gives rise to fear, uncertainty, rumours, speculation, and incorrect information being received and acted upon by the surviving employees, thus also negatively affecting their performance and perception of the organisation (Clair et al., 2006; Levitt et al., 2008; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006).

It is suggested that organisations should have timely, clear, open, and continuous communication with employees informing them of the plans and the progress of the restructuring process throughout all the stages, because the manner in which they

communicate will affect how the surviving employees receive and accept the restructuring process and how they perceive the fairness of the process (Iverson & Zatzick, 2011; Levitt et al., 2008). It has been proposed that two-way communication increases the credibility and the level of support for the restructuring process, as well as the surviving employees' commitment and trust towards the organisation (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006; Omuruyi, Chipunza & Samuel, 2011).

Furthermore, by providing more frequent, open, and transparent communication, organisations may be able to mitigate and moderate the negative effects of the restructuring process, thus increasing the surviving employees' hope, optimism, resilience, and trust, and giving them a sense of security and reassurance, which will positively affect their performance (Florah, 2013; Levitt et al., 2008; Norman, Avolio & Luthans, 2010; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006). This gives rise to the question of whether the surviving middle managers will respond in a similar way considering that they are management, their access and consumption of information may be different and at times, they also withhold information from their subordinates.

2.5.2 Commitment to the Organisation

Commitment is considered to be the surviving employees "emotional attachment to the organisation" (Uen et al., 2016, p. 217). It is important to the organisations' survival after the restructuring, as it is a driver of the surviving employees' involvement in the organisation, including their assistance in achieving organisational goals and their propensity to leave the organisation (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Uen et al., 2016). In addition, there surviving employees who experience and/ or perceive the restructuring process to be carried out in an unfair or unjust manner, tend to exhibit lowered levels of organisational commitment and morale (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Florah, 2013; Monippally, 2003; Omoruyi et al., 2011; Zatzick, 2016).

Dierendonck and Jacobs (2012) support the three classifications of organisational commitment, namely affective, continuance and normative commitment. With affective commitment being identified as one that affects the organisation's survival during and after the restructuring (Uen, et. al., 2016; Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012). It is strongly influenced by the perception of justice and fairness, and it has been found to demonstrate a relationship with attitudes and behaviours that are associated with restructuring processes, such as lower job performance, change in organisational perception, and a higher propensity to leave the organisation (Dierendonck & Jacobs,

2012). Kalyal et al. (2010) however, noted that employees exhibit greater levels of commitment to the organisation when they consider the changes or decisions made, to be beneficial to themselves and/ or when they feel important and valued by the organisation. Therefore, as indicated by Lee and Cobert (2006), the surviving employees' level of commitment is influenced by how they are affected by the restructuring process. If they are negatively affected, then their commitment to the organisation will be lowered and they become more focused on their self-interest, but when they perceive positive changes as a result of the restructuring, especially when they feel that they were well treated by the organisation and their line managers, then their commitment to the organisation is positively affected.

Therefore, it can be argued that the level of commitment shown by the surviving employees is a necessary and crucial factor in the survival of the organisation, during and post the restructuring process. This is because lower levels of commitment tend to negatively impact the surviving employees' perception of the organisation, their job satisfaction, their dedication to their work, and their propensity to leave the organisation; thus affecting their productivity and performance (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Kowske et al., 2010; Lee & Corbet, 2006; Omoruyi et al., 2011). Florah et al., (2013) also noted that reduced levels of commitment are one of the main reasons why restructuring processes do not yield the expected results in the long term. Hence, it is important for organisations to understand how the commitment levels of surviving middle managers are affected as it impacts on their propensity to leave the organisation and because they are in position of influence, they may pass their attitude onto their subordinates, thus hampering or aiding the organisation in the fulfilment of its financial and operational plans.

2.5.3 Perceptions of Fairness and Justice

It has been illustrated that when a restructuring process is accompanied by perceptions of unfair treatment and decisions being made solely by the organisation, the surviving employees may display resentment towards the organisation and rejection of the decisions associated with the restructuring process (Hart, Thomson & Huning, 2016). Moreover, it has been established that the surviving employees' perceptions of fairness or justice regarding the manner in which the restructuring process was carried out, affects their attitudes and behaviours, in essence, their perception of the organisation, their commitment level, trust, performance, productivity and intention to leave the organisation (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Monippally, 2003; Uen et al., 2016).

On the other hand, when the surviving employees perceive that they were treated fairly and that the restructuring process was carried out in a fair and transparent manner, they are likely to exhibit behaviours and feelings of commitment, loyalty, and belonging to the organisation (Hart et al., 2016; Grunberg, 2016; Omoruyi, Chipunza & Samuel, 2011). Surviving employees are also more likely to accept the restructuring process if they think that the process is a last resort for the survival and sustainability of the organisation, or if the reasons given for the implementation of the process are due to external issues or economic forces, rather than purely as a means to increase the organisations profitability (Bragger, Evans, Kutcher, Summer & Fritzky, 2015; Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Gandolfi, 2008).

The surviving employees' observation of fairness is impacted by whether they understand and accept the reasons for the restructuring process and whether they deem the performance criteria used to retrench employees to be clear, consistent, and impartial (Bragger et al., 2015; Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Monippally, 2003; Omoruyi et al., 2011). However, when the surviving employees do not understand, nor agree with the reasons for the restructuring and the manner in which the retrenched employees were treated, they exhibit negative attitudes and feelings of anger and mistrust towards the organisation, coupled with a sense of violation of the psychological contract (Bragger et al., 2016; Monippally, 2003). These negative attitudes and feelings result in lower commitment levels, reduced motivation, and low productivity and performance being exhibited by the surviving employees (Bragger et al., 2015). In addition, the surviving employees also have an inclination to use the restructuring process as an opportunity to observe the true nature of the organisation through the manner in which the retrenched employees are treated and whether the organisation accepts accountability for its actions, thus affecting their perceptions of the organisation (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Grunberg, 2016).

It has been recognised that when the surviving employees assess the level of fairness applied during a restructuring process, they do so considering three types of fairness or justice which have been given attention to in existing literature, namely distributive fairness, procedural fairness, and interactional fairness (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Hart et al., 2016). Distributive fairness is the perceived fairness in the distribution of work conditions, rewards, and resources; procedural fairness is the fairness of the processes and procedures used to make a decision; and interactional fairness is the objectivity and value of interactions between management and employees (Hart et al.,

2016; Kowske, et al., 2010; Dewitt, Trevino & Mollica, 2003; Mollica & Gray, 2001; Omoruyi et al., 2011).

In this regard, procedural fairness addresses the procedures used to implement the restructuring process; which is the reason why it is considered the most impacted and critical during the restructuring process. It has been noted to affect the surviving employees' commitment level, job performance, job satisfaction and their sense of belonging to the organisation (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Hart et al., 2016; Omoruyi et al., 2011).

Hart et al. (2016) and Dierendonck and Jacobs (2012), argue that procedural fairness is more important to the surviving employees than distributive fairness as it has the potential to moderate the effects of the restructuring process on the surviving employees' level of commitment, through observed fair enforcement of the restructuring procedures. Furthermore, Hart et al. (2016) observed that there is a correlation between the perception of procedural justice and the surviving employees' job performance, job satisfaction, commitment, productivity, and their intention to leave the organisation. Therefore, it can be said that the manner in which organisations execute the restructuring process may negatively or positively affect the surviving employees' observations of fairness, thus influencing their acceptance of the decisions made during the restructuring process, and moreover, affecting their level of commitment, loyalty, productivity, performance, and perception of the organisation.

Literature has shown how surviving employees are affected by their perceptions of fairness during the restructuring process. However, there is inadequate evidence illustrating how surviving managers will respond to, or perceive the actions carried out by the organisation, or how they will be affected, considering their roles within the organisation.

2.5.4 Remuneration and Benefits

De Muse and Dai (2013), raise the point that restructuring processes may yield different outcomes in different situations, therefore, there are other factors that may positively or negatively influence how survivors cope post the restructuring process. Luan et al. (2013), proposes that there is a positive relationship between an increase in employee remuneration and the firm performance. Thus, they suggest that decreasing employees' financial benefits (salary, annual increase, or bonus) would have a negative impact on the firm.

Hanson (2015) agrees that another element associated with restructuring processes where the impacts tends to be overlooked, is a reduction in the surviving employees' compensation and benefits, including demotions or a reduction in their roles and responsibilities. Nonetheless, these elements negatively affect the surviving employees' commitment levels, and their productivity and performance is retarded. Iverson and Zatzick (2011) also indicate that surviving employees who experience a reduction in their compensation and benefits, and/ or their roles and responsibilities, find it difficult to accept the changes in their remuneration or level, and they feel a diminished sense of worth which is exacerbated by feelings that the organisation does not care about them.

Therefore, it can be suggested that restructuring processes that include a reduction in the survivors' remuneration will result in negative behaviours being exhibited by the surviving employees due to lower staff morale, lower productivity, and loss of trust between employer and employee. However, it cannot be said with certainty that surviving middle managers will be affected in a similar manner.

2.5.5 Loss of Skilled Employees due to the Restructuring Process

Typically, during and post a restructuring process, organisations deal with the loss of skilled employees through voluntary and involuntary termination of the employees' services from the organisation. Noronha and D'Cruz (2006), observed that organisations have to cope with the loss of skilled, high performing employees executing key services within the organisation, who choose to accept the restructuring settlement packages being offered by the organisation. They found that these employees are not willing to stay in the organisation because they find the option of working in another organisation, or starting a business, to be more attractive than continuing their employment with their current employer. Despite this, Iverson and Zatzick (2011), posit that some managers also find it as an opportunity to reduce surplus manpower and remove low performing employees.

The loss of employees results in performance targets being restructured to take into account the available resources (Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006). However, what is challenging to those managing teams, is that their own survival within the organisation is dependent on their performance as well as the performance of their teams which are experiencing stress. As such, managers have no choice but to focus on performance (Boyd et al., 2014; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006).

2.6 Psychological Contract

The restructuring process gives rise to what surviving employees consider a breach in their psychological contract with the organisation. Psychological contract theory centres on the surviving employee and posits that a mutual relationship, based on trust and predictability, evolves between employees and employers, thus a disturbance in this relationship results in a breach of the psychological contract (De Muse & Dai, 2013).

A breach in the psychological contract occurs when a restructuring process is implemented and the surviving employees feel that they have been contributing to the success of the organisation whilst offering their loyalty, commitment, and complete work; however, their effort and contributions are not rewarded and reciprocated by the organisation by offering stable, positive, long term job security (Grunberg, Anderson-Connolly & Greenberg, 2016; Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Norohna & D'Cruz, 2006; Rust, McKinley, Moon & Edward, 2005; Uen et al., 2016). As such, the psychological contract breaks when the surviving employees feel that the organisation did not uphold their contract of trust and loyalty (Parzefall, 2012).

According to Uen et al. (2016), surviving employees will deem the psychological contract to be broken if they feel that the organisation has broken their trust and has not fulfilled what is morally expected of them. As a result, Rust et al. (2005) continue to state that the breach of the psychological contract negatively affects employees' performance, reduces their involvement in the workplace decision making process and lowers their level of trust. Also, the surviving employees tend to find the violation of the psychological contract painful and a betrayal (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Norohna & D'Cruz, 2006).

De Muse and Dai (2013), reviewed literature on psychological contracts, and concluded that actions which negatively affect the psychological contract may cause a reduction in employee loyalty, motivation and participation within the organisation. Furthermore, they state that survivors may also avoid performing tasks which will promote the organisations financial and strategic goals, such as performing at a high level. However, Waraich and Bhardwaj (2012), note that surviving employees are expected to be committed to the organisation and be highly productive, even though the organisation cannot guarantee and ensure job security, and are breaking the psychological contract.

Uen et al. (2016), found evidence to suggest that the exhibited negative actions of the organisation result in survivors forming a new psychological contract with the

organisations, which in turn affects the survivors' involvement in the organisation, their quality of work and their career ambitions. Furthermore, a change in the surviving employees' current job profile also triggers an assessment of their identity and belonging within the organisation (Parzefall, 2012). This assessment causes them to reflect upon their roles within the organisation, evaluate the meaning and value the organisation brings into their lives, and reassess their careers and their working lives as a whole (Parzefall, 2012).

Monippally (2003), holds a different view, suggesting that employees have adjusted to the environment where restructuring processes are part of business practices and as a result have come to realise that organisations do not have to offer long tenure for employment, thus suggesting that the implementation of restructuring processes does not break their psychological contract. Others argue in support of the traditional view, maintaining that even though restructuring processes have become a common occurrence, employees still consider it a violation of the psychological contract, especially when implemented in what is perceived to be, an unfair manner (Iverson and Zatzick, 2011; Zatzick, Deery & Iverson, 2015).

Another school of thought suggests that although surviving employees perceive a breach in the psychological contract when a restructuring process is implemented, the degree or intensity of the breach will vary depending on the surviving employees' ideological beliefs (Rust et al., 2005). The ideological beliefs provide a cognitive frame that influences the surviving employees' perceptions on the greatness of the breach (Rust et al., 2005).

Rust et al. (2005) identified three ideologies which influence the cognitive frame, being the ideology of market competition ("the belief that market competition is beneficial for industries, customers and the organisation", p. 39), ideology of shareholder interest ("the belief that shareholder value should be the dominant criterion for management decision-making" p. 39), and ideology of employee worth ("the belief that employees are the most valuable corporate resource because they provide critical inputs to business processes" p. 39).

These ideological beliefs either reduce or enhance the perception of the breach of the psychological contract and the acceptance of the restructuring process. Those who accept the ideology of market competition and the ideology of shareholder interest, are more likely to accept the restructuring process than those who believe in the ideology of employee worth. This is because they are focused on their contributions to the

organisation and believe that they should be reciprocated with job security (Rust et al., 2005).

Although there are suggestions that surviving employees may experience varying degrees of breach in the psychological contract, it still remains that surviving employees experience a breach in their psychological contract with the organisation when a restructuring process is instituted.

2.6.1 Perception of the Organisation

The act of restructuring and perceived fairness are likely to change the manner in which the surviving employees perceive the organisation. It may create a belief within employees that the organisation does not care about them and they are viewed as objects, merely a means to an end rather than meaningful, valued employees who contribute to the wellbeing of the organisation. This is a break in the psychological contract (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Iverson & Zatzick, 2011; Walker, 2015). When employees feel less valued and see themselves as objects used for the purpose of profit making, this changes their perception of the organisation, negatively affecting their level of trust and lowering their commitment to the organisation, to an extent that they consider terminating their employment despite the fact that they have survived the restructuring process (Iverson & Zatzick, 2011).

2.7 Job Insecurity

Changes in the organisational structure are inherently associated with stress and uncertainty, and can lead to fear of job loss amongst the employees creating perceptions of job insecurity (Kalyal et al., 2010; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006). Grunberg, Moore and Greenberg (2006) define job insecurity as “that feeling that one’s job is at risk or that one is likely to face job loss” (p. 162).

It is suggested that job insecurity arises due to a breakdown in the psychological contract, as employees expected security regarding their jobs and promotions and in turn they gave their effort and commitment to the organisation. The instability of their jobs and lack of expected promotions affects their level of job security and decreases their commitment level (Kalyal et al., 2010; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006). Since there is now no guaranteed lifetime tenure, the surviving employees become vulnerable, anxious, uncertain, and insecure about their future within the organisations, which then gives rise the idea of seeking employment in other organisations (Grunberg et al., 2006; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006.)

Neves (2014) noted that the work environment post the restructuring process is filled with stress and uncertainty which negatively affects employees' perceptions of their job security and the team dynamics/ social networks are also negatively affected. Parks-Yancy (2011) argues that in addition to feeling insecure, the surviving employees also experience feelings of anger, which are exacerbated by the impact the restructuring process has on their career aspirations or career paths. Their careers are affected by the change in their current and future roles, the overall change in the organisations structure, and the loss of employees who provided career guidance and/ or career opportunities.

Whilst some researchers associate the rise of job insecurity with other factors that are associated with the restructuring process, Grunberg et al. (2006) argue that job insecurity may not necessarily be caused only by factors associated with the restructuring process, but rather by the employees' mere involvement in the process as the restructuring process by its very nature, is associated with feelings of pessimism, lower levels of job satisfaction and increased anxiety over one's security of their job and their financial future. They argue that that the restructuring process affects the surviving employees' emotional state, and the sheer proximity to the process and witnessing of co-workers losing their jobs, may increase feelings of uncertainty and cause a degree of uncertainty in one's own employment status.

Therefore, it can be said that all things being equal and fair, surviving employees would still experience a degree of job insecurity purely by having experienced the restructuring process; the restructuring process in itself causes job insecurity.

Gurnberg et al. (2006) and Levitt, Wilson and Gilligan (2008), raise another consideration, that feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, job insecurity, and a perceived lack of career growth within the organisation, are contributing factors to employees wanting to leave the organisation and seek a more secure and stable work environment where there is a possibility of career growth and learning. When the surviving employees feel insecure in their jobs and are at a stage of seeking new employment, the employees' motivation and commitment level towards the organisation is considered to be low (Boyd et al., 2014; Levitt et al, 2008). The restructuring process therefore lowers the surviving employees' commitment level towards the organisation and affects their level of job security, causing them to seek new employment, especially when they do not foresee the possibility of getting promoted or growing within the organisation.

The notion of a guaranteed lifetime tenure has been replaced by surviving employees having to manage their own careers and being concerned about the notion of lifetime employability (Carbery & Garavan, 2005; Gandolfi, 2008; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006). The notion of employability means that the employees are concerned about being able to diversify in their job, and if they have the necessary competencies, training and qualifications to enable them to be internally and externally employable in the labour market – that is, being able to get promoted and grow internally within the current organisation or being able to find new employment externally in other organisations (Carbery & Garavan, 2005; Gandolfi, 2008; Kalyal et al., 2010).

Employability can generate hope and optimism amongst employees and it is considered to moderate perceptions and feelings of stress and job insecurity. However, it does not prevent surviving employees from pursuing other jobs that offer career growth and learning, nor does it guarantee loyalty to the organisation (Kalyal et al., 2010; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006). The sense of employability of surviving employees is affected by their own competencies and qualifications, as well as any training offered by the organisation (Carbery & Garavan, 2005).

2.7.1 Training and Skills Development

Surviving employees have been found to be concerned about adjusting to the changes within the organisational structure and developing new skills and competencies to allow them to fulfil their new roles, thus taking up the process of learning new information and situation-specific skills to fulfil their duties. Yet, a stumbling block to this learning process has also been found where low levels of motivation are considered to undermine the learning process, even if the surviving employees have the ability to learn and comprehend the new information (Carbery & Garavan, 2005).

Carbery and Garavan (2005) also noted another issue that leaves the surviving employees in a conundrum; the surviving employees recognise gaps in their skills and knowledge required for the fulfilment of their new role and for their own career development or for increasing their employability. However, organisations cannot be relied upon to provide opportunities or training for self-development. Organisations cannot always provide the training required by employees for their new roles as a result of financial constraints associated with cost cutting and the focus on driving performance, or because of not considering the need for training and development of the surviving employees.

The lack of training results in the surviving employees realising that they are responsible for their own training and also having to rely on their own accumulated skills, knowledge and experience in order to survive and cope within new roles, thus not improving their employability (Gandolfi, 2008). In addition, feelings of insecurity and uncertainty are worsened when performance measures are predefined by the organisation, as per the role, not taking into account whether the surviving employee has been provided with the required training to enable them to adequately perform their duties (Carbery & Garavan, 2005).

Hanson (2015) and Dwyer and Arbelo (2011), highlight the importance of providing training and skills development opportunities to surviving employees; an organisation can mitigate and moderate the negative effects of the restructuring process to an extent where the surviving employees are more motivated and show enthusiasm towards their jobs, thus improving their morale, commitment, performance and productivity. However, the shortage of organisational training and skills development opportunities leaves managers in an unattractive position, where the responsibility to train and develop the skills and competencies of the surviving employees in order for them to cope in their new roles and structure, rests upon the manager. This results in additional stress on the manager and it lowers their level of motivation (Carbery & Caravan, 2005; Hanson, 2015).

In summation, the restructuring process affects the surviving employees' growth and development, leaving the employees feeling uncertain, anxious in the fulfilment of duties in their new roles, not committed to the organisational goals, and concerned about their employability, thus negatively affecting their performance and their level of job security.

2.7.2 Duration of the Restructuring Process

The duration of the restructuring process also has an impact on the surviving employees' feelings of job insecurity. Although they have survived and they have their jobs, the environment is still perceived as unstable by the employees when the restructuring process is long, thus affecting their emotions and behaviour, and prolonging their existing insecurities and feelings of uncertainty, job insecurity, anxiety and fear (Hart, Thomson & Huning, 2016; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006). These insecurities and feelings of uncertainty and fear have a negative effect on the surviving employees' motivation level, morale, enthusiasm towards their job, and their productivity (Levitt et al., 2008; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006).

Carter (2010) also maintains that restructuring processes that extend over a long period of time cause the surviving employees to experience high levels of stress, and adds that this can result in a condition of burnout. Once the surviving employees experience burnout, they tend to feel like they are unable to cope with the demands of the job, they feel hopeless and worried, have low morale, lack energy, withdraw from their work, and their job loses meaning. This affects their motivation, commitment, productivity and overall performance (Carter, 2010; Iverson & Zatzick, 2011). Grunberg et al. (2006), agree, stating that long restructuring processes cause feelings of job insecurity, uncertainty and stress which in turn causes the surviving employees to experience burnout, and as a consequence, their motivation levels, productivity and job performance are negatively affected.

2.8 Trust and Loyalty

In their attempt to define trust, Tzafirir and Eitam-Meilik (2005) explain trust as an aspect of human relationships which is built and fostered through positive mutual interaction and mutual benefit, where, in the context of a workplace, employees would reciprocate the trust shown unto them by their managers by continuously striving to improve their performance. The level of trust is not only affected by how the restructuring process was carried out but also by whether the surviving employees understand and accept the reasonability of the reason for the restructuring as provided by senior management and the executives (Kowske et al, 2010).

2.8.1 Factors that Break Trust During the Restructuring Process

When employees perceive that the restructuring process was not carried out in a just and fair manner, and there were no clear criteria on how the affected employees were selected, then feelings of mistrust and cynicism develop, followed by a reduction in the level of commitment and work performance (Boyd et al., 2014; Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Levitt et al., 2008; Luan, Tien & Chi, 2013; Monippally, 2003).

Trust and loyalty is negatively affected when the surviving employees feel that they have been used by the organisation in the sense that they served the organisation for a long time and they are being repaid by having to deal with the consequences of the restructuring process, causing a break in the psychological contract (Levitt, Wilson & Gilligan, 2008; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006).

There is evidence that immediate line managers' behaviour or the manner in which they handle the whole restructuring process may negatively affect the surviving employees'

level of trust in the manager and the organisation (Norman, Avolio & Luthans, 2010). In instances where the manager is found to exhibit a negative attitude towards the restructuring process, is not transparent in their communication, cannot justify their decision-making process or they are seen to make decisions using personal factors which are not related to work; all these factors create feelings of mistrust in the surviving employees (Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Norman et al., 2010). Since middle managers are at a management level, it needs to be determined how their level of trust will be affected and how they will adapt their manner in which they lead their teams as a result of the restructuring process.

Surviving employees who had high levels of trust in their managers and the organisation, were found to be devoted to the organisation and they wanted to see the organisation succeeding to a point that they were willing to do whatever was necessary in order to complete the task at hand, even working extra hours and sacrificing their family time, exhibiting great levels of commitment to the organisation (Levitt, Wilson & Gilligan, 2008). On the contrary, employees who did not trust their managers or the organisation were not willing to perform at their best, nor were they willing to sacrifice their time or go the extra mile for the organisations, consequently negatively affecting their performance, perception of the organisation, job satisfaction, motivation and commitment to the organisation (Levitt et al., 2008; Tzafrir & Eitam-Meilik, 2005). Once again, it needs to be determined what factors will affect middle managers' dedication and commitment to their work.

2.8.2 Factors that Build Trust During the Restructuring Process

It has been noted that there are factors that can negatively affect the surviving employees' trust towards the organisation. However, there are also steps that can be taken by organisations to mitigate or moderate the effects of the restructuring process on the employees' level of trust. Open and honest communication, clarity on the necessity of the restructuring process, transparency on current and future strategic plans, and the execution of the restructuring process in a fair manner; are some of the factors which can mitigate or moderate the negative effects of the restructuring process (Kowske et al., 2010; Lakshman et al., 2014; Levitt et al., 2008). By addressing these factors, it has been found that trust in the organisation is improved, thus positively affecting employees' commitment to the organisation and their level of job satisfaction (Kowske et al., 2010).

Trust has been found to positively affect employee performance even during a restructuring process where the surviving employees strive to improve their performance. Furthermore, it is considered important to build trust as it has been identified as a critical element in improving the morale and productivity of the surviving employees who are experiencing a lot of uncertainty and insecurity (Tzafrif & Eitam-Meilik, 2005). Therefore, it is important for organisations to minimise factors that create or increase feelings of mistrust in surviving employees, as the lack of trust affects their motivation, morale, commitment, perception of the organisation and their performance. Middle managers are in a position where their actions affect the level of trust exhibited by their subordinates, however, the factors that affect their level of trust have not been fully explored.

2.9 Implementing the Restructuring Process and the Loss of Skilled Employees

It has been noted that there is limited research on the topic of implementers, to an extent that Ashman (2015) noted that only “four directly relevant studies have been found” (p. 112) on this topic, and that other studies do not have this topic as a main study, leading to the suggestion that this should be an area of focus (Ashman, 2015; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011). Implementers are employees or consultants who are responsible for the decisions concerning the restructuring process; the planning, implementation and evaluation of the restructuring process (Gandolfi, 2007; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011). The existing literature on implementers focuses on executives, senior managers and human resources practitioners. It does not specifically focus on surviving middle managers, therefore supporting the need to consider how surviving middle managers are affected by the process (Ashman, 2015; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006).

Noronha and D’Cruz (2006), uncovered that implementers found themselves in the dilemma of being part of “a necessary evil” (p. 96), where they had to implement the restructuring process for the economic survival of the organisation whilst causing a disturbance in the organisation and the lives of employees which they have a relationship with (Ashman, 2015; Clair, Ladge & Cotton, 2016; Clair, et al., 2006; Grunberg, 2006; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006; Walker, 2015). Implementers feel like they are bearers of bad news and they find actual process of retrenching to be difficult, leaving them feeling emotional, and physically sick, as such they wanted to avoid having to inform employees of the bad news (Ashman, 2015; Clair et al., 2016; Clair, et. al., 2006). They also find the process to be uncomfortable, unpleasant and

emotional to both themselves and those who get retrenched (Ashman, 2015; Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2005).

Implementers also have to cope with the behaviour of the retrenched employees, such as being tearful, angry, frustrated, in shock, and in some rare cases being joyful; but also receiving threats and abuses (Clair et al., 2006; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2005). As such they may find it necessary to rationalise, compartmentalise, withdraw, de-personalise, and disengage in order to cope with what is transpiring in the organisation to ensure that it does not affect their work performance and personal life (Clair et al., 2006; Grunberg et al., 2006; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2005). Yet it has been found that the effectiveness and performance of the implementers is negatively affected by the process (Clair et al. 2016; Clair et al., 2006; and Noronha & D’Cruz, 2005).

Implementers also tend to exhibit a great propensity to leave the organisation in order to escape the discomfort, stress, and the negative emotions associated with terminating employees (Clair et al., 2006; Grunberg et al., 2006). The process may also cause implementers to feel uncertain and anxious about the decisions they have made, when considering the impact on the organisation and the employees lives, resulting in feelings of guilt, distress, discomfort, and anguish for bringing devastation to their employees (Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006; and Noronha & D’Cruz, 2005).

It was further observed that implementers are likely to experience stress, emotional exhaustion, and burnout from executing the restructuring process, especially if they do not agree with the process, or they are not entirely convinced of the justification for the need to institute the process, or they are not certain that all other options were thoroughly explored and implemented before instituting the restructuring process (Clair et al., 2006; Grunberg et al., 2006). The implementers also struggled with accepting the process if they felt that they were not included in selecting the employees to be retrenched and/ or that the incorrect employees retrenched (Clair et. al., 2006). It is likely that they will struggle in accepting that the correct employees were retrenched if they observed inconsistencies in the selection criteria used for those who were retrenched (Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011).

In their consideration of how restructuring terminations are decided upon, Dwyer and Arbelo (2011) observed that the people responsible for implementing the process find the decision-making process to be complex, chaotic and confusing, and as such termination decisions are not always made based on employees’ performance,

experience, and competencies. They tend to be based on stereotypes, personal characteristics, and cognitive biases (Clair et al., 2006). The lack of a consistent, reliable selection criteria and the use of personal characteristics and biases to make decisions on which employees are terminated, causes both the surviving and terminated employees to be sceptical, lose trust in the organisation, change their perception of the organisation, and lower their commitment levels (Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Uen et al., 2016).

There are, however, implementers who experience dissimilar feelings and do not find the process of informing employees that they have been retrenched, stressful, taxing or emotional (Claire et al., 2006; Grunberg et al., 2006). Some implementers become dispassionate, unflustered and resilient, not allowing the process of retrenching employees to inflict stress upon their lives. As a result, they are able to quickly resume their duties and behave as though nothing ever happened (Claire et al., 2006; Grunberg, et al., 2006).

Chapter 3: Research Questions

In order to explore and understand how surviving middle managers are affected by restructuring process, the study will be centred on the following four research questions:

Research Question 1

What impact does a restructuring process have on the surviving middle managers' frame of mind as well as their role as managers?

The purpose of the question is to explore and understand how the surviving middle manager's frame of mind is affected by the restructuring process, in essence, how does the restructuring process affect the thoughts, attitude, behaviour, and feelings of the surviving middle managers. Furthermore, this question aims to understand how their role as managers is generally affected by the restructuring process.

By understanding how the thoughts, attitude, behaviour, and feelings emotions of the surviving middle managers are affected, it may be possible to establish whether their trust, commitment, and perception of the organisation, amongst others, are affected by the restructuring process

Research Question 2

How does the restructuring process affect the surviving middle managers' perceptions, and attitudes towards their work?

The purpose of this question is to discover whether the different stages of the restructuring process affect and/ or alter the surviving managers' manner in which they view their job, how they feel about their job and their overall attitude toward their work.

In discovering whether the surviving middle managers' perception and attitude towards their work was affected and altered, it may be possible to understand how the restructuring process affects their commitment to their work.

Research Question 3

How does the restructuring process affect the surviving middle managers leading of their teams?

The purpose of this question was to discover whether the surviving middle managers have to adapt and vary the manner in which they manage, lead, and interact with their teams or subordinates throughout the different stages of the restructuring process.

In discovering how the surviving middle managers manage and lead their teams during the restructuring process, it may be possible to determine how they help their teams cope and come to terms with the restructuring process whilst maintaining an acceptable level of productivity.

Research Question 4

How does a restructuring process affect the surviving middle managers' perceptions of the organisation and the security of their job within the organisation?

The purpose of this question is to discover whether the surviving middle managers' feelings, thoughts, and attitude towards the organisation change through the different stages of the restructuring process. Furthermore, this question aims to discover whether the surviving managers' perception of the security of their role and job is altered throughout the process.

In discovering how the surviving middle manager's perceptions of the organisation, and their security within the organisation are affected, it may be possible to establish what influences their perception towards the organisation and their job.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Design

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the research methodology used in this study. The literature reviewed established that the effects of the restructuring process on surviving middle managers have not been fully explored. For that reason, the research questions are exploratory in nature. A qualitative research design was selected in order to gain a deeper understanding of how surviving middle managers are affected by a restructuring process. The research methodology, sampling techniques and data collection techniques as well as the analysis procedures adopted support the qualitative nature of the study.

4.2 Research Methodology and Design

The use of exploratory research is well suited for when the research problem requires exploration and where the researcher purposes to discover new information about a topic or a new phenomenon that is not clearly understood (Creswell, 2013; Saunders & Lewis, 2012). It is also useful when little research has been conducted on a specific population. The researcher then aims engage with the participants and listen to their experience and build an understanding of the topic based on what is heard (Creswell, 2013).

Vaughn and Tuner (2016) describe people as complex beings, thus in order to gain a deeper understanding and to better capture the complexity of the people and data being studied, it is recommended that a researcher should follow qualitative research methods. It has been found that exploratory research is ideal for qualitative methods, such as conducting interviews, which allow the participants to narrate their experiences. It provides for a richness of data through the use of thick descriptions, thus adding an element of credibility to the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

The purpose of the research was to explore and understand how a restructuring process affects the surviving middle managers; what caused the surviving middle managers to experience or exhibit the negative and/ or positive effects associated with the restructuring; and what could have been done to moderate the negative effects associated with the restructuring process. As the purpose of the study was not to

determine what kind of people and how many of them share a certain characteristic, but rather to gain insight into the thoughts, perceptions, experiences, and assumptions held by those with a specific characteristic, an exploratory method was deemed suitable for this study (McCracken, 1988).

The data was collected from surviving middle managers who worked for organisations which were listed on the JSE top 40 index. The study was conducted at one short period of time and as such, the study is considered to be cross-sectional in nature (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

Having used prior research theory to guide the completion of the research instrument and to give direction for the collection of data, it can be said that a deduction approach was followed (Perry, 2001). However, since the purpose of the research was to discover new insights and new assumptions, an inductive approach was also followed. Therefore, the researcher ended up following a combination of the exploratory and confirmatory approach. Creswell (2013) and Perry (2001) advocate for a combination of the exploratory and confirmatory approaches to be followed where there is the building of theories whilst incorporating existing theories into the research. They believe that following only one approach may prevent the researcher from benefiting from prior research or developing new theory. Creswell (2013) goes on further to suggest that following both approaches allows the researcher to apply complex reasoning to the topic being studied.

4.3 Population

The population for the study was all surviving middle managers within organisations listed on the JSE Top 40 index which have undergone a restructuring process. The study focused on large sized publicly listed organisations as Cascio (2002) observed that such organisations tend to have restructuring plans that affect all levels of employees, including managers and executives. Furthermore, the restructuring process must have occurred within the period from 2013 to 2016.

4.4 Sampling

4.4.1 Sampling Method

The sampling technique used for the study was a combination of non-probability sampling techniques, being judgemental, quota and snowball sampling. These methods are suited for small samples that are not statistically representative of the

population, and they allow the researcher to use their judgement to determine and select a sample that will best be able to help answer the research question and meet the research objectives (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The use of snowball sampling enabled the researcher to gain access to middle managers who had survived a restructuring process. People who were known to the researcher and worked in organisations that had undergone a restructuring process were asked to provide references to colleagues who may be interested and willing to participate in the study.

Given the need to maintain the anonymity of participants and the organisations they work for, it was agreed that all participants and organisation names would be kept confidential. Therefore, pseudonyms have been used where all organisations have been represented by the use of letters of the alphabet, whilst the participants have been referred to as, for example, Participant 1.

4.4.2 Unit of Analysis

The unit analysis was the personal experiences and the perceptions of middle managers who have survived a restructuring process. Through the exploration of the surviving middle managers' experience and their perception of the restructuring process, the researcher was able determine how the surviving middle managers were affected by the restructuring process and how they managed challenges that arose as a result of the restructuring process.

4.4.3 Sample Size

In his study of what other researchers consider as acceptable sample sizes for a qualitative study, Mason (2010) noted that a general sample size of 20 was used, as it was found that little new information is gathered once 20 interviews have been conducted. However, only 17 surviving middle managers were interviewed as a result of unavailability and unwillingness to participate in the study, with some managers citing the reasons given below:

- They found the topic too personal and emotional;
- They were not comfortable discussing what occurred during the process or how they were affected because they felt that they would be ruining the reputation of their organisation; and

- They were concerned that someone within the organisation would find out that they were discussing restructuring matters and it may affect their future growth in the organisation.

4.4.4 Sample Consideration

The sample was made up of middle managers from four organisations which are listed on the JSE top 40 index. The focus was on their roles and responsibilities rather than their job titles. The participants were spread across the four organisations and across different locations within the same organisation. Furthermore, the sample included participants which were in support roles within the organisations, such as finance and supply chain, and others who were in operations or production. The role and location of the participants at the commencement of the restructuring process, are detailed in Table 1. A number of participants have since changed roles and locations as a result of the restructuring process. Further details on the sample are provided in Chapter 5 and Appendix 1.

Table 1: The Role and Location of Participants at Commencement of the Restructuring Process

Participant	Area of Specialisation	Location of Employment
Participant 1	Audit	Gauteng
Participant 2	Forensics	Gauteng
Participant 3	Legal services	Gauteng
Participant 4	IT Governance	Gauteng
Participant 5	Mining operations	Mpumalanga
Participant 6	BU Manager/ HOD	Mpumalanga
Participant 7	Stakeholder engagement/ Strategy	Gauteng
Participant 8	Technical services	Mpumalanga
Participant 9	Human Resources	Gauteng
Participant 10	Supply Chain	Gauteng
Participant 11	Audit/ Forensics	Freestate
Participant 12	Operations	Mpumalanga
Participant 13	Operations	Mpumalanga
Participant 14	Operations	Mpumalanga
Participant 15	Technology	Mpumalanga
Participant 16	Procurement	Mpumalanga
Participant 17	BU Manager/ HOD	Limpopo

Middle management is the level of management that is responsible for executing and turning strategies and tactical plans from top management into daily activities for their departments (Emam, Isfahani, Hosseini & Kordnaeij, 2016). In determining the manager's suitability for the study, the focus was on the managers' roles and responsibilities rather than on their job titles. The Patterson job grading system was used as a guideline (see Table 2), with the appropriate level of management being identified as band C, the middle manager band, consisting of employees who make interpretive decisions and tend to be department managers (Paterson & Husband, 1970).

Table 2: The Patterson Job Grading System (Paterson & Husband, 1970, p. 23)

Band	Decision	Title	Grade	Decision	Title
E	Policy – making	Top management	10	Co-ordinating	Managing Director
			9	Policy	Director
D	Programming	Senior Manager	8	Co-ordinating	General Manager
			7	Programming	Works Manager
C	Interpreting	Middle Manager	6	Co-ordinating	Department Manager
			5	Interpreting	Section Superintendent
B	Routine	Skilled Operator	4	Co-ordinating	Junior Manager
			3	On Process	Craftsman
A	Automatic	Semi-skilled Operator	2	Co-ordinating	Charge hand
			1	On Operation	Machinist
O	Defined	Unskilled	0	On Element	Labourer

Literature suggests that there is a shortage of academic research and empirical evidence on how middle managers are affected by restructuring processes, and how they in turn may influence their subordinates' behaviour and performance. Literature also highlights that their position is unique and ideal, in that it allows them to have an understanding of the operational and strategic levels of the organisations whilst being ideally positioned within the organisation to make a difference and become change agents (Farrell, 2014). Conducting a study on middle managers was deemed appropriate as it could add to the existing body of research, and offer business insight into how middle managers are affected by the restructuring process, and how this may affect the performance of the organisation.

Senior management were excluded from the study as they have a different level responsibility in the implementation of the restructuring process. They are responsible for articulating the strategy (Dewitt et al., 2003; Kowske et al., 2010). As a result, their

reaction to the restructuring may be different to middle management's reaction to the process as they are responsible for the execution of the restructuring plan (Dewitt et al., 2003).

4.5 Data Collection Tool

Creswell (2013) and McCracken (1988) consider the use of an interview guideline in a qualitative study, as an indispensable tool for the interviews, thus an interview guideline was used as the research instrument. Saunders and Lewis (2012), and McCracken (1988) also supports the use of a questionnaire in in- depth interviews as it allows for the researcher to cover the same questions with each respondent and these questions can also act as prompts for discussion. Furthermore, McCracken (1988) states that the interview guideline establishes the scope and direction for the interview, and it also allows the interviewer to focus on the actual interview and the responses received, rather than on having to recall all questions which should be asked. The researcher is also considered a key instrument in the data collection process as they are able to collect data through observing behaviour and conducting the actual interviews (Creswell, 2013).

Although an interview guideline was used, it did not lessen the use of open ended questions which enable the respondents to give variable, unstructured responses. The guideline merely ensured that the overall structure and objectives of the interview were maintained and met (McCracken, 1988). The interview guideline contained a set of predetermined questions; however, as semi-structured, in-depth interviews were performed, there were questions which were unique to each respondent being interviewed, giving them an opportunity to narrate their story in a manner that they were comfortable with, thus enabling them to tell their story in their own way (McCracken, 1988).

McCracken (1988) suggests that the interview guideline should be constructed and developed once existing literature on the subject matter has been reviewed. This is to aid the researcher in determining the scope, objectives and themes of the interview. It also aids the researcher in understanding the factors that may drive the participants' answers. This was the approach followed by the researcher in developing the interview guideline. The questions on the interview guideline were developed in accordance with existing literature on the subject matter so as to ensure that the key research objectives were addressed during the interviews.

The interview guideline was evaluated for content validity, which was to ensure that it provided adequate data in order to answer the research questions and meet the research objectives (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The questions on the interview guideline were mapped against the research questions to ensure consistency between the literature reviewed, the research questions, and the actual interview questions that were used in the interview guideline. The mapping of the interview questions and research questions is detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: Research Questions and Interview Questions Mapping

Research Questions		Interview Guideline Questions	
RQ1	What impact does a restructuring process have on the surviving middle managers' frame of mind as well as their role as managers?	IQ 1 IQ 2	What are your overall thoughts on how the restructuring process was carried out? How did this affect you and how did it make you feel?
RQ2	How does the restructuring process affect the surviving middle managers' perception, and attitude towards their work?	IQ 3a, 4a, 5a IQ 3b, 4b, 5b	How did you generally feel about your job before, during, and after the restructuring process? How would you describe attitude towards your job before, during, and after the restructuring process
RQ3	How does the restructuring process affect the surviving middle managers leading of their teams?	IQ 3c, 4c, 5c	How would you characterise/ describe your behaviour as a leader (towards your team) before, during, and after the restructuring process?
RQ4	How does a restructuring process affect the surviving middle managers' perception of the organisation and the security of their job within the organisation?	IQ 3d, 4d, 5d IQ 3e, 4e, 5e	What were your feelings and attitude towards the organisation before, during, and after the restructuring process? How did you feel about the security of your role/ job within the organisation before, during, and after the restructuring process?

Further to this, Saunders and Lewis (2012) suggest that it is good practice to review the interview guideline after each interview and where necessary, adapt the questions based on the outcomes of the previous interview. This suggestion resulted in one additional question being added to the research guideline after the fourth interview. Prior to this fourth interview, the question was asked at the end of the interview, as a general question. The interview guide was then reviewed, aligned with literature and the question became part of the standard questions. The final version of the interview guideline has been included in the Appendices.

4.6 Pilot Interviews

Two pilot interviews were conducted prior to commencing with the research fieldwork with middle managers from different organisations, who had survived the restructuring process. The purpose of the pilot interviews was for the researcher to review and develop the interview guideline to ensure that key themes were addressed, whilst also identifying challenges, limitations and improvements that needed to be made regarding the interview process (Creswell, 2013; Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The pilot interviews were conducted in the same manner as the actual interviews. The interviews were recorded and detailed notes were taken. Feedback received from the interviews resulted in changes being made to the research guideline in order to get a better quality of responses from the respondents.

4.7 Data Collection

It has been established that the study followed an exploratory research method. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were identified as the appropriate means of data collection for the research, as the researcher aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the participants experiences and their perceptions of the restructuring. Semi-structured, in-depth, face to face interviews, are appropriate for when one is unsure of the participants' answers, and they also allow the researcher to ask complex questions and explore the research objectives in-depth (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). They also allow the participants to freely express themselves, share insight on the questions raised and address any other topic that may be part of their experience and relevant to the study (Vaughn & Turner, 2016).

Through semi-structured interviews, the researcher is able to omit certain questions if they are found to be irrelevant to the participant, thus allowing for the exploration of topics raised by participants which may not have been identified through literature (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Conversely, by conducting semi-structured interviews, the researcher is able to ask the questions on topics which were identified in literature but had not come up during the interview. The researcher was able to control the direction of the interview, where necessary.

McCracken (1988) highlights the importance of creating an atmosphere where the participants feel safe and comfortable to share their experience. As a result, the interviews were conducted in locations selected by the participants. However, there were two interviews which were conducted telephonically due to the limited availability of the participants. During the data collection process, the researcher endeavoured to

create an environment in which participants were able to openly share their stories related to the research. The face-to-face interview process further provided the researcher with an opportunity to observe participants' emotional state and body language, amongst others, when sharing their experiences.

Considering the personal and exploratory nature of the study, it was essential for the researcher to establish a rapport of trust and respect with all participants (Creswell, 2013; McCracken, 1988). In order to put the participants at ease and establish a level of trust, the researcher started by explaining the purpose of the study and informing them that she had gone through a similar experience of surviving a restructuring process, without going into the details of the restructuring process. The researcher observed that after informing the participants that she had survived a restructuring process, they were more at ease as they felt like they were communicating with someone who empathised and understood the process.

The interviews were made up of introductory questions and five open ended questions which aimed to explore the middle managers' experiences and perceptions of the restructuring process. Each of the interviews lasted approximately one hour and consisted primarily of open-ended questions, with prompts allowing for the exploration of additional issues being raised by the participants.

The interviews were voice recorded and transcribed for a detailed analysis. The recordings from the interviews were word processed and transcribed, this together with the hand-written interview notes and the voice-recordings formed the data that was analysed (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.8 Data Analysis

4.8.1 Data Analysis Tool

The research data arising from the interview transcripts were analysed through the use of a computer – aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), ATLAS.ti. The program enabled the researcher to organise the research data, including the transcripts, along with the coding and findings into a project (Creswell, 2013).

4.8.2 Interview Transcript Preparation

The interviews were transcribed into a format that could be used on ATLAS.ti. The first four interviews were transcribed by the researcher and the remaining 13 were

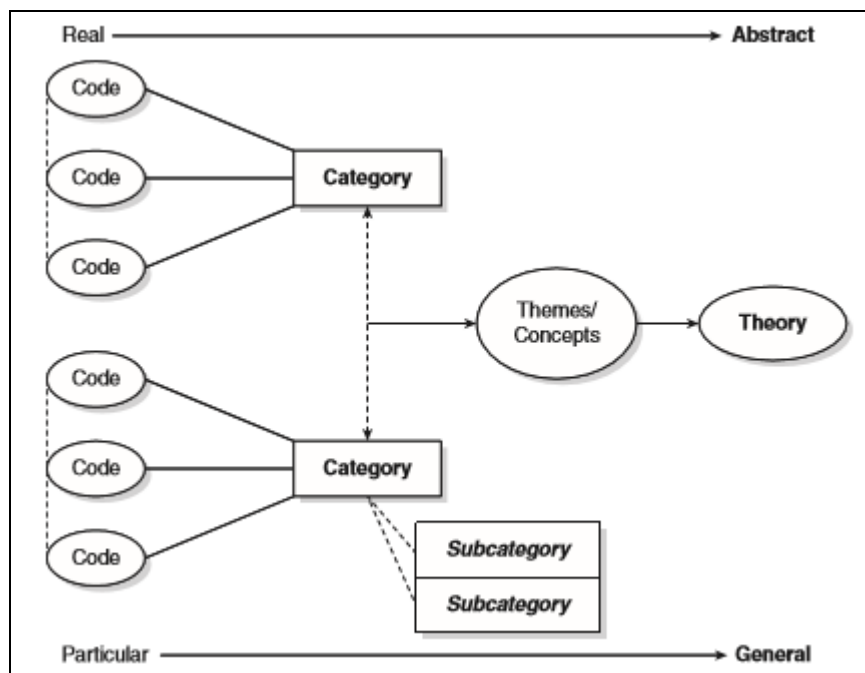
submitted to a transcription service. The received transcripts were compared, to audit interviews and ensure the completeness and accuracy of the transcripts. The transcripts were formatted in the same consistent manner for the use of ATLAS.ti (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

The participants' identity and the organisations they work for have been anonymised and no information that can directly be linked to the participant or a specific organisation, has been provided.

4.8.3 Method of Analysis

The researcher followed a thematic analysis approach in analysing the data, thus generating codes, building themes, identify trends, mapping relationships and developing strategies for identifying the information, that is useful to the study and in answering the research questions (Vaughn & Turner, 2016). The use of coding enabled the researcher to organise and group similar data into codes and categories, thus the formation of themes, the creation of patterns and maps (Saldana, 2012). Through this process of coding and building categories and themes, data forms meaning and it is then able to address the research questions and build solid research theory. The process used by the researcher of building codes, categories, themes and ultimately theory, is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Codes to theory model (Saldana, 2012, p. 12)



Perry (2001) states that the foundation of exploratory research is existing literature and it serves a purpose of providing a focus for the data collection phase. As a result, the interview guideline and the initial codes, was structured on the literature that was reviewed by the researcher. Perry (2001) expands on the method of coding by suggesting that further codes should be developed from the analysis of the interviews; researchers should use a mixed method of deduction and induction which is useful for exploratory research considering that the “process of ongoing theory advancement requires continuous interplay between the two” (Perry,2010, p. 310). This mixed approach allowed the researcher to benefit from existing theory and also develop new theories from the interview data, suggesting that the researcher thought deductively and inductively, and thus applied complex reasoning skills to the process (Creswell, 2013; Perry, 2001).

In following Perry’s mixed method approach, the researcher built initial codes deductively from the reviewed literature and further codes were developed inductively from the analysis of the transcripts.

4.9 Data Validity and Reliability

The validity of research is concerned about whether the methods used for data collection and analysis worked in the intended manner and that the findings are really about what they appear to be about (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). For research to be deemed reliable it should produce consistent findings and results which should be able to be replicated, and those interpreting the data should come to the same conclusions as the researcher (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

In order to address issues of validity or trustworthiness and reliability, Petty, Thomson and Stew (2012) suggest that four elements should be addressed. In essence, the data should be transferable, credible, dependable, and it should conform. Each of these elements will be addressed below.

4.9.1 Conformability

This addresses the issue of how the findings reflect the research issue and not the researcher’s bias which may be influenced by the researchers experience and subjectivity, thus affecting the interpretation of the data (Petty et al., 2012). In order to manage conformability, the data analysis was independently reviewed by the academic supervisor appointed to this study, thus reducing researcher bias. Considering the researchers own experience regarding the topic, which may affect the researcher’s

bias, an audit trail exists, clearly indicating the interpretations, implications and conclusions reached.

4.9.2 Dependability

An audit trail of the procedures and processes carried out by the researcher allows for a similar judgement to be reached by an independent person reviewing the study (Petty et al., 2012). An audit trail detailing the processes and procedures followed, was maintained by the researcher and the research transcripts were retained by the researcher.

4.9.3 Credibility

In order to build credibility there should be different perspectives to check interpretations. The coherence of the findings should be tested, there should be an identification of contradictions, and a consideration of alternatives, explanations and interpretation of data (Petty et al., 2012). The academic supervisor offered a different perspective and tested the validity of the findings through the review of the process followed, interpretation of the data and the findings. The coherence of the findings were tested through discussions with the academic supervisor, whilst focusing on possible contradictions and consideration of alternative and competing explanations.

4.9.4 Transferability

A qualitative study holds the assumption that the findings are specific to the context and phenomenon being studied. As a result, the aim is not to generalise the findings. Instead the aim is to reach analytical or theoretical generalisation by providing detailed, descriptive data on the phenomenon being studied so as to enable others to determine the degree to which the findings may be applied to their own environment (Petty et al., 2012). In order for the study to reach analytical or theoretical generalisation, detailed descriptive data was collated and the processes followed were documented by the researcher. The academic supervisor also monitored the process followed and reviewed the data.

4.10 Research Limitations

This study offers insight into understanding the experiences and perceptions of middle managers who had survived a restructuring process. There are some limitations in the

research methodology which may hinder the analytical or theoretical generalisation of the findings. Possible limitations include:

- As exploratory research has an element of subjectivity and is influenced by the perspective of the researcher, there may be some bias from the researcher which may influence the interpretation of the research findings.
- The interviewer was not expertly trained in interviewing. The style of interviewing and biases could affect the results of the collected data as the researcher was a research instrument.
- The population is limited to middle managers within large organisations. This may affect the ability to generalise the results, as managers in mid-sized or smaller organisations may not respond in a similar manner as a result of the organisational culture and external environmental factors.
- The use of snowball sampling resulted in a number of the participants being from one organisation. Although the participants were from different departments and different locations, they may have shared a similar experience due to the culture of the organisation and the restructuring process being carried out in a similar manner, thus affecting their perception of the restructuring process.

Chapter 5: Results

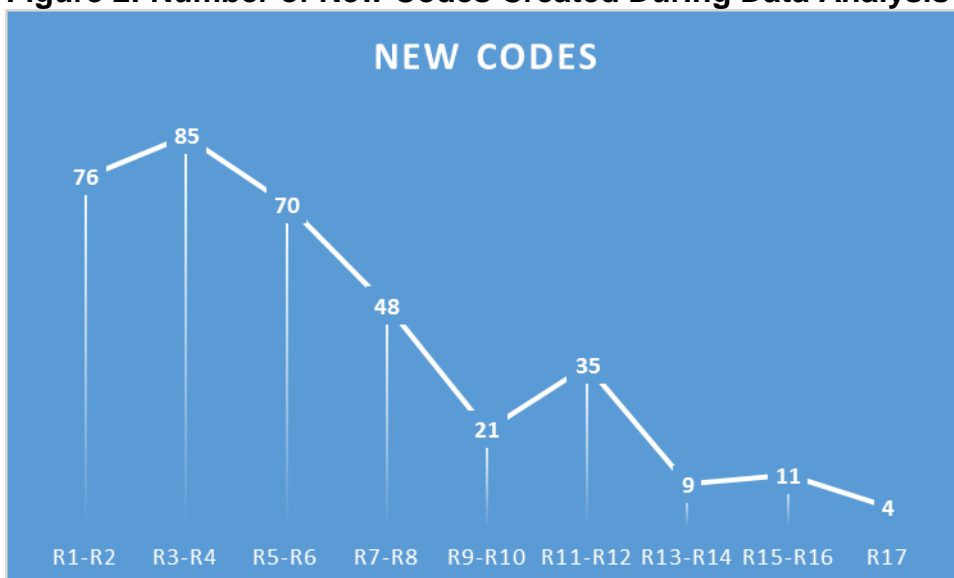
5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a description of the participants and the steps followed by the researcher to review and analyse the data collected. It is then followed by a discussion of the findings of the qualitative research conducted through in-depth interviews with 17 participants who survived a restructuring process. The interview questions used in conducting the interviews were mapped against the research questions from Chapter 3 to ensure consistency, with the research questions being developed inductively based on the literature review. Some additional research data was also identified inductively during the coding and analysis of the interview transcripts.

5.2 Brief Discussion of the Participants and the Interview Method

A total of 17 interviews were conducted with participants who survived a restructuring process within their organisation and who were still employed by their respective organisations at the time of the interview. Although only 17 interviews were conducted, it was noted that by the end of the twelfth interview, nothing substantially new was emerging in regards to the coding process, where interview 13 and 14 only had 9 granular codes (See Figure 2), hence the data was considered to have reached its saturation (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006).

Figure 2: Number of New Codes Created During Data Analysis



A combination of purposive quota sampling and snowball sampling was used to obtain the sample. All the participants were selected based on their experiences of having experienced and survived a restructuring in their organisation and were still in the same organisation, thus fulfilling the purposive quota. Five of the participants were also convenient in that they were known to the researcher prior to conducting the interviews. The remaining 12 participants were obtained through snowballing (referral). Snowball sampling has a limitation in that the sample may exhibit similar behavioural traits and share similar experiences and opinions (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). However, from the interviews and review of the transcripts, it was noted that the participants had differing opinions, thoughts and experiences of the restructuring process. From what the researcher observed, the participants' relationship or proximity to each other did not result in them giving similar answers or exhibiting similar behaviours. They each had their own thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and perceptions regarding the restructuring process.

5.2.1 Details of the Interviewed Participants

The participants worked for three organisations which were listed on the JSE top 40 index and which operated in different locations. The sample of organisations was limited to the resources and manufacturing sectors only. Other sectors such as telecoms, banking, and properties, were purposefully excluded. The participants worked in nine different towns across 4 provinces; Freestate, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, and Limpopo. The majority of interviews were conducted within the various towns, with the researcher meeting the participants at their preferred venue to conduct the interview. There was an exception of two interviews which were conducted telephonically due to the limited availability of the participants. The participants' designations were spread across different functions within the organisation, within head office and operations.

The interview guideline detailed in Appendix 2 was used by the researcher to guide and prompt the participants during the interviews. The interview guide included introductory questions which were used to establish the scene and put the restructuring process into context in terms of the period of the restructuring, the participants' role within the process and their scope of management.

From the introductory question, it was established that restructuring processes for the different organisations were announced at different times. The organisation with the

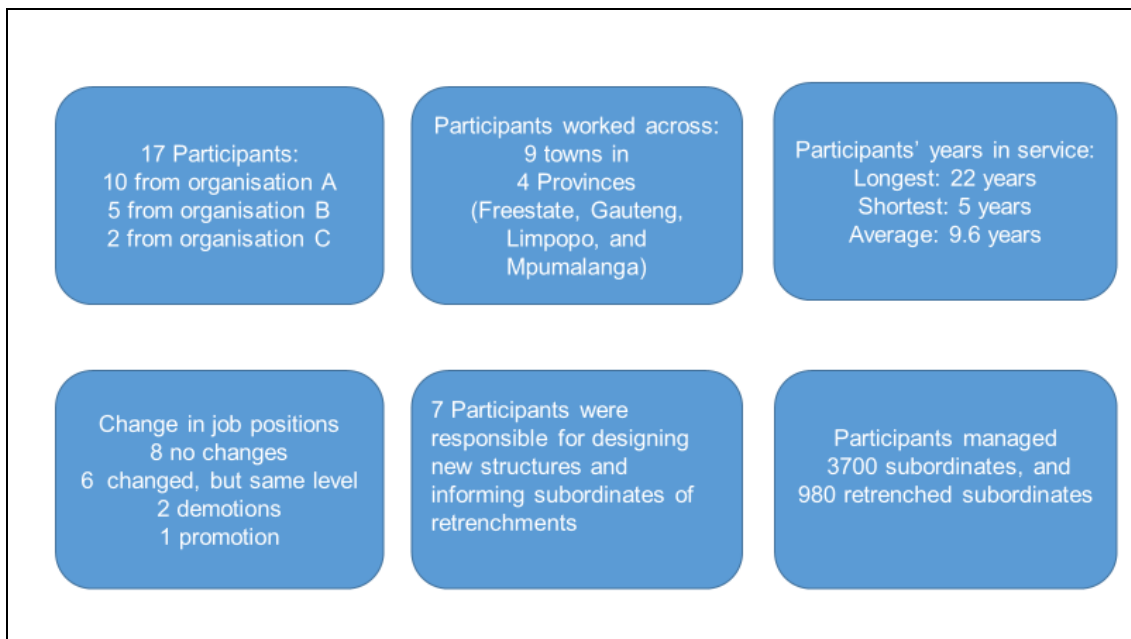
earliest restructuring process commenced restructuring in 2013 and this was finalised in 2015, while the rest commenced at different times between 2013 and 2016.

As some managers who were interviewed, were uncertain of the exact number of employees within the lower ranks of the organisation under their direct reports, it was estimated that the scope of control for the managers was approximately 3700 employees. This implies that the sampled managers were responsible for 3700 people who were affected by the restructuring process. It was also estimated that approximately 980 people were retrenched from these 3700 employees. Once again, the managers were uncertain of the exact number of people who were retrenched within the lower ranks. One participant however, indicated that they were responsible for designing a new structure that resulted in the restructuring of over 700 people.

Although some of the participants revealed that their positions or roles were not changed through the restructuring process, some others indicated that they were allocated new job positions at the same managerial level, and others could not retain their positions and were demoted to junior levels.

Appendix 1 provides more details on the participants and Figure 4 provides a high-level summary of the participants' details.

Figure 3: Summary of Participant Details



5.2.2 Interview and Transcribing Process

The interviews were conducted over a period of three weeks with four interviews lasting over an hour. The longest interview took 69 minutes and the average interview time was 48 minutes. The interviews were audio recorded and the recordings were backed up onto a cloud account. The first four interview recordings were transcribed by the researcher and the remaining 13 recordings were transcribed by a professional transcriber. The transcripts from the professional transcriber were read and checked against the audio recordings to ensure accuracy and completeness of the transcripts. Errors were corrected and inaudible or indecipherable sections, due to the use of a different language, were updated after listening to the audio and determining what was being said by the participant or the interviewer. Once the comparison between the audio and transcripts was completed, the transcripts were uploaded onto Atlas.ti for analysis.

During the first four interviews, the researcher asked a question on job security which was not initially part of the interview guideline. Subsequently, after reviewing the first four interview notes and literature, this question was included in the interview guideline. Since the interviews were semi-structured interviews, not all the questions were asked in the same order as documented on the interview guideline. Instead, the structure of the interview questions varied according to the participant's answers and the flow of the conversation.

As recommended by Creswell (2013), an initial, basic coding table was developed based on the review of theory and then the codes were allowed to develop and change as additional information was discovered during the analysis process. The coding of the transcripts was initially done at a granular level, using the coding table. New codes arising from the transcripts, were added, in an attempt not to cluster everything under a few codes and then losing the essence of the message. There were instances where the same phrase applied to multiple codes. Topics with a positive and a negative side to them were coded differently to ensure that the true essence of the participants' responses was retained.

Once all the transcripts were coded, there were 375 individual, granular codes. These codes were then grouped according to the different interview questions they related to. Within each group of codes, the codes which had a similar meaning or which were related to each other, were merged together to create the super codes or constructs. These constructs have been used in the analysis and reporting of the findings.

Constructs with a “ \square ” next to them emerged from single codes meaning that they were not merged with any other codes.

5.2.3 Understanding the Development of the Constructs

During the interviews the participants were asked for their thoughts feelings on the same question across the different stages of the restructuring process. As a result, it was important for the researcher to code within the context of the question being asked and as such it produced a long code list. The final code list consisted of 144 codes or constructs.

Each construct was analysed with both a frequency and a frequency of mention next to it. The frequency relates to the number of participants which mentioned a code, regardless of the number of times the participants mentioned that specific code. Therefore, even if a participant mentioned the code more than once, it was still counted as a frequency of one. This was done to identify how many of the participants discussed a particular code. On the other hand, the frequency of mention refers to the number of times a code was mentioned or implied. This was not a pure word count, as a phrase implying the code but not using the exact words of the code, was also counted as a mention. This provided an indication of the importance to the participants of this code. When analysing the data therefore, both the frequency and the frequency of mention for each of the codes were considered.

5.2.4 The use of the Words, Restructuring and Restructuring

As mentioned in Chapter 1, there is a distinction between a restructuring process and a restructuring. A restructuring process is focused on restructuring the business and its operations and as a consequence of such, it may result in the loss of human capital. A restructuring process however, is focused on reducing human capital and results in the restructuring of employees. Although there is a distinction between the two processes, and some participants were aware of that distinction, it should be noted that when reading the participants responses, these words were used interchangeably. Participant 2 said, *“Remember this was not a restructuring process per se, it was a restructuring process which consequently resulted in the offering of restructuring packages. The objective was not to retrench people, it was to re-evaluate the company’s sustainability in the ‘then’ economic climate and then predictions and forecast”*.

5.2.5 Issue Identified from the Introductory Questions

The purpose of the introductory questions was for the researcher to gain a brief understanding of the restructuring process and the participants' level of involvement in the restructuring process in order to establish context and understand the participant's involvement in the restructuring. The introductory questions were not intended to produce any findings regarding the restructuring process, however, it was found that the participants shared insight on their thoughts, feelings and frustrations, regarding how the new structure was set up, especially within their area of management.

The specific introductory question that provided insight into the participants' thoughts and frustrations regarding the setting up of the structure was:

What was your role in the restructuring process?

Three constructs emerged from the coding of the responses relating to what the participants role was in the restructuring process, they expressed their thoughts and feelings on setting up of the new structure, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Role Played in the Restructuring Process

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Senior managers and executives did not fully understand the new structure and middle managers were forced to accept it	13	16
2	Managers felt that they had had adequate input and decision making on the new structure	7	8
3	Managers felt that they had limited input and decision making on the new structure	6	9

5.2.5.1 Issues with the Process of Designing a New Departmental Structure

As can be seen from the first construct in Table 4, the participants believed that the senior managers made assumptions and decisions on the new structure without an overall view of the workings of the departments, and how the departments should be structured. They indicated that senior management did not appreciate that departments have a greater working relationship in reality than what is detailed on paper. As a result, they did not have a full grasp of the impact and consequences of their decisions. Yet these decisions and the new structure were forced upon the participants, who then had to follow through on the decisions made and make the structure work.

“The way I put it, is that they made many faulty assumptions in that process... But now at the same time you have got to think of all the consequences if you make those big assumptions. Which I don’t think they did. I don’t think they did think through all the consequences... and at the same time they are saying “thou shall”... But then they must understand the consequences.” Participant 4

“My feelings to the process is that they did not consult... they did not consult in good faith. I think the employer was being, in a way a bully, that this is what I have decided and this is it, you are not going to influence it in any way.” Participant 9

The participants were frustrated how the new structures or departments were being developed by senior management and executives, without their input. They felt that senior management and executives lacked a full understanding of the existing structure, the daily tasks involved in the functioning of the departments, the uniqueness of each department, and how the departments interact with each other to have a working system. The participants also believed that senior management and executives’ view of how things operate, was very different from reality.

“They didn’t have that in their minds and what tended to happen is that at the executive level, even now, there is a perception that everything is in place and it’s all working. At the ground level it’s not.” Participant 4

Many participants also felt that they had a limited role in the process of designing the new structure. They were merely given the number of people that should be in their department and they needed to make the department function with the given number of resources. As a result, they had to make the new structure work, even if it was impractical and illogical.

“Now because you are not involved in the operating model... for a good many months afterwards you question it, you remain questioning. You remain questioning the sanity and approach of what had happened and how they actually...how they did it. Some things are still illogical.” Participant 3

“You could make a decision or give input based on a structure that was already decided upon – which you did not have input on.” Participant 2

The second and third constructs identified, both related to the participants’ perceptions of their input and decision making on the new structure. Several participants indicated that the new departments were structured without consultation with the managers or

heads of those departments who understand the real needs of their respective department, and where it would be most practical to reduce resources. They felt that even when their senior managers sought their input, the final decision had already been made as senior management got their way regardless of what the respondents advised. As a result, the participants had the challenge of working within the parameters of the proposed new structure, to create functional departments, although as the participants indicated, these could not function as effectively as they could have, had they been given the opportunity to give input into the decisions made on the new structure.

“In most instances the executive hadn’t thought about other implications... the HOD would know because the HOD’s, all of us, work together, and we know how we interface with each other and how we rely on each other... if you map your processes according to your strategy you will know who you can’t afford to get rid of... but it feels like they do it back to front and then they want it to fit, like a square peg in a round hole, you must make it fit.”
Participant 7

No, it’s like going through the motions, you were allowed to come up with proposals and try and provide good motivations and all that but at the end of the day the decision was taken higher up to say this is what it will look like at the end... and based on what we are seeing now the accepted structure is not working.” Participant 3

Although, as indicated by the third construct, many of the participants felt like they were not included or adequately consulted in the process, a similar number of participants (indicated by the second construct), felt that they were sufficiently involved and their input was taken into consideration during the process of determining their new departmental structure. They also felt that the complexity and uniqueness of their departments, and the roles needed for the department to function efficiently were taken into consideration in creating the new structure.

“So we went through iterations of the structure itself. I am talking boxes, so just plain structure, you are not even talking people. So we started at that level and there were lots of iterations saying, how many people should be in this structure, how many people should be kept in this and this structure.”
Participant 15

“When it came to my level or my area of responsibility. Let me not say more about developing the structure, but developed in the roles profiles to say is this what the people will be doing, what are the roles...” Participant 16

In summation, it was found that many participants felt excluded from the process of planning and determining their new departmental structures. They felt that they should have been more involved in the process as they have a better understanding of the functioning of their departments and also of what is truly happening at ground level. They felt that they were given structures which don't necessarily work in their environment and they had to make them function adequately with the limited resources provided to them. They also felt that senior management and the executives were not fully aware of the consequences of creating and imposing these impractical structures upon them.

5.3 Presentation of Results

The results in this chapter are structured and presented according to the research questions as detailed in Chapter 3 and the interview questions as mapped out in Table 3.

It should be noted that in instances where circle brackets () are used within participants quotes, it is the researcher's words attempting to offer clarification or context of the quote. In instances where square brackets [] are used, it is the researcher removing specific reference to people, organisations or any information that can be related to a specific organisation and replacing it with generic information.

Tables of constructs have also been included within each section of this chapter. The tables have been ranked according to the frequency of participants who mentioned the code. However, the constructs within each section are not presented in the order in which they rank. This is to allow for a more fluid flow of the presentation of findings. As such, when a new construct is discussed, the researcher makes reference to the construct ranking, for ease of reference for the reader. In addition, it must also be noted that where constructs were identified as being of little value to the research objectives, these have not been presented, but have still been included in the tables of constructs to provide the reader with an indication of the full data set.

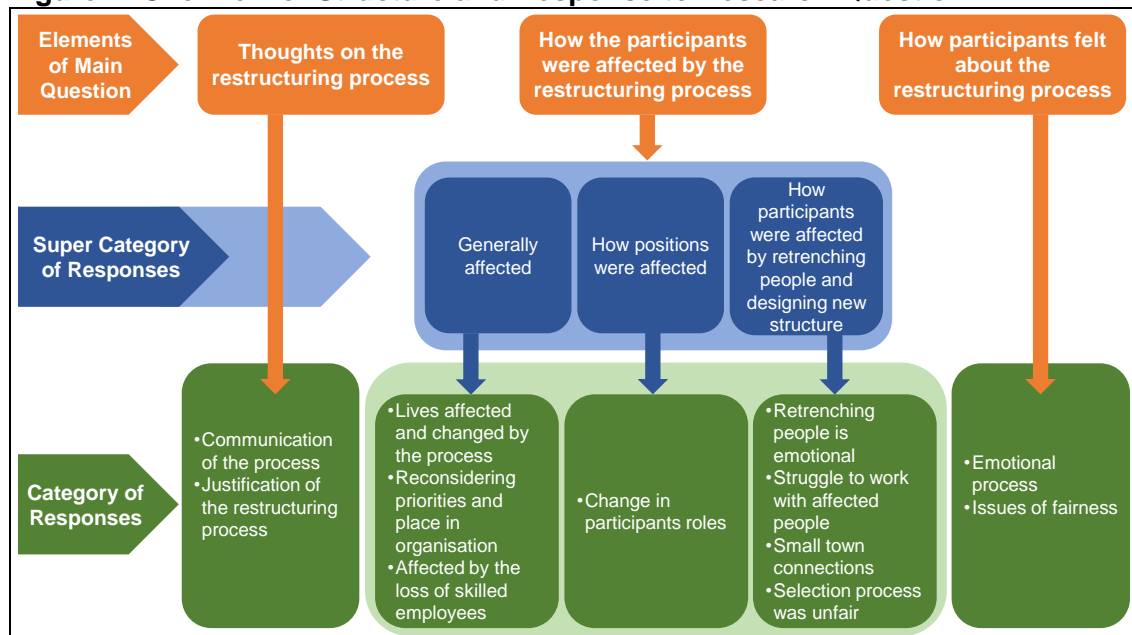
5.4 Results for Research Question One

What impact does a restructuring process have on the surviving participants' frame of mind as well as their role as managers?

This question aimed to understand how the restructuring process affected the surviving participants' frames of mind, or in other words, their thoughts, attitude, behaviour, feelings, and emotions. Furthermore, this question aimed to understand how their role as managers was generally affected by the restructuring process.

The research question was broken up into three elements and as a result the responses were also grouped according to these elements. Presented below is Figure 5 which details an overview of the structure of the question and the responses.

Figure 4: Overview of Structure and Response to Research Question 1



5.4.1 Participants Thoughts on the Restructuring Process and How it was Carried out

The participants were asked what they thought about the restructuring process and how it was carried out. Table 5 details the main thoughts on how the restructuring process was carried out and the frequency of those thoughts.

Table 5: Participants Thoughts on the Restructuring Process

	Constructs	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	The process was accepted and necessary for economic sustainability of the organisation	13	19
2	There was limited communication/ information during the process	12	20
3	There was transparent, open and honest communication of the process	11	14
4	The process was filled with rumours and communication was slow	8	11
5	The process lacked full disclosure, transparency and honesty	6	10
6	The organisation needed to get lean, thus sacrifice a few for the lot	6	8
7	Restructuring was instituted to reduce labour cost and increase profit	5	9
8	There was no full or clear plan/ strategy for restructuring	5	6
9	Restructuring was an opportunity for change and something new within the organisation and to correct the existing structure	4	4
10	∅The duration of the process was too long	4	4
11	The new proposed structure is impractical and illogical and further cost cutting measures seem unplanned	3	4
12	∅No clear performance criteria was used for retrenching employees	3	4
13	∅Participants did not know purpose of the restructuring process	3	3
14	∅The restructuring process was well planned	3	3
15	∅Decent people fought to save employees' jobs	2	2
16	The restructuring process was instituted to improve productivity	2	2
17	∅The restructuring process was not done in good faith	1	1

The major thoughts can be grouped into two major categories being the communication of the process, and the justification for instituting the restructuring process.

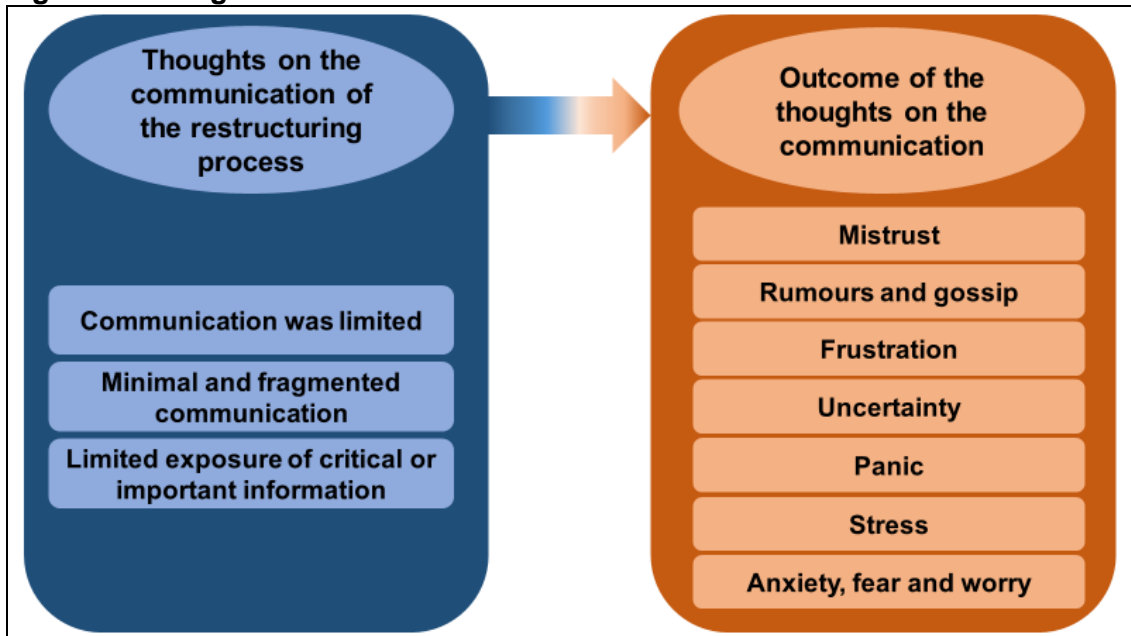
5.4.1.1 Thoughts on the Communication of the Restructuring Process

As indicated by the second construct, the majority of the participants thought that there was limited communication from senior management and the executives regarding the process which had a number of negative outcomes (see Figure 6). The participants felt uncertain about their own future and how the process would be carried out, as a result of the limited communication or disclosure. Thus, making the work environment feel like an unstable environment where they did not know what would happen and when it would happen.

“Initially there was anxiety and lack of transparency... but I think there was more information that was not being passed through. We didn’t know what’s going to happen, we didn’t – people had more questions than answers. We didn’t know what was happening to the people above us because if you don’t know what’s happening with the people above you, you start to be uncertain (about) what’s going to happen (to you).” Participant 16

“The longer you keep going with the less information the more you are in the dark, the more you are in the dark the more uncertain you become, the more uncertain you become the less confidence you have.” Participant 11

Figure 5: Thoughts of the Communication and Resultant Outcomes



They also thought that there was limited disclosure of critical or important information, as shown by the fifth construct, to the extent that it frustrated the participants and

caused further panic and anxiety. The participants observed that when senior management and the executives decided to communicate, the information being communicated was minimal and fragmented, thus creating feelings of mistrust, as they wondered what information they were not being given and why.

I think the only thing that failed us... was the communication. The communication just didn't work out well, and that's what gets a lot of people despondent. And the top executive will make a decision and they can justify it... but if it's not communicated well, the message gets lost on the way down, to a point where I am standing in front of my guys and I am pointing out and I am saying, it's [the CEO]. Don't look at me". Participant 13

"And what frustrated the whole system was that top management, especially the executives, even the CEO himself, when the people were asking questions they all said we don't know. And they are the ones who are setting direction, they are the ones who are taking the decisions, and how can you say, I don't know? You can say, we are still busy in the process and we have not made final decisions yet. Don't just say, I don't know. So people really lost trust in that" Participant 9

"Communication was also fragmented." Participant 2

The constant rumours and gossip circulating around the organisation, indicated by the fourth construct, were a negative consequence of the limited and fragmented communication. The participants found the rumours to be greatly frustrating as they created more uncertainty and anxiety. The participants found themselves, and especially their subordinates, in a state of panic, worry and stress because of the rumours. It frustrated the participants that they could not put an end to the rumours and gossip amongst their subordinates, as they also did not have complete information and they were uncertain of the truth. The communication of information was limited, delayed and fragmented to the extent that some of the participants discovered critical information about their own jobs and departments through informal channels.

"Well, the funny thing is, I think formally I was told by my boss, but I already knew... So I heard through the grapevine that we were going to be cut into one position, and I think a week later then my boss told us. So by then we already knew. [the restructuring] was like crazy, things were just flying all over the show." Participant 13

"Because it started like a rumour, people heard that that operation is going to be sold, and then they started asking around... the first time I heard it, it

was a rumour, I didn't know as well. So I heard the rumour from the bottom guys, we hear this mine is going to be sold, is it true?" Participant 5

"Corridor talk and rumours were an issue." Participant 2

Although the overwhelming voice from the participants was that there was insufficient communication, there were some participants which thought that that there was transparent, open and honest communication throughout the process (third construct). They felt that they were given sufficient information to know what to expect and how the process would be carried out. However, the participants stated that the nature of the communication was more to satisfy the human resources policies and legalities of the process, rather than being information that would put the participants at ease.

"Because now there is a whole thing that there must be a consultation process between the employer and the employees. In this case I was representing the employer. Also, even discussions with the unions, this is what is going to happen to my department and these are the positions that we have identified that are going to be redundant." Participant 6

"So it was done like together, so it was the HR process, the consultation and everything... they would just give me feedback of what is happening. To say, look, we have had this meeting with the Union..." Participant 5

The participants' overall thoughts on the communication was that there was no open communication and when information was communicated, there was limited disclosure. There was also a lack of transparency in the manner in which the executives and senior management made decisions and carried out the restructuring process. The lack of complete information caused a surge in rumours resulting in critical information relating to individuals being heard via informal channels. The lack of timely and complete information also caused more uncertainty, anxiety, instability and mistrust towards senior management and the executives.

5.4.1.2 Thoughts on the Justification of the Restructuring Process

The highest-ranking construct on the restructuring process is that the restructuring process was accepted and deemed necessary for the economic sustainability of the organisation. As much as the participants did not like nor want the restructuring process to proceed because of the potential impact it could have on the employees' livelihoods, it was evident that they understood that the process was necessary for the survival of the organisation.

“So, if you were to stand back and say, this company would not be profitable given certain economic climates, for example, our rand exchange, our dollar per barrel oil price. So, if you take that and stand back you will say, yes, we do need to do something. So would you rather have the business go down in totality or a few people lose their jobs? Anybody can say you would want to have few people losing their jobs. But then, in the back of my mind was, those few people have families behind them.”
Participant 16

The majority of the participants also thought that their respective organisations were too big in terms of human capital and there was a need to get lean (indicated by the sixth construct) and get rid of the excess staff considered as ‘dead wood’. They agreed that their respective organisations needed to focus on increasing efficiencies and productivity per employee, and reduce duplication of effort in order for the organisation to be profitable and economically sustainable.

“Sometimes you need to cut some of the driftwood. We have been accommodating a lot of, I want to say, driftwood because there’s a lot of people currently sitting in positions that shouldn’t exist... it took the company, in my opinion, too long to get to this point (of restructuring).”
Participant 8

“I use gangrene or something to describe the process to some of my guys because they couldn’t understand why would you cut some of the people – you cut peoples feet off just to save their legs. To save the rest.” Participant 8

“Before this whole restructuring, I think it (the organisation) was too big, it was too big of an elephant... unfortunately that’s a problem with fat structures, you cannot get to a point because there’s plenty of people who want to keep themselves busy... so it (the restructuring) had to be done, it was not sustainable.” Participant 14

As indicated by the first construct, the participants also conceded that the restructuring was necessary for the financial profitability of their respective organisations, taking into account the current economic climate. They indicated that organisations need to take drastic cost cutting measures in order to survive the current economic climate otherwise they will not survive.

“The market says now stop your operations or cut, it’s the market condition that pushes them... it looks like the market is calling for that. I wouldn’t blame them otherwise we would go down like a sinking ship... (next thing) it will be hostile takeover, let’s restructure ourselves which is much better”.
Participant 10

“My understanding... was that if the current conditions prevailed until 2020 then the company would have been bankrupt. So they had to revise their strategies and that resulted in restructuring in entities... I believe that the process was justifiable, it was warranted economically.” Participant 2

“There were a few things that triggered the whole restructuring process. The commodity market, the whole drop in prices...” Participant 6

“And because the company has gone more global, it deals with issues that other companies deal with. If the company is not doing well, then they cut jobs.” Participant 1

As much as the majority of the participants saw the restructuring process as an opportunity to make the organisation leaner, more efficient, profitable and sustainable in the future, some participants thought that the main reason for the restructuring process was not for the survival of the organisation but rather for the purposes of increasing profit and lining executives’ pockets (seventh construct). They felt that it was more important for the executives and shareholders to receive their return on investment, hence the restructuring process.

“They decide to close down a specific environment, or area, or business unit because they are not happy with the profit margins. It might be profitable, but it’s not good enough for them. Then that stays the fact, and they will get rid of that department (for profit margins).” Participant 3

“This is also driven by what EBIT margins that shareholders want. So, if someone says, I want EBIT margins of 15 percent, that’s what they want... In this case I will be diplomatic and say it’s mainly about profits. This is the reality of it... Restructuring is painful in a sense that it’s linked to profitability levels.” Participant 6

“It’s about money, it’s about business profitability, all those things that they say are not the most important. They say people are your most important aspect, but it’s the money.” Participant 7

Further to that the participants also thought that their organisations were too radical and unreasonable in their cost cutting measures to the extent that they were cutting out the niceties which do not have a great impact on the overall bottom line and profitability of the organisation, yet do have a great impact on employee morale. Examples provided of these niceties were coffee and car washes.

“I know we said the main drive was also cost saving... we call it symbolic savings, the coffees, the car wash. And my own personal opinion, those things are small when it comes to monetary value but I think they are big when it comes to the impact on the morale of the people, the morale of the people!... And that demoralised lots of people. I mean we used to be served with better coffee, now it is tea and Ricoffy. So that demoralised people and I think that was not taken into consideration, we only looked that we need to have that symbolic cost savings idea that no coffee, nothing!”

Participant 16

A large number of the participants accepted the need for the restructuring process because they thought their respective organisations were too big in terms of human capital and if the organisations continued performing in the same manner with the same size of labour, they would not continue to be sustainable in the current economic climate. However, there were some participants who thought that the organisations' main drive was to increase profitability and please shareholders, even at the expense of the employees, resulting in demoralised employees.

5.4.2 How the Participants were Affected by the Restructuring Process

The second part of Research Question 1 aimed to understand how the participants' role as managers was generally affected by the restructuring process. It should be noted that the impact of the restructuring process on the participants was only limited to their roles/ functions as managers within the organisation. The scope of the research did not extend to the impact on their families and their lives outside the organisation.

Through the interviews, it was noted that the restructuring process did not merely affect the participants as an employee, it also affected them as managers of other people and it affected their job positions or roles. The findings from this question also highlighted that the participants, as managers, were dealing with multiple elements, and as such their responses address multiple elements on how they were affected by the restructuring process.

The impact of the restructuring process on the participants can be classified into three categories, each of which will be discussed separately:

- How the participants were affected by the restructuring process, in their capacity as managers;
- How the participants were affected by changes in their positions or roles as a result of the restructuring process; and
- How the participants were affected by the act of retrenching employees and setting up departments in line with the new structure.

5.4.2.1 How the Participants were Affected by the Process

Table 3 below outlines a number of constructs that were identified in regard to how the participants were affected by the process.

Table 6: General Effect of the Restructuring on the Participants

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Reconsider career growth plans and new life priorities	14	28
2	☐Affected and life changed by restructuring process	11	13
3	Loss of good, skilled employees	10	12
4	Willing to leave the organisation voluntarily or involuntarily	9	14
5	Want to be something else, more than the organisation sees you	4	7
6	☐People withhold information/ fight unfairly for their own positions	3	5
7	Has limited information received to pass onto subordinates	3	3
8	Must make the new process and structure work	3	3
9	Less commitment to work	3	3
10	☐Unwanted change of career plan	2	2
11	☐Dealing with suicide and its impact on the staff	2	2
12	Struggle or find it difficult to secure own job	2	2
13	☐Unaffected/ neutral	2	1

In this section, only the four major codes will be explored further, those being that the participants were affected by the restructuring process to the extent that their lives

were changed. They felt like they would have to reconsider their life priorities and career growth plans. They would also need to consider their willingness to leave the organisation voluntarily or involuntarily which meant they needed to think about a future within the organisation and even a future outside the organisation. They were also affected by the loss of good, skilled employees.

5.4.2.2 Participants' Lives Affected and Changed by the Restructuring

As indicated by the second construct, the participants echoed the same sentiments on how their lives were affected and changed by the restructuring process, such that they did not believe that they will ever be the same again. The effects of the restructuring process directly affected them as managers and as employees within the organisation. Their feelings and emotions had a negative impact on their confidence levels, and their stress levels were heightened by the process. They did not feel like they were the same person anymore. The participants also indicated that the manner in which they performed their duties, managed their subordinates, and how they interacted with the organisation was affected and changed by the restructuring process.

"Nobody could say they were not affected by it... I think that will have an impact on me for the rest of my life." Participant 3

"So it didn't just change my work environment... it changes you, it does." Participant 8

"I think for me it was a life changer, definitely." Participant 13

"People have feelings and feelings are very difficult to manage, even the most sane person, like me, I was losing my head last year because I was thinking, am I going to be retrenched, what's going on." Participant 7

"It (restructuring process) attacks your confidence and self-worth, let me tell you that, but you need to have confidence in yourself, and that was difficult to retain during that process... that negatively impacted my self-confidence." Participant 11

5.4.2.3 Participants Reconsidered their Priorities and their Place within the Organisation

Most participants indicated that the restructuring affected their sense of belonging and sense of purpose within the organisation (first construct). They had to reconsider their future career plans and what they had hoped to achieve within the organisation. They

also felt that there was more to their lives and they could not be merely defined by their jobs or the organisations they work for.

“You quickly realise that who you are is not determined by your job. Previously you had a lot of pride in, ‘I achieved the following’, and you realise that could come to nothing in a short period of time. That is not who you are. Your work and your position should not determine who and what you are.” Participant 3

As most participants were reconsidering their futures, they also questioned whether they were well prepared for a future without their current employer (construct 4). These introspective thoughts made them consider furthering their studies, pursuing entrepreneurial and other business ventures, and looking for new employment outside the organisation. Other participants were even considering career changes in pursuit of more secure careers and diversification. The restructuring process made the respondents feel insecure and unsure of themselves and their futures.

“I don’t ever want to find myself in this position again. Hence the whole thinking about entrepreneurship... it has shaped me in a way that I never thought – I have never thought of running my own business or going into another field or another sector, but right now that’s exactly what thinking... it was one of the reasons why I did the MBA, because suddenly realised maybe I need other skills... before engineering was like for me, the be all and end all, I wanted to get to the highest level of engineering, but right now I am thinking entrepreneurship, I am thinking other sectors of the workspace, not only engineering. I am thinking moving into a bank or doing investment.” Participant 13

“Look, at this stage the work is important, but the whole process has led to me ... drawing up a life plan on where we see ourselves actually in five years... I don’t see myself with this company in three to five years, I see myself doing something different.” Participant 8

Some participants were reconsidering their dedication to the organisation and relooking at their life priorities (first construct). They felt that they had given a lot of their time and energy to their respective organisations which was to the detriment of their families who they considered to be their top priority. They had allowed their work and the needs of the organisation to come ahead of their personal needs and those of their families.

Now they were taking a step back to assess what was important to them and then focus their attention and time on those things.

“My view has changed and now it’s family first, so work life balance is far more important...You are employed for the fruits of your labour and that’s all. Therefore, I do not sacrifice family time as previously. That’s it. You want me for family time, I want half time, klaar. In the old days, it didn’t come at a price, now it comes with a price.” Participant 11

“You think to yourself that I won’t jeopardise my time with my family to rather make sure that the work gets done. That just fell away. Now you just prioritise what is important in life. And that’s what the restructuring forced you to do, go sit and think what are the most important things in life. And work wasn’t one of them, it wasn’t the top one.” Participant 3

“For me now it’s more important to spend time with my daughter at home...than it is sitting here at work. Whereas before this process... I spent a lot of hours at work, overly committing myself... I have got a family, I want to be with them.” Participant 8

Those participants who were questioning whether they still had a place and a future within the organisation, indicated that they were ready to leave the organisation. They felt that if the organisation instituted another restructuring process, they would accept their voluntary restructuring packages. They were not afraid of losing their jobs or not being part of the organisation. In fact, they were comfortable with the idea of not being employed by their current employer.

“I mean the only reason I am still here is because I haven’t found something yet, and although I have a package, I am extremely stressed to be unemployed because money runs out. So, you take a package or whatever, but money runs out. And you need to worry if you have got a young family to put through school, all of that.” Participant 7

It could be said that the participants’ commitment and loyalty to the organisation was affected by the restructuring process, in a sense that they did not want to give more than what was expected of them and they were now focusing on other alternatives to generate an income. They were also focusing on different priorities and not thinking of themselves as employees of the organisation in the near future.

5.4.2.4 Participants Affected by the Loss of Skilled Employees

Another area that was affected by the restructuring process, resulting in a negative impact on the participants, was the loss of good, skilled employees, as indicated in the third construct. The participants believed that the skilled, dedicated, hardworking employees were either retrenched or voluntarily took restructuring packages and left the organisation, as they could not manage the uncertainty and unstable environment. They also felt that the organisation could have done more to save employees' jobs, thus minimising the loss of good, skilled human resources.

This was expressed as a frustrating consequence of the restructuring for the participants because they were still required to produce good quality work and/ or meet their production targets with limited human resources in terms of skills and capacity. The participants indicated that, as managers, their performance was not only measured on how they performed, it was also measured on how their team performed. The loss of skilled human resources therefore affected the performance and ability of their departments to produce good results.

"... the organisation lost skills, we lost skills but we couldn't accommodate them anywhere else, so we lost skills." Participant 17

"People are dropping out like flies, they are all going, people are taking voluntary separation... In the team where I was, they took away everything and they let people go who they shouldn't have, and in functions that are critical... You had people who were here for 15 years, and with them they took institutional memory." Participant 7

"I lost my good guys, these guys are not performing... The reason I am not performing is because you gave me those people, it's not me." Participant 14

5.4.3 Effects of Changes to the Participants' Positions or Roles

One of the noticeable consequences that the restructuring process had on the participants was how their positions or roles were affected by the restructuring. Some of the participants experienced minor changes in their roles, responsibilities and job profiles; some had to take up new positions resulting in completely new roles and responsibilities which were at a similar managerial position as their previous position; and others had major changes to their roles, responsibilities and their level of authority.

As a result of not being able to secure their old positions, the latter had to accept jobs which were at a lower managerial level.

Table 7: Effect of Chang in Job Positions or Roles on the Participants

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Unwanted job and career change for participants makes them unhappy and they feel its unfair (new role)	9	10
2	Participant unwillingly stays with organisation for financial security	7	9
3	Loss of power and status (demoted)	5	12
4	Loss of authority and unwanted reliance on subordinates	4	8
5	Worried about application for job position	4	7
6	Doesn't know work, frustrated and stressed at learning new role	4	6
7	Frustrated at lack training for new role	4	5
8	Feels guilty for taking someone's job	4	5
9	Lacks self confidence in work and worried about losing job	3	3
10	Application process tedious and inadequate application information	2	3
11	Finds hope in their skill set	2	3
12	Worried about application for position and remuneration	2	2
13	No job satisfaction	2	2
14	αGeneral: feels safe and secure	2	2
15	αFinancially worse off in new role	2	2
16	αDoes not feel guilty for getting job	1	1

5.4.3.1 Change in Participants' Roles and Management Levels

The participants who had changes to their positions and roles, while remaining at the same managerial level, still felt unhappy and annoyed by the changes (first construct). They felt like they had to accept an unwanted and unrequested change to their careers plans. Their annoyance was exacerbated by the feelings and perception of a loss of power, authority, status, and self-confidence as a result of moving to a new role that they were not comfortable with or fully proficient in. They also considered these changes to their careers to be unfair. They perceived their new positions to be of a

lower level of complexity, with some considering it a demotion although they were still at the same managerial level. The respondents also felt that these changes to their positions and careers negatively affected their level of job satisfaction and contentment.

“You are moving from this big structure of 400 plus people, now I am going to 15 people, you have to manage 15 instead of the 400. So, to me it was like, ah, ah, this is like a demotion... yoh! They just downgraded me, they just put me right at the bottom. So it was not easy at all... It was not a good change because I didn’t want to do that... I was constantly stressing because I felt it was not fair for me, why did they place me here. I was even blaming the organisation, couldn’t they find something better for me... No, I didn’t like it.” Participant 5

“Was less satisfying because that other side I was in charge of three different mines or shafts. When I moved... I had a shaft manager on top of me, I have never been used to that, so I needed to work for someone... In terms of satisfaction you become less satisfied because now you are a ‘picanin’, you used to be a ‘makhulu baas’.” Participant 17

As indicated by the third and fourth constructs, these participants also indicated that the feeling and perception of a loss of power and authority was worsened by the need to have their subordinate teach them their job, as they were placed in roles that are new to them. The participants found having to learn a new role stressful and frustrating and the fact that that the organisations did not provide adequate training, added to their stress levels. Furthermore, they had to rely on their subordinates to guide them in their new roles and the running of their departments, thus losing their authority to enforce change and rules. They felt that they had wait until they were comfortable in their new positions before they could attempt to regain their power back.

“So, I had to start from scratch now, so I am like a person who just came out of university and you are starting something new. Something that I have never even done in my life, and even the exposure in terms of training, it was not that good. So I had to be dumped in the middle of the pool and I must swim myself out.” Participant 5

“So to me I had to subject or serve under the person that is reporting to me so that I can at least grab or try to understand what happens in the department. So I had to sort of give up my power... So I am the boss, but

now he is teaching me the job... So the bad part is, now you are trying to give away your power so that you can learn.” Participant 5

The participants who lost their management positions and were now at junior level also felt unhappy and angry. However, their emotions of dissatisfaction and anger came from being managed by a person they used to manage and being in a position that they wanted to occupy (third construct). Their loss of power was not perceived, it was real, and they found it hard reporting to someone who used to be their subordinate. They no longer had the authority to give instructions, they were now the ones receiving instructions from those who were previously their subordinates.

“My junior is managing the function which I previously managed... I have trained him so well, now suddenly I am obsolete... I became angry because of that. I know certain things more than my manager... That is weird... Sometimes I manage my manager.” Participant 11

Some participants indicated that they stayed in these new, unwanted positions, be it at the same or lower managerial level, purely because of their remuneration (second construct). They were well compensated and they also needed the security and comfort of a constant income. They were not staying in the organisation out of their sense of loyalty to the organisation. If it was not for the need for a secure income, they would not have remained in the organisation.

“Retention money... Only money that made me stay, not because I am loyal.” Participant 17

“The main driver was money... at the end of the day it is about money. Status and all these soft comfortable things and career aspirations, opportunities for growth, challenging working environment, those are lighter weighted in terms of the impact that a salary can make once you leave your work. Can you eat it?... It’s about money”. Participant 11

5.4.4 How the Participants were Affected by the Act of Retrenching Employees and Setting up New Departments

Table 8: The Effects of Retrenching People and Setting up a New Structure

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Difficult and emotional informing employees of restructuring	27	46

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
2	Concerned about employability and families of the retrenched	9	14
3	Subordinates performance affected by restructuring	9	11
4	Difficult to manage staff during restructuring	7	8
5	Difficult designing new structure, limited resources	6	9
6	Withdraw from people - coping and justifying restructuring	5	12
7	Small town connections are emotional	5	7
8	Trying to save jobs, gets blamed for the restructuring	5	7
9	Deals with employees begging for jobs and receiving threats	5	6
10	Have to be strong/ brave face, speak positively, when informing retrenched	5	5
11	Worried about own job while worried about subordinates	3	3
12	Detach emotions in order to retrench	2	2
13	Staff interviews create conflict	2	2
14	Told what to do, no room to think	1	1
15	Unhappy about loss of benefits/ remuneration	1	1
16	Re-hiring the previously retrenched is hard	1	1
17	In new structure, no one wants to take responsibility	1	1
18	Hard dealing with employees who do not accept the restructuring	1	1

5.4.4.1 Participants' Emotional Struggle with Retrenching Employees

As indicated by the high frequency of the first construct, there were a number of codes that were combined under this construct, lending itself to a frequency of 27. The participants indicated that the biggest impact the restructuring process had on their feelings and emotions was the actual execution of the restructurings.

The participants found the act of informing subordinates of their restructuring to be difficult, hard and filled with a range of emotions, it was something they did not find pleasure in doing. It further required them to be sympathetic and empathetic towards

the retrenched subordinates. The respondents were quite clear that it is something they would never want to do again.

“It’s not easy. When you are confronting a person, thinking that a person has got family, it’s not an easy one. In the middle of nowhere then you have to tell that person you are no longer required here, it’s not an easy thing, it’s quite emotional. It’s very bad, you don’t want to be in that situation. No, it’s terrible.” Participant 14

“I hated it after that. I did not want to be involved because I was the one now who was telling people, you know what, your jobs are finished.” Participant 7

“So we had to tell certain people this news, that for me was terrible, that was sickening... that was very difficult and sad.” Participant 15

Some participants dreaded the whole process and found it so emotionally taxing that they reached a point of wishing they could resign from their jobs and let other people handle the process. It also made them feel guilty, as though they were the ones who were taking away the subordinates’ jobs. The feelings of guilt and other emotions were exacerbated by the connections the participants had with their subordinates, both in and out of work.

“I think at some point I wanted to resign... I would wake up in the morning and just feel like I don’t want to go there, not today. Especially if you know today is the day that I need to tell somebody that they don’t have a job, you go through a lot of emotions even before you come to work. So there were days where I just felt like maybe I should quit, let somebody have to go and do this.” Participant 13

The participants also found themselves worrying about their subordinates’ ability to secure other employment outside the organisation, as well as the survival of their families (second construct). This state of worry further increased their stress levels and worsened their feelings of guilt.

“A lot of people would come to my office and say, look, where will I go, what is happening, what will happen with me. And you don’t even know if that person will get a job.” Participant 5

“Even the strongest of people, like myself, I cried when I heard of some people who were affected or who had lost their jobs, and I was thinking

about their families, and I think, oh my God, how is this person ever going to come right?” Participant 7

In order to try and cope with the process and the overwhelming emotions, the participants indicated that they minimised interaction with their subordinates and withdrew from interacting with those who were affected by the restructuring process (sixth construct). They chose to distance themselves from the affected people. This made them feel like they were not responsible for the job losses and they didn't have to see their subordinates' lives fall apart. Due to the process being very emotional for the participants, they were trying to find tools to cope with these emotions and the effects of the restructuring process.

“I think I pulled back more than some of the guys actually did from their side just because I couldn't face them. Since we started with the closure project, I couldn't look the guys in the eyes... there was a lot of emotion involved and to make it easier for me, I cut myself off... to the extent that I was told I need to do something about this because it's not healthy for me and I can't carry the weight of 1 000 people on my shoulders.” Participant 8

The last element of discussion concerning the participants' difficulties with retrenching their subordinates, is that the participants also struggled to deal with subordinates who were not accepting of their job losses (eighth construct). The participants observed that the retrenched employees would exhibit feelings of anger towards the participants and blame them for having terminated their employment and ruined their lives.

Those feelings of anger would then turn to grief, despair and feeling like it's the end of the world, causing their retrenched subordinates to beg for their jobs, or blame and threaten the participants (ninth construct). The actions of begging for their jobs and threatening the participants would extend beyond the workplace and into the participants' homes.

“Some people took it personally and some people will approach you at home, after hours, with their family, to plead their case. And I mean you now start to feel like you are the jury now. That was challenging... To tell somebody that this is for the better of the company, for the good of the company, and it was tough, really tough.” Participant 13

“I had to be quite sensitive because with restructuring comes all of these negative attitudes. People will sommer unleash it to you, how can we do our job if you are busy taking our colleagues away! You just have to understand

the situation and be sensitive a bit, you don't have to rush into things, raise your emotions. Just be calm and calm the situation.” Participant 14

5.4.4.2 Participants Struggle to Work with Affected Employees

As indicated by the third and fourth constructs, the participants had to manage subordinates who were struggling to cope with their restructuring or the process as a whole and who were in ‘limbo’ as they did not know how their jobs were affected. The participants also found it hard to get their subordinates to perform at the expected levels or produce work that was of the expected standard of quality. They saw a drop in their subordinates’ performance, which was due to the increased levels of uncertainty, anxiety, stress and the emotions caused by the restructuring process. The participants understood that they had a duty, as managers, to handle and manage their subordinates’ behaviour during this time, whilst being empathetic and motivating them to work and remain productive.

“You would think because of what is happening, people will be more engaged or try to protect their jobs, but we saw a lot of absenteeism... We later found out that it was just stress. Because of the level of stress people were more sick, and sometimes they would just prefer to stay at home... You could literally see performance drop because concentration levels were just at their lowest... So, it was a challenge, it was a big challenge, and we had to keep the teams motivated.” Participant 13

“Now other people and subordinates, their performance dropped drastically, very bad...So that anxiety is always there.” Participant 14

5.4.4.3 Small Town Connections

There is another element that was unique to the participants who live and work in small towns or in close knit communities (seventh construct). Those participants found that the feelings of guilt extended beyond the workplace as they would meet the retrenched employees in public places and those who were retrenched would refer to them as ‘the manager who took my job’. What also tended to happen is that the participants knew the retrenched employees’ families, or they were friends, so the guilt and the feelings and emotions associated with the process would resurface.

“It does not only end at work because whoever you retrenched is part of society, so these things they follow you because you walk in the same malls. And the moment that you meet someone with their families, with their

kids, it becomes emotional, they say that is our manager that retrenched me... which creates a lot of anxiety when you meet them again.” Participant 6

“In such a small town when you tell somebody today that they don’t have a job, tomorrow you are meeting them at the mall with their family and it is such an emotional experience because here is the person now, they are with their kids and you know they are now unemployed and you know you played a role in those decisions. So, it was really emotionally draining.” Participant 13

5.4.4.4 Difficulty in Setting up New Departmental Structures

The participants indicated that they were affected by the process or the manner in which the people to be retrenched were determined which resulted in difficulties in designing and setting up new departmental structures and having to work with limited human resources (fifth construct). The difficulty in designing a new structure and not having adequate human resources was attributed to the process used in selecting employees to be retained within the organisation and those to be retrenched. The participants found the process to be flawed, inconsistent and prone to managers using their own judgement to decide who retains their job and who gets retrenched. The participants felt that it became an opportunity to pick and choose favourites without considering their capabilities, skills and abilities and the needs of the organisation. They observed that senior managers would protect their friends and sacrifice good, hardworking, employees who were exceptional performers, all because of rumours and gossip, no facts at all.

“Then I thought, this is almost now playing men more than the structure ... So managers have an option now to pick and choose again, it is almost re-appointing your people. And if I had an issue with you either personally or we are clashing or we had a conflict at some point, this is the opportunity that they said “I will show you now” ... I lost trust in the whole process, that the whole point was to select my people and get rid of the people that I don’t like... I sat in a number of selection processes now and it is really horrific how managers will pick and choose... So it’s very subjective. And so, it’s predominantly based on who I like and who I don’t like.” Participant 9

“Sometimes I will give other managers poor employees because I wanted them to take them – so, I’d say “hey, that guy’s good, if you have that guy

you will have the best,” and they take them and then I am like, “okay, thank you”. Only to find out that I went to the mine that took all these useless people.” Participant 17

“So, they also used it as an opportunity to get rid of people they didn’t want who were not performing.” Participant 7

5.4.5 Feelings on the Restructuring Process

The participants were asked how the restructuring process made them feel. This interview question aimed to explore the respondents’ feelings and emotions arising from the restructuring process.

Table 9: Feelings on the Restructuring Process

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Felt unfairness in the practices in retrenching and retaining people	17	28
2	Process was emotional	11	14
3	Felt uncertain, anxious and uncomfortable	11	14
4	Found the process terrible, horrible and it hurt	8	13
5	EE was not well considered or applied	8	10
6	Felt betrayed and broken loyalty	7	10
7	Fair process and the retrenched were taken care of	6	10
8	Felt rejected, unappreciated and alienated by the organisation	6	5
9	Generally unfair	5	8
10	Felt angry and frustrated by process	3	4
11	Low morale and not optimistic	3	3
12	Felt calm and excited	2	3
13	It affects lower levels more than senior	2	2
14	Relieved spouse does not with you	1	1
15	Made to feel that one should be grateful because of money being given	1	1
16	Not sympathetic	1	1
17	Interviews opportunity to showcase yourself	1	1
18	Felt Guilty	1	1

From the observation of the constructs with high a high frequency, it was noted that the participants had a range of feelings about the restructuring process which broadly fall into two areas, emotional feelings and feelings of fairness and unfairness. These will be discussed in more detail.

5.4.5.1 Participants' Emotions

The participants found the restructuring process to be very emotional (second construct). In essence they felt sad, upset, violated, vulnerable, annoyed, and a range of other emotions. They became more emotional when they had to consider how the lives of those affected by the process would be changed, especially in the current economic climate. The participants indicated that it hurt them to see people get retrenched and they found the whole restructuring process to be a difficult, painful and terrible process to go through.

"I came here broken and my heart was in 20 000 different pieces because I felt violated. I felt vulnerable, people were not honest about how the processes were going to work. So you get emotional – you cry a lot, you get upset, and then you think, I am not going to do this anymore." Participant 7

"So if you were to talk of how did I feel throughout the process, it feels like I had a rollercoaster of emotions, sometimes very sad, sometimes very annoyed, sometimes understanding what we want to do as a business." Participant 15

"I don't wish to go through that... No, I didn't take it well at all... It was not easy at all." Participant 5

Besides feeling emotional, the participants experienced strong feelings of uncertainty, anxiety and discomfort about the whole process (third construct). The feelings of uncertainty and anxiety were brought about by the lack of complete information regarding the process and having to wonder whether their jobs were secure. They also mentioned that the duration of the restructuring process increased their feelings of uncertainty. The longer it was, the more the participants felt anxious and uncertain about the future. They found themselves in a position where they were not in full control of their lives and careers. The lack of control and not knowing what to expect, left a lot of the participants constantly feeling anxious.

"Different stages of the processes, there's different feelings. Initially there was anxiety and lack of transparency... there was more information that

was not being passed through, we didn't know what's going to happen, we had more questions than answers. You start to be uncertain what's going to happen. In the stage where they come to our level there was even more uncertainty." Participant 16

Other participants felt rejected, betrayed and alienated by their respective organisations. They felt that their organisations did not appreciate them and the contributions they were making to the organisation (sixth and eighth constructs). Furthermore, they felt that their organisations were not loyal to them and were ready to terminate their employment in an instant. All these feelings of rejection, betrayal, alienation, and lack of loyalty, were brought on because they felt that the organisations showed that they were willing to sacrifice them and their jobs by instituting the restructuring process. As such the participants' own loyalty towards the organisation and perception of the organisation were negatively affected.

"Your job is up, you are sitting in the job, (they say) sorry, klaar! So you lost your loyalty towards your employer, that is me, I am still not loyal."
Participant 11

"And there is no loyalty. It's a horrible thing... you realise that there is no such thing as loyalty from the company. So why should you put yourself at risk and have loyalty towards a company." Participant 3

"The feeling is of alienation. That's probably the best way to describe it, the feeling of alienation and the feeling that the company does want to accommodate you." Participant 4

5.4.5.2 Issues of Fairness and Unfairness

It should be noted that the highest-ranking construct for feelings on the restructuring process, was that the participants felt that the process used to retain and retrench people, was unfair. These were the feelings of all the participants, not only those who had to retrench their subordinates. The issue was addressed in sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 where the participants detailed their thoughts on the restructuring process and how they were affected by the process. In this section, they were expressing their feelings and the overwhelming response was that the participants felt that the practices employed in deciding who gets retrenched and who gets which position, were unfair. The participants found that the process disadvantaged a number of employees and favoured a select few. They felt that people involved in the process were insincere, disingenuous, showed favouritism and were unfair in their decision making.

“Individually it may be that a line manager or manager had cronyism, nepotism, favouritism...” Participant 2

“And again, looking at the structure, they looked after their friends and even appointed guys where you knew that it’s not going to benefit the company.” Participant 3

“I feel – because some people, they lost their jobs, because they went through the interview processes. I know those people were good in what they were doing... But ja, to me I felt it was not fair...” Participant 5

One issue which participants found to be disappointing and unfair was how the matter of employment equity was handled by the organisation and senior management (fifth construct). The participants felt that the organisations were not transparent in regards to how the employment equity policy would be instituted. They also found that issues of race were not well handled and in some cases race was used as a tool or a scapegoat to get people to leave the organisation instead of dealing with the real issues within the organisation.

“At that stage, you got the idea that they were going to use the restructuring to drive EE but they didn’t make that clear. But speaking to everyone who was part of the process, they were told that you will use this as criteria, so if you look at that, if they made it clear and transparent what they wanted to achieve and how they were going to achieve it, that would have been fair.” Participant 3

“And that’s why a lot of black South Africans left this company, because at the end of the day when you get treated like a piece of dirt then you shouldn’t stay – no company should be allowed to do that to South Africans.” Participant 7

“I would say there were disappointments. Personally, there were disappointments... I was expecting that they would correct a couple of things like employment equity... they had a huge opportunity to do that. That didn’t happen. Personally, I thought they would correct it by trying to put the right people, which fit the right profile, on the job. Although that was the message, personally I didn’t think that that happened.” Participant 16

In terms of the general perception of fairness and unfairness (seventh and ninth constructs), the participants’ responses were based on how they were affected by the process. They admitted that there was an element of bias in their feelings and

perceptions of fairness. Their perception of fairness was affected by specific events which transpired. Some participants found the process to be fair because those who were retrenched were taken care of and well treated by the organisation. The belief in the justification or rationalisation given by the organisation for instituting the restructuring process also affected the participants' perception of fairness and unfairness. There were a number of participants who felt the whole process was unfair, they felt that restructuring processes, by their very nature, are unfair to the employees.

"If I had been negatively affected, what would my answer have been? That this is bull crap. This is psychological and you have to be in a certain frame of mind. Someone who was negatively affected will give you different answers." Participant 2

"It was a very good process in that perspective, a humane process... they were well looked after in leaving." Participant 4

"I think it's good for certain people, it has not been fair the way the treatment is. I feel like sometimes it's not fair the way they do things. Ja, to me I felt it was not fair... I felt treatment was not fair." Participant 5

"Seeing your colleagues affected, that sort of makes you feel that the process was a little bit unfair... So ja, it really makes you feel the process was a little bit unfair." Participant 16

The participants found the restructuring process to be filled with mixed emotions. They experienced feelings of sadness, anger, hurt, grief and other ranges of emotions as a result of the process. They also found themselves feeling very anxious as they were uncertain of their futures within the organisation. The participants had experiences throughout the restructuring process which shaped and affected their perception of fairness. Some of those experiences was related to how the retention of employees was determined and how the employment equity policy was applied. Such experiences resulted in some participants feeling that the process was unfair whilst others felt that the organisation was fair to those who were retrenched.

5.4.6 Conclusion for Research Question One

The participants indicated that the communication about the restructure was limited and that there was a lack of transparency in how decisions were made. This resulted in many rumours surmounting, coupled with uncertainty, anxiety, instability and mistrust towards senior management and the executives. Although many of the participants

accepted the need for the restructuring process in order for the organisation to remain sustainable, there were some who believed that the rationale for the restructuring was to increase profitability.

Unwanted changes in roles or positions for the participants, left them feeling undervalued due to their perceived loss of status. This affected their engagement with the organisation and loss of job satisfaction. However, some participants were forced to accept their new positions purely for financial security.

The participants experienced feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, hurt, betrayal, rejection, anger, frustration, feelings of fairness and unfairness, and a range of other emotions as a result of the restructuring process. There were also feelings of rejection by the organisation which negatively affected their loyalty. Overall, the participants found the restructuring process to be an emotional process. They were emotionally effected by the act of having to inform their subordinates that they have been retrenched, a task they found extremely difficult to cope with. They exhibited feelings of guilt, sadness and heartbreak. As a coping mechanism, the participants ended up withdrawing from people in order to not have to see and socialise with the affected people. They also had to deal with their subordinates' emotional state and feelings of uncertainty which negatively affected their performance.

One of the major issues to come up was the loss of good skilled people and the manner in which it was done. This topic was a major construct in three different areas. The participants felt that the manner in which people were selected was not fair and it was open to manipulation by those in power in order to retain those they favour and get rid of the ones they do not like. The process resulted in the loss of good, skilled people and a loss of faith and trust in the system and senior managers. As a consequence, the participants have had to deal with the guilt and emotions of losing good people, and perform with limited resources.

5.5 Results for Research Question Two

How does the restructuring process affect the surviving participants' perception, and attitude towards their work?

The purpose of this question was to discover whether the different stages of the restructuring process affect and/ or alter the participants' manner in which they view their job, how they feel about their job and their overall attitude toward their work. In

discovering whether the participants' perception and attitude towards their work before, during and after the restructuring process, was affected and/ or altered, it may be possible to determine how the restructuring process impacts on the commitment to their work.

During the interviews and through the review of the transcripts, the researcher noted that the participants did not give clear answers on how they felt about their jobs and their attitudes towards their jobs, even when probed. It was noted that the responses gravitated back to the restructuring process and difficulties they experienced in managing their subordinates during the restructuring process. As a result, brief and concise responses were received from the participants and at times the responses given were not related to their feelings or attitude. It appeared as though they were not considering how they perceived their jobs during the restructuring process, they were more concerned about getting through the process and ensuring that work targets and results are met.

5.5.1 Feelings and Attitude Towards their Job Before the Restructuring Process

The interview questions aimed to establish the participants' feelings and attitude towards their work before the restructuring process. Overall, the participants had positive feelings and attitude towards their job prior to the restructuring process. These will be discussed together in more detail following.

5.5.2 Participants' Feelings Towards their Job

The interview questions aimed to establish the participants' feelings towards their work before, during and after the restructuring process. These feelings will be discussed together in more detail following.

5.5.2.1 How the Participants Felt About their Job Before the Restructuring

Table 10: Participants' Feelings Towards their Job Before the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency
1	Enjoyed and loved their job	6
2	Felt engaged, added value and was satisfied in job	4
3	Did not like their job	1

The participants indicated that they were passionate about their job, they enjoyed their job and they also loved the work they were doing. They were happy doing the work they were doing, it was exciting, challenging and they felt that it gave them a sense of fulfilment and a great level of satisfaction.

“I was enjoying it. I was having fun. Being the big boss as well it was very nice. I loved my job. I was at that point where I felt, now this is what I wanted and I have got it now, let me just push. So, I was enjoying it.”

Participant 5

“At the time, yes, I was happy with what I was doing, it was exciting, it was fun, you were always faced with great challenges in the project and the culture was very, very good. So, I loved the environment, I loved the work.”

Participant 15

It was also indicated by the participants that they felt like they were needed by the organisation, and that felt good. They felt that they were adding value to the organisation by doing their job and achieving the desired results. The participants were involved in the organisation and engaged in their work and other employees. They further emphasised that they felt satisfied in their job.

“I felt that I was adding a lot of value because I stepped into wherever there was a need... I'd help them and come out and do different things in different ways... I felt very satisfied. I had a lot of job satisfaction.” Participant 4

5.5.2.2 How the Participants Felt About their Job During the Restructuring

Table 11: Participants' Feelings Towards their Job During the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency
1	Felt positive and was driven to perform well and give good work	3
2	Felt indifferent with low job satisfaction	3
3	Did not like their job	1

The highest ranked construct was feeling positive and being driven to perform well and give good work, with a frequency count of three participants. These participants still felt passionate and positive about their work and were driven to continue performing at the

expected level and produce the desired results. They felt that their productivity and quality of work should not be affected by the restructuring process.

“I hold to this saying, if you get up in the morning and you say to yourself, damnit I don’t want to go to work, then you need to go find something else. That has never happened to me, never ever! I have never felt like I do not want to get up and go to work, even before and during the retrenchment. I decided that I have a day job to do and I need to do it to the best of my ability...” Participant 2

A few of the participants found it hard to describe how they felt about their work whilst also feeling indifferent about their work. They felt like they were less satisfied with their jobs during the process. Their focus was on the actual restructuring process, focusing on what was going on and whether they were safe and secure. As much as they were trying to focus on work and maintain the expected performance levels, they found themselves focusing on trying to ‘survive’ the process.

“During the process, it’s hard to describe how you feel about your work, because you are actually in the trenches. It’s getting down the trenches and survival approach during the retrenchment.” Participant 4

“You just keep performing and sometimes, for me, it’s a survival mechanism because if I don’t have that to focus on then I don’t have anything else. So literally what I try to do is to focus on work and delivery.” Participant 7

5.5.2.3 How the Participants Felt About their Job After the Restructuring

Table 12: Participants’ Feelings Towards their Job After the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency
1	Felt their job was not a priority in their lives	2

There were not many participants who indicated how they felt about their work after the restructuring process. The few participants who articulated their feelings indicated that they felt that their work was no longer a priority in their lives. Their focus was now on their families which they consider to be a priority in their lives.

“Now you just prioritise what is important in life... And work wasn’t one of them, it wasn’t the top one.” Participant 3

“Yes... my view has changed and it's family first...” Participant 11

5.5.3 Participants’ Attitude Towards their Job

These interview questions also aimed to establish the participants’ attitude towards their work before, during and after the restructuring process. Their attitude will be discussed in more detail following

5.5.3.1 The Participants’ Attitude Towards their Job Before the Restructuring

Table 13: Participants’ Attitude Towards their Job Before the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency
1	Had a positive attitude and worked hard, achieved good results	7
2	Loved and proud of their job	3

The participants had a positive attitude and a drive towards their work prior to the restructure. They showed dedication to their work and the organisation by going the extra mile and working hard to produce good results or meet their production targets.

“I was quite happy actually with my position and... I really enjoyed my job. I had plans, I could see the structure, I knew exactly where I was going, I had a good mentor, so I was very positive in terms of where I wanted to be. I liked my job, I think way more than I do now. I did, I was coming at work like 05:00, I didn’t mind staying late.” Participant 13

In terms of their attitudes, the participants exhibited love and pride towards their work. They felt that their work was a part of them, it represented them and they were performing well and achieving great results. They felt that their performance showed that they were proud of their job.

“I was proud of my job. Now that’s the best English word I can use, I was proud of my job, I really did a good job, I really thought I did a great job compared to my peers.” Participant 11

When assessing the participants’ comments, it is evident that most of the participants which responded were quite happy with their jobs, they enjoyed and loved the work they were doing. They were also passionate and dedicated to their work, and they

worked hard to achieve good results and make a difference in the area they were working in.

5.5.3.2 The Participants' Attitude Towards their Job During the Restructuring

Table 14: Participants' Attitudes Towards their Job During the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency
1	Were disengaged, didn't care about job and had lower job performance	5
2	Generally, not changed	4
3	Generally, changed	4
4	Proud, loved their job and felt their job was important	3

There were four participants who felt that their general attitude towards their work had not changed. There were also four participants who felt that it had changed. Those whose attitude had not changed felt that they were still passionate about their work and they loved their job.

"I love my job, I really do and nothing changed." Participant 2

"My current attitude, it has changed a bit..." Participant 6

Whilst there may not be an overpowering voice in term of the general change in the participants' attitude, the largest construct frequency of five participants was for feeling disengaged and not caring much about their jobs. These participants even lowered their job performance during the restructuring process.

"So that impacted directly into my position and during the whole process I was very disengaged, actively disengaged. Meaning that I would come to work, just do the bare minimum, just to get by, and you just only try to do what is on your performance contract and that is it. No discretionary effort any longer. That thing of giving it your all, it is not there anymore." Participant 9

"I think during the whole process, you just stopped caring about what they want because you knew that you were at risk no matter what you do you might be gone tomorrow." Participant 3

There were also some participants who exhibited and maintained an attitude of pride and dedication towards their work. They loved their work and considered their work to be important and a reflection of themselves.

“Once you have done something and you are proud of what you have done, the outcome of that gives you pride. I feel satisfied on that when I look at the project and say, you know, that project actually I did it with the team, that’s what drives me.” Participant 16

5.5.3.3 The Participants’ Attitude Towards their Job After the Restructuring

Table 15: Participants’ Attitudes Towards their Job After the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency
1	Love their job, have positive attitude and want to work harder, produce great results	5
2	Not proud of their work and offer limited input to work	2

The participants exhibited similar attitudes as those shown during the restructuring process. Some participants felt that they were still passionate and they loved their job and they wanted to reach greater heights in the job, whilst a minimal number of participants were no longer proud of their job and they gave limited input towards their work.

“Ja, it (the restructuring) was a great thing and that even added more positiveness and now I even want to do more, I want to go even higher. It changed me in a positive way. I wanted to do more, I wanted to shine and be visible.” Participant 12

5.5.4 Conclusion for Research Question Two

Once again, it should be noted that this section had a low number of responses. The participants’ feelings and attitude towards their jobs were initially quite positive before the restructuring took place. The majority had a positive outlook, indicating that they loved their job, and felt engaged with the organisation. They also had a positive attitude to working hard to achieve good results. However, it was clear from the findings that these feelings and attitudes were negatively affected during the restructuring process. Several participants became less engaged and less motivated to perform well. Many participants failed to give feedback on their feelings and attitudes after the restructuring, but the trend was similar to that of during the restructuring process.

5.6 Results for Research Question Three

How does the restructuring process affect how the surviving participants lead their subordinates?

The purpose of this question was to discover whether the surviving participants have had to adapt and vary the manner in which they manage, lead, and interact with their teams or subordinates, throughout the different stages of the restructuring process. The term team and subordinate will be used interchangeably in this section. In discovering how the surviving participants lead their teams during the restructuring process, it may be possible to determine what they do to help their teams cope and come to terms with the restructuring process whilst maintaining an acceptable level of productivity.

A comparison was done between the manner in which the participants led and interacted with their teams before, during and after the restructuring process

5.6.1 The Participants' Manner of Leading Before the Restructuring Process

Table 16: Participants' Manner of Leading Before the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Collaborative approach and results driven	6	7
2	Fair and firm with employees	4	5
3	Transparent and open communication	3	5

Three main styles were identified as being employed by the participants prior to the restructuring, in order to manage and lead their subordinates, to get the best results out of their performance.

The leading construct style mentioned by six participants, was that of a collaborative, participative approach, and being involved with their subordinates. The focus was on working on a mutual understanding and a shared vision or goal, between the participants and their subordinates. The emphasis was on getting the best performance and results out of their teams.

"I rather move into a participative style to get the team buy-in and then land on a doable solution and then just manage the doable solution, that was easier to manage because everyone understands the way we are going,

they understand the end result, so the targets are clear and that was easier to manage... where appropriate I used a participative or collaborative management style.” Participant 11

“I think before [the restructuring] I was definitely very much involved, all the way to the bottom. I used to sit in their meetings... to interact and talk to the guys, I was hands-on, not like a dictator.” Participant 13

The next most common manner to lead, employed by four of the participants, focused on treating subordinates in a fair and just manner. The participants who employed this style were deadline and results driven. They always aimed to meet their targets and produce work of an exceptional standard. The participants indicated that as much as they were firm with their subordinates and wanted to get results, they still treated them fairly and with respect.

“Before, I liked to keep people accountable, you will account for everything, because it’s called empowered accountability. So I gave you all you want, you got all the resources, if you do not deliver I am going to hold you accountable.” Participant 14

“My preferred sense of leadership was, you give people... roles and deliverables, and expect them to deliver.” Participant 15

Some of the participants found it best to be open and transparent with their subordinates, allowing them to know what decisions were to be made and why. They always strived to inform their subordinates of everything that effects the department, whilst keeping them calm. By following this approach, they established a relationship of trust, mutual respect and collaboration with their subordinates.

“I think I was more transparent, and communication as well, I wouldn’t keep anything from them. So they knew everything about the whole operation, what was happening, why are we doing this, addressing issues if there is a risk to be addressed they will know upfront... even communication in terms of production... Which they liked as well, they appreciated that.” Participant 5

“With my people, I had some sort of open relationship so I wasn’t afraid to say what I was feeling, but again I was responsible enough to keep them calm.” Participant 10

The participants' main focus before the restructuring process was on having open and honest communication with their subordinates, thus building a relationship of trust and fostering a collaborative manner of leading their teams. They found this essential in driving key performance and productivity.

5.6.2 The Participants' Manner of Leading During the Restructuring Process

Table 17: Participants' Manner of Leading During the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Encourage and motivate team to work	11	13
2	Empathetic and lenient towards team	7	9
3	Open, honest communication and build and maintain trust	5	6
4	More involved and showed more of old positive style	3	4
5	Distanced self and neglected team while focusing on new structure	3	3
6	Found it hard to lead them while also affected	2	4
7	No change to leadership style	2	2
8	Varied leadership style depending on the employees' needs	1	1
9	Unsympathetic towards subordinates	1	1

During the restructuring process, the participants needed to get their subordinates to think positively about their jobs, the process and their future (first construct). They sought to encourage, support, and motivate them so as to get their subordinates to focus on work. Through fostering positive thoughts, the participants aimed to keep their subordinates focused on producing good quality work or meeting their production targets during the restructuring process.

“As much as we were all emotionally drained or grieving, we needed to be aware that our team are going through the same thing. So we had to keep the teams motivated, we had to keep assuring everyone that this is for the good of the company and that this is a process that has an end.” Participant 13

The participants were more sympathetic and empathetic towards their subordinates during this time (second construct), as they were going through the process

themselves. Most restructuring processes started with senior employees and ended with the most junior. As a result, the participants knew how their subordinates were feeling as they had gone through the same emotions, concerns and insecurities. The participants were also more lenient on their subordinates in terms of meeting deadlines and producing the expected results. The participants understood that they could not drive performance as they did before the process, as they would appear to be inconsiderate and insensitive, and they were aware that their subordinates were stressed by the process.

“They are human beings, they are people that are going to go through the same stress levels as you are and I think you have to have a lot more empathy for the guys going through the same type of process... So I had a lot more empathy with the guys.” Participant 3

“Now during this whole process, you cannot really hold people accountable to that extent... Now if they are a bit slow or they are being negative it could be they still feel the pressure or the load that comes as a result thereof. I had to slack a bit during [the process]. And I was a bit firmer before that. Now you are just slack and you tend to tolerate crap, let’s put it like that. It’s not to say it cannot be done but you tend to say, it’s all right, I understand you did not get to the target because you lost this and that. You tolerate it.” Participant 14

“I need to understand that you are going through a difficult time and I cannot be hard on you and now say you are not performing or you are disregarding company rules in terms of time. It will be like, now you want to victimise them... like you appear as if you don’t care.” Participant 9

Communication during the restructuring process was considered vital (third construct) as it afforded employees the necessary information about the process, to ensure that they were secure and that they could make rational decisions during the process. Some participants focused on maintaining transparent, open and honest communication, to foster and maintain a relationship of trust.

“During a restructuring process, one of the things that you have to show... it was trust... they still have to trust you as a manager... showing trust among the employees and also keep on inspiring them. So it’s mainly about showing, inspiring these people and making sure the trust still remains.” Participant 6

Despite the participants adapting the way in which they managed during the restructuring process, in order to get the best results out of the subordinates, they still experienced difficulties in managing during this process. The participants found that they ended up separating and distancing themselves from their subordinates (fifth construct). The separation occurred as a coping strategy to deal with their own personal struggles with the process, to try and structure their departments, and still manage their subordinates. They also found that they ended up neglecting their subordinates as they were more focused on themselves and the new structure.

“When this process started, I neglected my team horribly, completely actually, let me put it that way. I did not spend enough time with my team as well throughout it all because I put in all my effort on this, so the problem is it blinded me to my teams struggle as well, because they all then were impacted.” Participant 8

“Whereas of late I find myself more distant... So I feel like there has been a change, I have pulled out a bit.” Participant 13

During the restructuring process the participants had to be more sensitive to the needs of their subordinates and act in a manner that was sympathetic, empathetic and fostered a relationship of trust. They also had to be a lot more considerate and lenient as well as motivate their subordinates to get the best performance levels that they could from their subordinates. As much as they adapted their way of leading, to suit the environment, they still found it a bit challenging to give their subordinates their full attention and remain focused on the process.

5.6.3 The Participants’ Manner of Leading After the Restructuring Process

Table 18: Participants’ Manner of Leading After the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Firm with employees	3	3
2	Manner of leading changed because of the new role	2	2
3	Manner of leading and interacting with the team was consistent	2	2

It was noted that the participants altered the manner in which they interacted with their subordinates during the restructuring process to help their subordinates cope with the

process. They focused on styles and qualities which showed that they were empathetic, supportive and understanding of what their subordinates were experiencing. Post the restructuring process, there was no need for focus on the emotional element and the participants reverted to their original ways of leading their subordinates. As such only the participants' manner of leading before and during the restructuring process were discussed in detail.

It was noted that the participants generally modified their manner of leading, to be more conducive to the restructuring environment. They changed from being very firm and results driven to being more mindful of their subordinates' feelings and the stress brought on by the restructuring process. Thus, they attempted to be more open, transparent, fostering a relationship of trust, sympathetic, empathetic, lenient, and understanding of what their subordinates were experiencing. By changing these ways of managing, the participants were able to get their subordinates to focus on work and perform, even though the performance was not necessarily at the same levels as before the restructuring process.

5.6.4 Conclusion for Research Question Three

The main change in the manner in which the participants lead their team occurred from before the restructuring process to during the process. There was not much of a change from during the restructuring process to post the process. What was noted is that the participants maintained their core leadership styles, they merely added some form of emotional element to their style in order to motivate and help their team cope with the process. Once the process was over they returned to their original style and they let go of the emotional element as it was no longer necessary post the restructuring process.

5.7 Results for Research Question Four

How does a restructuring process impact the participants' feelings and perceptions of the organisation and their continued tenure within the organisation?

The purpose of this question was to discover whether the participants' feelings, thoughts, and attitudes towards the organisation change through the different stages of the restructuring process. Furthermore, this question aimed to discover whether the

participants’ feelings and perceptions of their tenure within the organisation and the security of their roles and jobs, was altered throughout the process.

The results for this question have been split into two sections, the first part being the change in the participants’ perception of the organisation and the second section being the participants’ feelings and perceptions of job security.

5.7.1 Perceptions of the Organisation

The interview questions aimed to discover whether the restructuring process affected or altered the participants’ perception towards the organisation in any way, before, during, or after the restructuring process. The perception of the organisation included the perception of the leaders within the organisation, that being the senior management and executives within the organisation. The participants felt the organisation cannot be separated from its leaders as they can be considered to be the face and representation of the organisations and for that reason, their perception of the leaders was considered in their responses.

5.7.1.1 Perceptions of the Organisation Before the Restructuring

Table 19: Perceptions of the Organisation Before the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Organisation cared for its people, their growth, skills, and protected their jobs	7	9
2	Good organisation to work for and proud to be part of it	4	4
3	Executives are engaging, employees are allowed to think outside the box	2	2

The participants’ perceptions of the organisation before the restructuring process were positive. The respective organisations were seen to take care of their employees through growth and skills development and the organisations were perceived to protect their employees’ jobs (first construct). The participants felt that their organisations showed that employees matter and they are valuable to the organisation.

“There are some companies that are known for job security and our company had that thing before the first restructuring. People were sure of their jobs... The company used to shelter employees.” Participant 1

“I thought it was a great company looking after its people.” Participant 11

All the participants had positive sentiments towards their organisations and they felt that they were good organisations to work for (second construct). They were proud to be associated with and be part of the organisation due to the manner in which the employees were treated.

“It’s the best company to work for. I was not even thinking of maybe applying for a job anywhere else because I knew that it’s the best”.
Participant 5

“You were proud to be part of this company. You knew that it would be great to work for this company.” Participant 3

Lastly, the participants indicated that the executives were engaged with their employees whilst exhibiting great leadership (third construct). The sentiment was that the leaders listened to the employees’ input and encouraged the presentation of new and good ideas. They accepted that other people may have good ideas and great input and they encouraged out of the box thinking.

“In fact, the chairman had a mantra that there is always a better way, he just arrived and talked to you. He was a very engaging executive... So we were encouraged to challenge the status quo.” Participant 4

5.7.1.2 Perceptions of the Organisation During the Restructuring

Through observation of the high-ranking constructs it was noted that the participants’ perception of the organisation changed during the restructuring process, from being positive and of high regard towards the organisation to one of a negative perception. The participants also gave the impression of ‘them’ and ‘us’ where the leaders were the ones who had changed and were making terrible decisions and they were separate from the leaders’ actions.

Table 20: Perceptions of the Organisation During the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Leaders did not show compassion or care for employees	8	10
2	Leaders lacked trust, honesty and were not transparent in their actions and communication	4	8
3	Leaders focused on self-interest, they did not do all in their power to save jobs	4	6
4	“Organisation was not loyal to its people	4	4
5	“Participants’ loyalty to the organisation was reduced	3	3
6	Leadership cared about the people	2	2
7	“The organisation was not as great as it used to be	1	1

As indicated in the first construct, the participants felt that the organisation as a whole and the leaders, did not care about the wellbeing and survival of the employees. They also considered senior managers to be insensitive and lacking in compassion during their conduct and interaction with employees, thus indicating that they did not care about the employees.

“They don’t care about you, they don’t care about me, so they don’t care if I have got a job or not, let’s put it that way, and now I need to remember that although I am an employee and they say you are valued, you are just an employee that can be replaced, you can be retrenched. It’s as simple as that.” Participant 8

“I know of former colleagues that were blatantly told that you’re finishing end of July, without any compassion or empathy or even preparing the individual.” Participant 2

The participants also perceived that the leaders were not transparent and honest in their conduct or communication on the justification of decisions made (second construct). They felt that the leaders did not act in good faith and they could not be trusted. This brought up feelings of mistrust toward the organisation from the participants.

“The feeling I got was that execs were not as transparent as they could have been with what exactly they were trying to achieve with the restructuring. They knew, but they did not share that with everybody... I

don't think they were honest with everybody... I think that there were hidden agendas with the restructuring.” Participant 3

“I started having feelings of mistrust, in a way, for the top leadership of the organisation to say, we opened up VSP's and only they knew what they are going to do... People really lost trust in that... Mistrust is very high.” Participant 9

The feeling that the leaders could not be trusted was exacerbated by the perception that leaders were only focused and concerned with what was beneficial to them and the decisions they made were reflective of such behaviour (third construct). The participants also felt that the leaders were focused on themselves and profits. This was further exhibited by the lack of action to explore all possibilities to save employees' jobs.

“During that (restructuring) phase, seeing how everything and the structure was you realise that they were looking after themselves and close business associates. It was not to the benefit of company or anyone that works in that company, they looked after themselves that became clear... I think during the restructuring... you realised that the company is not there to look after their people, they are there to look after their own pocket. I think your perception towards certain individuals in the company changed, I talk about senior management, so we initially had the idea in your head that the executives are acting in the best interest of the company... there is no loyalty.” Participant 3

The participants perceived the decisions of the leaders to indicate that the organisation was not loyal to its employees (fourth construct). The feeling about this lack of loyalty from the organisation was reciprocated by the participants not being loyal to the organisations.

“We were loyal to the teeth because we will fight with our teeth for the company, and then suddenly it comes back to say... it (the restructuring) has got to happen...” Participant 11

There was an overall change in the participants' perceptions towards the organisation during the restructuring. Their perceptions of the organisation moved into a negative space where they felt that the organisation and its leaders could not be trusted, they were not loyal to the employees, and they did not have the employees' best interests at heart. The participants had a view that the leaders were concerned about themselves

and all that benefitted them. This led the participants to exhibit less trust and loyalty toward the organisation as they felt that the organisation was not honest, could not be trusted and was not loyal to the employees.

5.7.1.3 Perception of the Organisation After the Restructuring

Table 21: Perception of the Organisation After the Restructuring

	Perception of the organisation	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Participants general perception of the organisation changed	10	12
2	Leaders did not care about employees, employees were a means to an end	9	12
3	Disappointed in leaders' actions and decisions, and had no faith in them	8	9
4	Leaders were ruthless, they only cared about profits and were focused on self-interest	6	9
5	Leaders were not transparent, open and honest in communication	6	6
6	Leaders were disengaged and were not excited about future of the organisation	4	5
7	Organisation cared, trusted and had faith in its employees	3	4
8	Leadership was great and generally improved the view of the organisation	3	3
9	Did not trust leaders, they were hiding information from employees	2	3
10	Leaders did not fully understand the consequences of their actions	2	2
11	Loyalty to the organisation was reduced	2	2
12	Had trust in the leaders	2	2
13	Leaders could not be questioned, there was no open culture	1	1
14	Not the best organisation to work for	1	1
15	The organisation was not loyal to its people	1	1

The majority of the participants indicated that their perceptions of the organisation had changed negatively, from what it had been before the restructuring process to what it was after the process (first construct). They now had a negative perception of the organisation and its leadership. The change in the participants' perception was brought on by the feeling of disappointment in the leaders' actions and decisions (third construct). The participants felt that the leaders spoke one thing and acted differently

from what they had been communicating to the organisation (fifth construct), they were hypocritical in their behaviour making the participants feel even more like they could not have faith in the leaders. Furthermore, the participants felt that the leaders were disengaged and had separated themselves from the organisation (sixth construct), they were not leading from the front, and they were not aware of the true reality of what was going on.

“I have lost faith and confidence in my employer, totally.” Participant 11

“I’m disappointed with the company... What they preach and what they do are two different things.” Participant 1

“There is no direction to say these are our focus areas for the year, this is where we are taking the organisation. Now we hear that there is a new business strategy that they developed by themselves, they haven’t communicated it yet, they said they will communicate it when they have finished the whole restructuring process. So the leadership is not there, they completely detached themselves from the people... employees and top management should be... in the same boat (as us) ... when we are in trouble why then do you separate yourself.” Participant 9

Through the review of the participants’ responses, it was noted that similar feelings and perceptions of the organisation were exhibited during the restructuring process as those after the restructuring. The participants still felt that the organisation did not care about its employees to an extent where they felt like employees were seen as mere numbers and a means to an end, utilised to meet the leaders’ plans (second construct). They held the view that leaders were not honest, open and transparent in their communication and their decision-making processes (fifth construct). Participants still felt like their leaders could not be trusted, they only cared about themselves, and were not transparent in their actions (third construct). Thus, the participants’ level of trust and loyalty towards the organisation was negatively affected (eleventh construct).

“How I feel about the company, there is an impact, I feel that in general terms we are more numbers than humans.” Participant 4

“The company did a survey and the biggest feedback was that senior management has lost the trust. They don’t have trust. The staff do not trust in their ability to guide the company... we are still in the position where the trust is not there in the organisation... if you don’t trust management, then ethics comes under question.” Participant 3

The participants felt that the leaders were concerned about profit margins more than they were concerned about the employees (second construct). In addition, they felt that the leaders were ruthless in their decision making, and were inconsiderate of the impact of their decisions on the employees (fourth construct).

“It’s every man for himself... It’s a dog eat dog world, it’s that kind of thing where you literally don’t see people looking after each other and looking out for each other. It’s about survival, it’s like Animal Farm, everybody just does their own thing, there’s rebellions happening everywhere and you see them and you think, what the hell was that? The people who are making the decisions didn’t give a shit, they just did what they needed to get the money, as usual.” Participant 7

The overall perception of the organisation after the restructuring was negative. The participants felt that the leaders were focused on profits and were making decisions that were to their benefit rather than the benefit of the whole organisation. They believed that the organisation had stopped caring about its employees and employees were seen as a means to an end rather than one of the most vital resources available to an organisation. The participants lost trust in the organisations and leaders, as they felt that they could not be trusted and were not loyal. In addition, their loyalty to the organisation was negatively affected.

5.7.2 Feelings and Perceptions of the Participants Security Within the Organisation

The second part of the question aimed to discover whether the participants’ feelings and perceptions in regards to their existence within the organisation, and security of their role and job, were altered throughout the process.

5.7.2.1 Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security Before the Restructuring

Table 22: Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security Before the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	☐ Felt safe and confident	8	8
2	☐ Thought it was a lifetime tenure	2	2

Prior to the commencement of the restructuring process, the participants felt safe and secure in their jobs. They felt that their respective organisations guaranteed and

protected their jobs and they would in turn work for those organisations for their entire lives. They had their own career plans and aspirations to grow within the organisations, and they felt that there was nothing that could make them lose their jobs.

“Before [the restructuring] most of us were cruising, I started as a trainee and there was that promise, even though it was not written, that you are going to grow through the structures if you do well. So there was not really that much of a concern in terms of should I be looking for jobs somewhere else, I just saw the structure and I had my own targets to say I’m going to be someone.” Participant 13

“We are from the baby boomer generation, the 65’ers to the 70’s, we go for job security, we start at a firm and you work at a firm and you retire at a firm, and you will even sacrifice family time for the firm because the firm looks after you and you look after the firm, that was the concept.” Participant 11

“I was sure that I am there, my job was safe. There was no risk in terms of me losing my job. Respondent 5. I was rather secured, I did not have any feelings of job insecurity, I must say.” Participant 9

5.7.2.2 Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security During the Restructuring

Table 23: Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security During the Restructuring

	Construct	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Insecurity, uncertainty, anxiety and fear of job loss	18	20
2	αFelt safe and secure in job	2	2

When the participants overall perception of job security before the restructuring was compared to that of during the restructuring, it was noted that the participants’ feelings and perceptions regarding the security of jobs within the organisation changed drastically during the restructuring process, with all the participants indicating that they felt insecure, uncertain and anxious about their job security since the restructure (first construct). Some participants had previously felt that because they were in the core business operations of the organisation, their positions would not be affected. However, when they realised that their positions would be affected, they started feeling insecure. The process brought on feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, fear, and worry, even

to the participants which were most secure in their jobs before the restructuring process.

“Ja, well I suppose before, we used to think like that, like we engineers are untouchable. After [the restructuring] I realised well, we can be cut down to one.” Participant 13

An overwhelming number of participants experienced feelings of insecurity, uncertainty, anxiety and fear (first construct) because they did not have sufficient information to know what was going to happen in the organisation, where their future lay, or what options they had available to them. They had a lot of unanswered questions. The participants indicated that they had to start thinking about the possibility of not having a job or having to leave an organisation which they previously felt comfortable in and were planning to spend their working careers in. The participants also felt like the people and leaders within the organisation could not be trusted. Unfortunately, those feelings did not alleviate their concerns. The participants' feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and fear of losing their jobs and the ability to source an income were at their highest during the restructuring process.

“Oh no, it makes you very insecure. I have never been an insecure person in my entire life. It's like I was always sure that I would be in a job, I never for once thought that any kind of restructuring talk or whatever would ever come near me, and yet it did, it was very close to me.” Participant 7

“So the feeling was still there but that fear of uncertainty sort of kicked in, here is something coming and what is going to happen? I didn't know what was going to happen... But there was uncertainty, there were a lot of question marks within me to say, look... now it looks like there is a storm coming, what if the storm affects me or my job.” Participant 5

“And it really made me very anxious to say, if I don't get a position here in [the organisation] then I am not going to fit outside.” Participant 9

“Ja, it is difficult to get a job anywhere else, you had to pray to keep yours.” Participant 13

There was a minority of participants which felt safe and secure in their position because of the speciality of their roles (second construct). They felt that they would not lose their jobs because they were a scarce resource. Other participants felt safe because they expected the employment equity policy to be implemented and that would result in their job being spared.

“Because of the speciality... because my role is a specialised role, I went into this comfort mode that I am safe and then I got the document (confirmation). I felt kind of secure.” Participant 2

“I was an EE candidate and it’s now a legal requirement for them to comply (with EE numbers), so I calculated the risk and I assessed the risk. I looked at the number of people at my level and I realised that they would have to keep me because of the EE... this was according to my assessment.” Participant 1

5.7.2.3 Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security After the Restructuring

Table 24: Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security After the Restructuring

	Constructs	Frequency	Frequency of mention
1	Felt safe, confident and secure in job; not afraid to lose job	13	17
2	Insecure, anxious, and uncertain of the future of the organisation	7	12
3	Concerned about career growth and employability	7	10

As indicated by the first construct, the end of the restructuring process brought back feelings of security for most of the participants. They also felt confident and secure in their jobs, that there is nothing in the foreseeable future that would cause them to lose their jobs since they were performing at or above the expected levels. Others felt confident because they had gained additional experience or had up skilled themselves during the restructuring process. As such, they had scarce skills within the organisation, they had become a scarce, skilled resource.

“I have got a unique skill-set which is admirable in my eyes, I get head hunters phoning me, which is nice... I am in a niche market where there are limited individuals.” Participant 11

“Within the organisation there is a strategic position and this position is a scarce skill. And in this case my category is falling within a scarce skill, now it is part of the set scarce skills within the... industry... And with performance discussions that I have with my principals that does give certainty of, ‘I am covered’.” Participant 6

Other participants were no longer afraid of losing their jobs (first construct). It was as though the process has destroyed all fears associated with losing their jobs. They rationalised their feelings by expressing that the notion of job security no longer exists and as such they cannot live in fear of losing their job.

“The biggest thing this whole process took away from me was my fear of sitting at home without a job, it was my fear of losing my job.” Participant 8

“The job security was a wake-up call, we thought we would always be at [the organisation] having a career... and then suddenly everything changed. The career security is not there anymore.” Participant 11

“This whole thing has taught me that gone are the days of security.” Participant 9

There were some participants that still felt anxious and insecure in their jobs (second construct). They felt insecure as they were uncertain of the future direction of the organisation. They felt that the organisation may have a further restructuring process in order to remain profitable, as the economic climate has not improved. Then they would have to deal with the possibility of losing their jobs again.

“Knowing that the economy is at this state, even with comments from management that they are not considering further restructurings, you know that this can happen at any time. Anything can happen to any company at any time and you can go through the same process again.” Participant 3

“And after this you just knew that, you know what, any day anybody can be jobless. So it’s now you feel vulnerable and now you start looking at yourself and then that loyalty to [organisation] starts shrinking, because it has today just showed you that we are not always safe here.” Participant 10

There was an underlying concern among the participants which related to their career growth and future employability (third construct). They were uncertain about how their careers would progress in the new, leaner structure and whether they had the required skills to move into senior positions within and outside the organisation. Some participants felt that they should expand their skills base to better improve their employability.

“In terms of job security I am okay but in terms of whether I am still ahead (in my career), I don’t know... that’s another problem with lean structures, it’s so lean that there is no space to move.” Participant 14

“And maybe it affected me, that’s why afterwards I realised, no, I need to change, I need to broaden my experience.” Participant 16

5.7.3 Conclusion for Research Question Four

Prior to the restructuring process, the participants indicated that they had very positive sentiments towards their respective organisations who they believed cared for their employees. They were proud to work for their organisations and believed that their jobs would be protected by the organisation. These feelings and perceptions changed during the restructuring process. The participants became despondent, as they started believing that they could no longer trust the organisation and that the organisation did not care for them. These feelings continued after the restructuring process as well, as the participants continued to feel unvalued and betrayed by the organisation who they believed was only interested in the bottom line. The participants remained disloyal to the organisation.

The disloyalty toward the organisation displayed by the participants after the restructuring process stemmed from their changed perception of their job security. Prior to the restructuring, there was no fear of job insecurity but during the process, the participants began to feel that their jobs were not secure. Coupled with this, they experienced anxiety and fear about their future. However, after the restructuring many of the participants became less anxious and accepted that job security can never be guaranteed. Some were motivated to improve their employability through up-skilling themselves.

5.8 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of the interviews conducted with participants who have survived a restructuring process within their organisation. The findings relating to each of the research questions presented in Chapter 3, were outlined. It was found that the restructuring process had resulted in various negative consequences in terms of the participants’ feelings, emotions, and perceptions of the organisation, feelings and behaviour towards the organisation and their jobs within the organisation, as well their psychological contract with the organisation. These findings will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, in relation to existing literature.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Findings

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings found in Chapter 5 as explored through in-depth interviews with the 17 participants who were middle managers that had survived a restructuring process. The findings will be examined against the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, in order to provide insight into the problem identified in Chapter 1 and to answer the research questions in Chapter 3.

6.2 Issue Identified From the Introductory Questions

Although the introductory questions were not intended to produce any findings regarding the restructuring process, two issues regarding the process of designing a new departmental structure were worth taking note of, from the introductory questions.

6.2.1 Issues with the Process of Designing a New Departmental Structure

It was found that a majority of participants felt excluded from the process of planning and determining their new departmental structures. They felt that they should have been more involved in the process as they have a better understanding of the functioning of their departments and also of what is truly happening at ground level. They felt frustrated at being given structures based on assumptions, which don't necessarily function well in their environment and they had to make them work with the limited resources provided to them. They also felt that senior management and the executives were not fully aware of the consequences of creating and imposing these impractical structures upon them, which increased their level of frustration.

The participants were frustrated as they felt that they should have been consulted instead of being given the design of the new structure and number of human resources that should be in their department, as it became their responsibility to make the structure function even if it is impractical and illogical given the available resources.

The participants generally had feelings of frustration for being excluded from the design process and for having to work with structures that would not enhance their departments' efficiencies.

The reviewed literature on restructuring does not detail the surviving middle managers' thoughts and feelings on new departmental structures, this study offered insight into those feelings and thoughts. The surviving middle managers expressed feelings of frustration concerning their minimal involvement and consultation in setting up the new structure, and they also thought that those who set up the new structures did not have a full understanding or appreciation of the day to day workings of the departments. This is a new insight into the thoughts and feelings of surviving middle managers.

6.3 Discussion of Findings for Research Question One

What impact does a restructuring process have on the surviving participants' frame of mind as well as their role as managers?

This question aimed to understand how restructuring processes affected the thoughts, attitude, behaviour, feelings, and emotions of the surviving participants. As previously mentioned, these thoughts, attitudes, behaviours, feelings, and emotions on the whole, will be referred to the participants' frame of mind. Furthermore, this question aimed to understand how their role as managers was generally affected by the restructuring process.

As it was done in Chapter 5, the findings will be discussed in three parts, firstly addressing the participants' thoughts of the restructuring process, secondly addressing how they were affected by the process, and lastly how they felt about the restructuring process.

6.3.1 Thoughts on the Restructuring Process and How it was Carried Out

The participants were asked what they thought about the restructuring process and how it was carried out. The participants' thoughts can be grouped into two major categories being the communication of the process, and the justification for instituting the restructuring process.

6.3.1.1 Thoughts on the Communication of the Restructuring Process

Concerning the manner in which the restructuring process was communicated, the majority of the participants thought that there was a lack of open communication and limited disclosure of information from senior management and the executives regarding

the process. This practice is consistent with that noted by Noronha and D’Cruz (2006), who observed that senior management tend to decrease communication during a restructuring process.

Literature indicates that limited communication gives rise to rumours and speculation, feelings of fear and uncertainty, and it negatively affects employees’ perceptions of the organisation (Clair et al., 2006; Lakshman et al., 2014; Levitt et al., 2008; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006; Monippally, 2003; Parks-Yancy, 2011). The effects of the limited communication on surviving middle managers was consistent with literature on surviving employees. The surviving middle managers felt that the communication was fragmented and lacked transparency, which caused rumours and gossip, resulting in increased feelings of frustration, anxiety, fear, panic and uncertainty about their own futures. The limited communication and disclosure of critical information also gave rise to feelings of mistrust towards senior management, thus changing their perception of the organisation as they were unsure of the truth. Furthermore, the participants had to deal with their subordinates who were also in a state of panic, worry and stress because of the rumours.

6.3.1.2 Thoughts on the Justification of the Restructuring Process

The manner in which organisations communicate affects how the surviving employees accept the restructuring process (Iverson & Zatzick, 2011; Levitt et al., 2008), and surviving employees are likely to accept or reject the restructuring process based on whether the reason for the restructuring is for the financial survival and sustainability of the organisation or the financial benefit of a few (Bragger et al., 2015; Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Kowske et al., 2010; Lakshman et al., 2014; Levitt et al., 2008).

As in accordance to literature, the surviving middle managers which accepted the need for the process, did so as they thought their organisations were inefficient, had excess human capital and if the organisations continued performing in the same manner with the same size of labour, they would not be profitable or financially sustainable in the current economic climate.

Likewise, the participants who did not accept the restructuring process thought that the main reason for the restructuring was not for the survival of the organisation but rather for the purposes of increasing profit at the expense of the employees, and because of this the participants experienced feelings of low morale. The participants were further left feeling less valued by the organisation, as if they were merely a means to an end. A point, which is often taken for granted, was raised by some participants. They thought

that their organisations were too radical and unreasonable in their cost cutting measures to an extent where employee morale was negatively affected.

The low morale and feelings of being less valued, were consistent with those noted in literature on surviving employees (Iverson & Zatzick, 2011; Travaglione & Cross, 2006), which further suggests that these feeling will lead to lower commitment.

As much as the surviving middle managers' feelings were similar to those experienced by surviving employees, as noted in literature; the surviving middle manager's acceptance of the restructuring process was not influenced by the level of communication, as stated in literature. It was discovered that the surviving middle managers' acceptance of the restructuring process was influenced more by their own assessment and analysis of the organisation and the environment it operates in, rather than the level of communication. They did not merely accept or reject the need for the restructuring based on the general, high level reasons given by the organisation. Their acceptance or rejection was based on the rational assessment of the organisation, the environment it operates in and whether it was a reasonable solution for their organisation.

6.3.2 How the Participants were Affected by the Restructuring Process

The manner in which the participants' role as a manager were affected by the restructuring process, can be classified into three categories:

- How the participants were generally affected by the restructuring process, in their capacity as managers;
- How the participants were affected by changes in their positions or roles as a result of the restructuring process; and
- How the participants were affected by the act of retrenching employees and setting up departments in line with the new structure.

Each of these three categories and their sub categories will be discussed separately.

6.3.2.1 Participants' Lives were Affected by the Restructuring

The majority of the participants echoed the same sentiments on how the restructuring process directly affected them as managers and as employees within the organisation. It negatively affected their feelings, emotions and confidence, and it heightened their stress levels. These negative feelings and emotions experienced by the surviving middle managers are consistent with those that have been noted in literature to be

associated with a restructuring process (Bragger et al., 2015; Carbery & Garavan, 2005; De Muse & Dai, 2013; Levitt et al., 2008; Molinsky & Margolis, 2006).

6.3.2.2 Participants Reconsidering their Priorities and their Place Within the Organisation

The participants were reconsidering their dedication to the organisation and their life priorities. Their dedication to the organisation was negatively affected in a sense that they were no longer willing to give more to the organisation than what was expected of them. They felt that they were previously overly committed to the organisation and in fulfilling its needs, to the detriment of what they deemed as priorities in their lives. Now, they were shifting their focus from the needs of the organisation to their own needs and priorities in their lives.

It could be said that the surviving middle managers' dedication, commitment and loyalty to the organisation was negatively affected by the restructuring process. These negative feelings are consistent with those that are exhibited by the surviving employees as noted in literature (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Kowske et al., 2010; Monippally, 2003; Omoruyi et al., 2011; Parzefall, 2012).

Surviving employees have a higher propensity to leave an organisation than they had previously, as they seek a more secure and stable environment (Datta et al., 2010; Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011; Kowske et al., 2010; Levitt et al., 2008; Omoruyi et al., 2011).

The participants in this study were also considering new possibilities and future plans, which included leaving the organisation and pursuing other interests such as furthering their studies, pursuing entrepreneurial and other business ventures, and looking for new employment outside the organisation. The consideration of new future plans was driven by the need for security, stability, and career diversification, as the restructuring process had made the participants feel insecure and uncertain of themselves and their future in the organisation. Their behaviour suggests that their propensity to leave the organisation was increased, and their sense of belonging and purpose within the organisation was negatively affected by the restructuring.

What has been revealed through this study, which was not explicitly stated in the reviewed literature, is that the surviving middle managers were concerned about the security of their future income, resulting in consideration of furthering their studies and other business ventures.

The participants felt they needed to commit themselves to what matters to them and not the organisation and they also felt insecure and uncertain about their future in the organisation. As a result, the participants lowered their commitment and loyalty towards the organisation and their propensity to leave the organisation was increased.

6.3.2.3 Participants Affected by the Loss of Skilled Employees

As observed in literature, organisations have to deal with losing skilled employees who accept restructuring packages as they are unable to cope in an environment filled with uncertainty, or they want to pursue other interests (Boyd et al., 2013; Hassard et al., 2012; Levitt et al., 2008; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006). This observation was not different for the surviving middle managers as they were also struggling with the loss of skilled, dedicated, hardworking subordinates who were either retrenched or they could not cope with the uncertainty, and chose to accept their voluntary restructuring packages.

Through this study, the surviving middle managers went on further to express how they were affected by the loss of employees. These feelings have not been expressly noted in the reviewed literature on surviving employees. They offer new insight that can be considered to be distinct to middle managers. The participants felt very frustrated by the loss of skilled, dedicated, hardworking subordinates and they also felt that the organisation could have done more to save such employees’ jobs. Their frustration was brought on by the fact that they were still required to produce good quality work and/ or meet their production targets, with limited skilled human resources. They argued that the loss of skilled human resources negatively affected their performance and ability to produce good results.

6.3.3 How the Participants were Affected by Changes in their Positions or Roles

One of the noticeable consequences that the restructuring process had on the participants was the how their positions or roles were affected by the restructuring. Some of the participants had minor changes in their roles, some got new roles at a similar managerial position, and others had major changes to their roles where they had to accept jobs at a lower managerial level.

6.3.3.1 Change in Participants’ Roles and Management Levels

Organisations would expect employees, who managed to secure jobs at the same managerial level as their previous jobs, would be pleased and grateful (Levitt et al.,

2008; Norohna & D'Cruz, 2005). However, it was found that the participants who had a role change while remaining at the same managerial level, felt unhappy and were annoyed by the changes. They felt like the role change was unfair as it presented an unwanted change to their careers. They also felt that the new positions were at lower levels of complexity, even considering them as a demotion. This resulted in the feelings and perceptions of a loss of power, authority, status, and self-confidence. The expression of these feelings offers new insight into how surviving middle managers are affected, as they have not been expressed in the reviewed literature. As a consequence of these feelings the participants' level of job satisfaction and contentment was negatively affected.

As noted by Carbery and Garavan (2005), organisations going through a restructuring cannot provide training to employees in new roles, and similarly these organisations were unable to provide training for surviving middle managers in new roles. Dwyer and Arbelo (2011), Hanson (2015), and Lakshman et al. (2014), considered training to be an important factor and a moderator of the negative feelings experienced by surviving employees. This study found that the contrary was true for the managers. The lack of training worsened the managers' negative feelings. In addition, these negative feelings were exacerbated by having to be trained by their subordinates. They found the process of learning from their subordinates to be more stressful and frustrating, and felt that it further reduced their power and authority.

The participants who were demoted to a junior level also felt unhappy, angry and dissatisfied, which is consistent with literature (Hassard et al., 2012; Parks-Yancy, 2011). These feelings came from the loss of power and authority, from losing their managerial position, and/ or from having to be managed by a person who was once their subordinate. They also found it hard reporting to someone who used to be their subordinate.

The general change in roles negatively affected the participants' loyalty to the organisation, which is supported by the literature on surviving employees (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Grunberg et al., 2016; Norohna & D'Cruz, 2006; Rust et al., 2005). However, what was further expressed by the participants, is that they were merely remaining in the organisation because of how well they were compensated, and not out of loyalty.

The participants felt unhappy, annoyed, angry, and dissatisfied at the changes in their job roles. They also felt that the changes were unfair and they came with a loss of

power, authority, status and self-confidence. The participants at junior levels found it hard to adjust and deal with the change in manager-subordinate relationship.

6.3.4 How the Participants were Affected by the Act of Retrenching Employees and Setting up New Departments

6.3.4.1 Participants' Emotional Struggle with Retrenching Employees

People responsible for implementing the restructuring process find the process to be difficult, uncomfortable, unpleasant and emotional (Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2005). The participants' feelings concurred with literature on implementers, as they felt that they were emotionally affected by the act of having to inform their subordinates that they have been retrenched.

The participants found it extremely difficult to cope with informing their subordinates of the restructuring, they exhibited feelings of guilt, sadness and heartbreak and they found the process to be difficult, hard, strenuous, and filled with a range of emotions. The feelings of guilt and other emotions were exacerbated by the connections the participants had with their subordinates, both in and out of work. The participants also found themselves worrying about their subordinates' employability and the survival of their families. This state of worry further increased their stress levels and worsened their feelings of guilt.

One of the recurring feelings reported in literature on restructurings and surviving employees, is the feeling of guilt (Clair et al., 2006; Datta et al., 2010; De Muse & Dai, 2013; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011; Grunberg et al., 2006; Levitt et al., 2008; Molinsky & Margolis, 2006; Parks-Yancy, 2011; Shook & Roth, 2011). However, the participants did not exhibit feelings of guilt because of the same reasons surviving employees do. It should also be noted that this was the one instance where the participants truly exhibited feelings of guilt. The participants expressed that they had previously fired subordinates and they were not emotionally affected by that, for that subordinate's behaviour warranted them to be fired, whereas restructurings are unwarranted.

The participants found the process to be so difficult that they thought of resigning from their jobs so other people could handle the process. The considerations of delegating this task to someone else, or escaping it by leaving the organisation, are consistent with those exhibited implementers in the literature (Clair et al., 2006; Grunberg, et al., 2006). In order to try and cope with the process and the overwhelming emotions of

terminating employees, the participants minimised interaction with their subordinates and withdrew and distanced themselves from those affected by the restructuring process. Once again, this behaviour is consistent with those of the implementers, as noted in literature (Clair et al., 2006; Grunberg et al., 2006; Molinsky & Margolis, 2006; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2005).

One of the things that offered insight and was revealed during the study that differentiated surviving middle managers from the implementers detailed in literature, was that the surviving middle managers still had to work closely with the retrenched employees until they left the organisation. Through this study, it was revealed that surviving middle managers found it very difficult to manage subordinates who were stressed, anxious, panicking and struggling to accept and come to terms with their restructuring. The feelings and behaviour of their subordinates translated to lowered performance, thus affecting the overall performance of their departments.

The participants also had to cope with the retrenched employees begging for their jobs, and/ or getting blamed and threatened because of the restructuring. The actions of begging for their jobs and threatening the participants would extend beyond the workplace into the participants' homes.

This is another element that was discovered during the study which was not detailed in the reviewed literature on implementers. The surviving middle managers experienced difficulty in setting up their new departments due to the limited availability of skilled, human resources. The difficulty in designing a new structure and not having adequate human resources was attributed to the process used in selecting the employees to be retained within the organisation and those to be retrenched. The participants found the selection process to be flawed, inconsistent and prone to managers using their own judgement to decide who retains their job and who gets retrenched.

The biggest impact that the restructuring process had on the participants' feelings and emotions was the actual execution of the restructurings. The participants experienced a range of feelings, including guilt, and difficulties from having to inform their subordinates of their restructuring.

6.3.5 Participants General Feelings on the Restructuring Process

The participants were asked how they felt about the restructuring process. This question aimed to explore the respondents' feelings and emotions arising from the restructuring.

6.3.5.1 Participants' Feelings and Emotions

The restructuring process, by its very nature, is associated with positive and negative effects on the surviving employees' feelings and emotions (Bragger et al, 2015; Carbery & Garavan, 2005; Datta et al., 2010; Hanson, 2015). In accordance with literature, the participants found that their feelings and emotions were affected by the restructuring process. The participants experienced feeling sad, hurt, angry, frustrated, vulnerable, alienated, rejected and betrayed, and a range of other emotions; as well as feelings and perceptions of fairness and unfairness. These feelings and emotions are consistent with those reviewed in literature on surviving employees, therefore, it can be said that surviving middle managers experience the same feelings and emotions and as those experienced by surviving employees (Datta et al., 2010; Gandolfi & Hansson, 2011; Grunberg et al. 2006; Hanson, 2015; Lakshman et al., 2014; Levitt et al., 2008; Molinsky & Margolis, 2006; Shook & Roth, 2011; Parks-Yancy, 2011).

It is worth noting that, contrary to the surviving employees, the participants did not exhibit emotions of guilt that are experienced by surviving employees when they receive their job whilst others do not. Shook & Roth (2011) observed that feelings of guilt arise when the surviving employees are unable to deal with conflicting emotions of relief, joy, sadness and distress, that arise due to witnessing others lose their jobs while having retained theirs. The participants did not experience that conflict, they seemed to rationalise things and accept that they got their job and other people lost theirs. Besides the feeling of relief, the participants did not associate other feelings with having retained their jobs.

In addition to feeling emotional, the participants experienced strong feelings of uncertainty, anxiety and discomfort. They indicated that these feelings of uncertainty and anxiety were heightened by the lack of complete information regarding the process, and that the duration of the restructuring process also increased their feelings of uncertainty. The effects of a lack of communication on the surviving managers were consistent with those noted in literature on surviving employees, for the lack of communication increases feelings of uncertainty (Hart et al., 2016; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006).

Participants also felt that by deciding to institute the restructuring process, their organisations were not loyal to them and as such the participants felt rejected and betrayed by their organisations. This negatively affected the participants own loyalty towards their organisation. Once again, the surviving middle managers' reaction and

feelings are similar to those noted in literature on surviving employees (Lakshman et al. 2014; Luan, Tien & Chi, 2013; Neves, 2014; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2005).

6.3.5.2 Feelings and Perception of Fairness and Unfairness

In terms of the general perception of fairness and unfairness of the restructuring process, there was no overarching voice on whether the process was perceived as fair or unfair. During the study, it was discovered that the participants’ perception of fairness was based more on how they were affected by the process, rather than being based on a general perception of the process and/ or how others were treated. The participants’ perceptions of fairness is contrary to what is noted on reviewed literature on surviving employees which states that the perception of fairness is based on how others are treated (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Grunberg, 2016; Hart et al., 2016; Monippally, 2003; Omoruyi et al., 2011). The participants were specific on the issues they did not find fair, and also contrary to literature, those issues did not affect their general perception of the whole restructuring process. Once again, the participants gave a sense that they rationalise issues and deal specifically with them in the context and environment they apply to, rather than generalise.

A specific matter which was raised by the participants on three separate questions, is the issue of determining which employees would be retrenched as well as which employees would be placed into specific roles. As such, resulting in the loss of skilled human resources. Participants expressed feelings of disappointment at the unfair practices employed in the process of deciding role placements and who gets retrenched, as those selection practices were inconsistent and open to manipulation. Such a perception of unfairness and the resulting feelings are consistent with those noted in literature on implementers (Bragger et al., 2015; Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Monippally, 2003; Omoruyi et al., 2011; Uen et al., 2016). This included how the matter of employment equity was handled. The participants felt that organisations were not transparent regarding to how the employment equity policy was instituted. They felt that the whole selection process disadvantaged a number of employees and favoured a select few.

The participants went on further and gave insight onto what they thought of those involved in the employee selection process. The reviewed literature on implementers does not give insight into these thoughts as expressed by the surviving middle managers. They felt that people involved in the selection process of those who would be retrenched and those who would be placed into other roles, were insincere,

disingenuous, showed favouritism and were unfair in their decision-making process. As a result, the surviving middle managers lost faith and trust in the organisation. The loss of faith and trust in the organisation concurs with feelings noted in literature on implementers (Boyd, et al., 2014; Levitt et al., 2008; Luan et al., 2013).

6.3.6 Conclusion on Research Question One

The participants' thoughts and experiences on how the process was communicated negatively affected their feelings as well as their perception of the organisation. The lack of timely and complete information resulted in feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, instability and mistrust towards the organisation.

Some participants thought the restructuring process was justified and necessary whilst others felt that the restructuring process was only going to benefit a few people, at the expense of the employees. As a result, some employees experienced feelings of low morale.

The participants felt very frustrated by the loss of skilled, dedicated, hardworking employees and as a result their performance and ability to produce good results being negatively affected.

The participants felt a range of emotions as result of the restructuring process. The participants experienced feeling sad, hurt, angry, frustrated, vulnerable, alienated, uncertain, anxious, rejected and betrayed and a range of other emotions; these feelings were accompanied by feelings and perceptions of fairness and unfairness. These feelings negatively affected the participants' loyalty, trust, and commitment towards the organisation.

The participants found the process of informing subordinates of their restructuring to be overwhelming and filled with mixed emotions. They experienced feelings of sadness, anger, hurt, grief and other ranges of emotions as a result of the process. The participants felt that the process used to determine employees to be retrenched was inconsistent, disappointing, and unfair. They felt that people involved in the process were insincere, disingenuous, showed favouritism and were unfair in their decision making.

Although there were a number of findings which concurred with existing literature, it should be noted that these findings are still new in respect to middle managers. The

findings noted, either agreed with literature on surviving employees or the implementers.

6.4 Discussion of Findings for Research Question Two

How does the restructuring process affect the surviving participants' perception, and attitude towards their work?

It should be noted that the participants offered very limited and brief responses regarding their feelings and attitude towards their work.

6.4.1 Participants Feelings Towards their Job

The reviewed literature on restructuring processes focuses on the changes, feelings and attitudes that occur during and after the restructuring process, and for that reason the participants' feelings before the restructuring process are not discussed in relation to literature.

6.4.1.1 How Participants Felt About their Job Before the Restructuring

The participants exhibited positive feelings towards their job before the restructuring; stating that they were happy and passionate about their job, they enjoyed and loved their work and they found it challenging, giving them a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction in their jobs. The participants were involved in the organisation and engaged in their work and the work of their subordinates, indicating that they were committed to their jobs. Their commitment to the organisation was enhanced when they felt like they were needed and valued by the organisation.

6.4.1.2 How Participants Felt About their Job During the Restructuring

The few participants that responded, found it hard to describe and articulate how they felt about their job during the restructuring process. The general tone indicated that the participants were not focused on how they felt about their job, but were rather focusing on the restructuring process and its progression, although they did express feeling less satisfied in their jobs during the process. They were also concerned about the security of their jobs and maintaining an acceptable level of performance. The focus on performance during a restructuring process is supported by literature on surviving

employees, which suggests that the surviving employees focus on performance as a result of feeling insecure in their jobs (Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006; Tzafirif & Eitam-Meilik, 2005; Waraich & Bhardwaj, 2012). However, the differentiating factor between surviving employees and surviving middle managers is that the managers’ decision to focus on their work was driven more by the need to maintain an acceptable level of performance and results, than by feelings of insecurity, even though they were concerned about the security of their jobs.

6.4.1.3 How Participants Felt About their Job After the Restructuring

There were not many participants who indicated how they felt about their work after the restructuring process. The minimal participants who articulated their feelings, indicated that they felt that their work was no longer a priority in their lives. Their focus was now on their families which they considered to be a priority in their lives. It can be said that the participants had reduced their efforts towards their work and that their commitment levels to the organisation were negatively affected. Such an assessment would be in line with literature on surviving employees (Grunberg et al., 2006; Waraich & Bhardwaj, 2012).

6.4.2 Participants’ Attitude Towards their Job

Similar to the section on participants’ feelings towards their job, the participants’ attitude before the restructuring process was not discussed in relation to literature.

6.4.2.1 The Participants’ Attitude Towards their Job Before the Restructuring

A number of participants indicated that they loved their jobs and they approached their work with a positive attitude and with passion. They showed great dedication to their work and the organisation, by working extra hours and giving more than what was required in terms of their performance. They exhibited an attitude of pride and love towards their work and they were constantly striving to achieve great results.

6.4.2.2 The Participants’ Attitude Towards their Job During the Restructuring

There was no conclusive answer on whether the participants changed their attitude towards their job during the restructuring process, as there was the same number of participants that felt that their general attitude towards their work had not changed as those who felt that it had changed. However, what was clear is that those participants

whose attitude had not changed, still exhibited a positive attitude, dedication, and they were passionate and proud of their work. This positive attitude that is exhibited by the surviving middle managers is consistent with that noted in literature on surviving employees where it was observed that surviving employees may exhibit an attitude of positive and high energy during a restructuring (Guo & Giacobbe-Miller, 2012; Lakshman et al., 2014; Neves, 2014; Petzall et al., 2000).

The participants who exhibited changes in their attitudes had disengaged from their work and they did not care much about their jobs. These participants were not willing to work harder or give more than what was expected, thus lowering their dedication and commitment towards their job and negatively affecting their job performance during the restructuring process. This change in attitude is also consistent with literature on surviving employees as observed by Datta et al. (2010), who said that surviving employees may experience feelings of withdrawal during a restructuring process where they withhold their effort and reduce involvement in their job and the organisation, thus negatively affecting their job performance and commitment levels.

6.4.2.3 The Participants' Attitude Towards their Job After the Restructuring

The participants exhibited similar attitudes as those shown during the restructuring process. Some participants possessed a positive attitude, whereby they were still passionate and loved their job and they wanted to reach greater heights in the job. Once again, this positive attitude exhibited by the surviving managers is consistent with that observed in literature on surviving employees (Lakshman et al., 2014; Neves, 2014). A minimal number of participants were no longer proud of their job and they gave limited input towards their work indicating that their job performance and commitment levels were negatively affected.

6.4.3 Conclusion to Research Question 2

The participants gave limited and brief responses regarding their feelings and attitude towards their work. Nonetheless, certain conclusions could be drawn based on the responses given. The participants' commitment levels and their job performance were negatively affected during and after the restructuring process, as a result of changes in their feelings and attitudes towards their jobs.

The responses in this section were mostly aligned with existing literature, however, it should still be noted that the literature referred to surviving employees and not

surviving middle managers. Therefore, the responses received from the participants still offer new insight into surviving middle managers feelings and perceptions towards their jobs before, during and after the restructuring process.

6.4.3.1 Participants' Feelings Towards their Job

It was observed that at the beginning of the restructuring process, the participants were feeling passionate and they were committed to their jobs. Although the participants could not fully articulate how they felt during the restructuring, they were still focusing on performing well. Yet, some of the participants felt that work was no longer a priority, indicating that their commitment was negatively affected and resulting in decreased job performance.

6.4.3.2 Participants' Attitude Towards their Job

Similarly to how the participants felt about their jobs, it was observed that the participants exhibited a positive attitude towards their work. They were committed and involved in the organisation. There was no domineering response in terms of change in attitude during and after the restructuring, but there were some participants whose attitude changed whilst others did not change. The participants were either feeling positive towards their work or they had disengaged from their jobs and lowered their effort. As a result of their attitudes their job performance and commitment levels were negatively affected.

6.5 Discussion of Findings for Research Question Three

How does the restructuring process affect the manner in which participants lead and manage their subordinates?

6.5.1 Participants' Manner in Leading their Subordinates During the Stages of the Restructuring Process

The reviewed literature on restructuring processes focuses on the changes, feelings, and attitudes that occur during and after the restructuring process, and for that reason the participants' manner in leading and managing their subordinates before the restructuring process were not discussed in relation to literature.

As noted in section 5.6.3, the main change in the manner in which the participants led and managed their subordinates occurred from before the restructuring process to during the process. There was not much of a change from the manner in which they led

during the restructuring process to **after** the restructuring process. For that reason, only the participants' manner in which they led their subordinates **before** and **during** the restructuring process will be discussed.

6.5.1.1 Participants' Manner in Leading their Subordinates Before the Restructuring Process

Most of the participants led their teams by following a collaborative, participative approach, working on mutual understanding and a shared performance goal between themselves and their subordinates. They considered these approaches to be essential in driving key performance and productivity.

The participants also focused on treating subordinates in a fair and just manner, whilst being firm, in order to ensure that they met their production and performance targets, and produced work of an exceptional standard of quality.

Some participants focused on being open, honest and transparent in their communication and interaction with their subordinates, thus building a relationship of trust and fostering a collaborative approach to leading and working with their subordinates.

6.5.1.2 Participants' Manner in Leading their Subordinates During the Restructuring Process

Through the study new insight was gained into how surviving middle managers led and managed during the restructuring process. It was observed that the surviving middle managers were conscious of their subordinates' struggles with coping with the process, and for that reason they encouraged, motivated and supported subordinates and got them to focus on work, rather than on what was happening with the restructuring. The participants maintained a collaborative and participative approach, and they were also more sympathetic, empathetic, and lenient towards their subordinates to a point of relaxing the firm deadlines and performance requirements.

They continued being open, honest and transparent in their communication with their subordinates, thus fostering and maintaining a relationship of trust. It has been observed in literature on surviving employees that having adequate and transparent communication can moderate the negative effects associated with the restructuring process (Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Grunberg, 2016; Hart et al., 2016; Kowske et al, 2010; Levitt et al., 2008; Norman et al., 2010; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006). As suggested in

literature, choosing to be open and transparent in their communication, the participants maintained trust and were able to get their subordinates to focus on work and perform, even if it was not at the same performance levels as before the restructuring process. By doing this, they were consciously or unconsciously, moderating the negative effects of the restructuring on their subordinates.

An unintended, yet key issue arose whilst discussing the manner in which the surviving middle managers led. It was observed that the participants experienced difficulties in their roles as managers during the restructuring process, in that they found it difficult to deal with their own personal struggles with the process, try and structure their new departments, and still manage their subordinates. They also found that they ended up unintentionally neglecting their subordinates as they were focusing on themselves and the new structure. In some instances, the participants made a conscious decision to separate and distance themselves from their subordinates, in order to cope with the process. The act of consciously separating from subordinates has been noted in literature on implementers where they disassociate with those they retrenched in order to cope with the act of retrenching employees, it has not been noted as a behaviour that is generally exhibited in order to deal with the restructuring process and management duties (Clair et al., 2006; Grunberg et al., 2006; Molinsky & Margolis, 2006).

6.5.2 Conclusion for Research Question Three

The study offered new insights into how surviving middle managers led and managed their subordinates before the restructuring process and how they had to alter their styles in order to suit the restructuring process and help get the best performance from their subordinates, under the circumstances. The main change in the manner in which the participants led and managed their team was observed when the manner in which they led before the restructuring was compared to how they led during the restructuring process. What was noted, is that the participants maintained the approach they were comfortable with in leading their subordinates, with slight modifications, and they included some form of emotional element to their approach which was conducive to the restructuring environment, in order to motivate and help their team cope with the process. Once the process was over they returned to their original approach, letting go of the emotional elements, as they were no longer necessary post the restructuring process.

It was further observed that the participants altered the manner in which they interacted with their subordinates during the restructuring process, again, to help them cope with the process. The participants focused on approaches and qualities which showed that they were empathetic, sympathetic, supportive, and were understanding of what their subordinates were experiencing. They changed from being very firm and results driven, to being more encouraging, supportive, and motivational during the restructuring. They were mindful of their subordinates' feelings and the stress brought on by the restructuring process. And as such they kept their subordinates focused on producing good quality work and/ or meeting their production targets during the restructuring process.

6.6 Discussion of Findings for Research Question Four

How does a restructuring process impact the participants' feelings and perception of the organisation and the security of their job within the organisation?

The results for this question have been split into two sections, the first part being the change in the participants' perception of the organisation and the second section being the participants' feelings and perceptions of job security.

6.6.1 Participants' Feelings and Perception of the Organisation

The question aimed to discover whether the restructuring process affected or altered the participants' perception towards the organisation in any way, before, during and after the restructuring process. The perception of the organisation included the perception of the leaders of the organisation. Organisational leaders were included in the perception of the organisation as the participants considered them to be the face and representation of the organisation and they felt that they could not separate the organisation from its leaders. When reference is made to 'leaders', that refers to senior managers and executives within the organisations.

The reviewed literature on restructuring processes focuses on the changes, feelings, and attitudes that occur during and after the restructuring process, and for that reason the participants' feelings and perceptions of the organisation before the restructuring process were not discussed in relation to literature.

6.6.1.1 Feelings and Perception of the Organisation Before the Restructuring

The participants' perceptions of their organisation before the restructuring process were positive, and it portrayed the organisation and its leaders in a good light. The participants felt that their organisation took care of its employees, their jobs and well-being, and they were treated fairly. Some participants held their organisations in high regard to a point where they expressed that they loved their organisations and felt they were the best organisations to work for.

Other participants felt that their leaders were engaged, accepted input from others, and were also focused on career growth and uplifting the skills of their employees. The participants also felt that their organisations showed that they, and the rest of the employees, mattered.

6.6.1.2 Feelings and Perceptions of the Organisation During the Restructuring

It has been observed in the reviewed literature that the restructuring process may result in changes in the surviving employees' perceptions of the organisations (Grunberg et al., 2006; Iverson & Zatzick, 2010; Lakshman et al., 2014; Levitt et al., 2008; Luan et al., 2013; Neves, 2014; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2005). The participants' perception of the organisation changed during the restructuring process, from being positive and of high regard towards their organisation, to being one of a negative perception. This is in accordance to literature on surviving employees, suggesting that although they are middle managers, they respond in a similar manner to surviving employees in this regard.

The participants also gave the impression of 'them' and 'us' where they held the perception that the leaders were the ones who had changed and were making terrible decisions regarding the restructuring and the future of the organisation, and as such, they were separate from the leaders' actions.

There was an overall change in the participants' perception towards the organisation for they now thought of their organisation in a negative light. The participants gave new insight into their thoughts and feelings about the leaders, some thoughts have not been explored in literature. They felt that the organisation and its leaders were insensitive, lacked compassion, could not be trusted, were not loyal to the employees, and they did not care or have the employees' best interest at heart. The participants had a view that

the leaders did not act in good faith, were not honest and transparent in their conduct and communication, and they were only concerned about themselves and all that benefitted them.

It has been noted in literature on surviving employees that when employees feel that the organisation is not honest and transparent in their communication, then their level of trust and commitment is negatively affected (Grunber, et al., 2016; Hart e. al., 2016; Grunber, et al., 2016; Iverson & Zatzick, 2010; Levitt et al., 2008; Noronha & D’Cruz, 2006). The surviving middle managers exhibited similar behaviour as that of surviving employees in a sense that their level of trust was negatively affected by the perception that their leaders were not honest and transparent in their conduct and communication. Furthermore, their loyalty and commitment to the organisation was negatively affected as a result.

6.6.1.3 Feelings and Perception of the Organisation After the Restructuring

The study revealed that the participants exhibited similar feelings and perceptions of the organisation during the restructuring process as those exhibited after the restructuring. Most participants still held the view that leaders were not honest, open and transparent in their communication, actions and with their decision-making process. Participants still felt like their leaders could not be trusted, for they were perceived to only care about themselves and increasing profits.

What was new after the restructuring, was that some participants felt that the organisation did not care about them and its employees. They felt like they were seen as mere employee numbers and a means to an end, utilised to meet the leaders’ profit targets, rather than one of the most vital resources available to an organisation.

The participants also felt that the leaders were disengaged and had separated themselves from the organisation; they were not leading from the front, and they are not aware of the true reality of what was going on within the organisation. As a result of what the participants experienced, they did not have faith or confidence in the organisation, and as a result. their trust, loyalty and commitment towards the organisation was negatively affected. Once again, the feelings and attitudes that arise in surviving employees when they experience feelings of mistrust, as observed in literature, are similar to those exhibited by the surviving middle managers (Dierendonck

& Jacobs 2012; Dwyer & Arbelo, 2011; Levitt et al., 2008; Luan et al., 2013; Norman et al., 2010; Tzafir & Eitam-Meilik, 2005).

6.6.2 Feelings and Perception of the Participants' Security of their Jobs

The second part of the question aimed to discover whether the participants' feelings and perceptions of the security of their jobs were altered throughout the process.

6.6.2.1 Feelings and Perception of Job Security Before the Restructuring

Prior to the commencement of the restructuring process, most of the participants felt safe, confident, and secure in their jobs. They felt that their respective organisations implicitly guaranteed and protected their jobs, and that they would in turn, work for their organisations for their entire lives. These participants also had their own career goals and aspirations to grow within the organisations, and they felt that there was nothing that could make them lose their jobs.

6.6.2.2 Feelings and Perception of Job Security During the Restructuring

When the participants' perceptions of job security before the restructuring was compared to that of during the restructuring, it was observed that participants' feelings and perceptions of their job security changed drastically during the restructuring process, as compared to what it was before the restructuring process. The change in the surviving middle managers' perceptions is consistent with literature on surviving employees who also changed their perceptions of job security (Boyd et al., 2014; Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Grunberg et al., 2016; Grunberg et al., 2006; Neves, 2014; Rust et al., 2005; Waraich & Bhardwaj, 2012 and).

The majority of the participants were now feeling anxious, afraid, and uncertain about their future within the organisation. The restructuring process brought on feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, fear, insecurity and worry to even those participants which were most secure and felt safe in their jobs before the restructuring process.

The participants further expressed that feelings of insecurity and anxiety were heightened by the lack of information about the process and the future of their jobs. The issue of trust came up again, as the participants also felt that other people and

leaders within the organisation could not be trusted. The importance of communication and its impact on trust and job security is highlighted in the reviewed literature on surviving employees, where their level of trust and job security is lowered as a result of limited communication (Dierendonck & Jacobs, 2012; Levitt et al., 2008; Norman et al., 2010; Omuruyi et al., 2011). The lack of communication had a similar effect on surviving middle managers as it had on surviving employees.

The participants' feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and fear of losing their jobs and the ability to source an income were at their highest during the restructuring process.

6.6.2.3 Feelings and Perceptions of Job Security After the Restructuring

The end of the restructuring process brought back feelings of security for most of the participants. Most participants felt confident in their jobs to an extent where they thought that there is nothing in the foreseeable future that would cause them to lose their jobs, since they were performing at or above the expected levels and had gained additional skills during the restructuring process, making them more valuable to the organisation. Yet there were some participants that still felt anxious and insecure in their jobs. They felt insecure as they were uncertain of the future direction of the organisation. Neves (2014) also noted that surviving employees may still feel a bit insecure when they are unsure of the future of the organisation.

The restructuring process also changed some of the participants' perceptions of job security, for they now felt that the concept of job security and lifetime tenure no longer existed, and for that reason they were not concerned about their level of employability and diversifying their skills. The focus on employability by the surviving middle managers is consistent with that noted in literature on surviving employees, where they focus on their career growth and being employable within the organisation and externally (Carbery & Garavan, 2005; Hassard et al., 2012; Noronha & D'Cruz, 2006).

There was an underlying concern amongst some of the participants that related to their career growth and future employability. They were uncertain about how their careers would progress in the new, leaner structure and whether they had the required skills to be promoted into senior roles within and outside the organisation. As a result, the participants felt that they should expand their skill base to better improve their employability.

6.6.3 Conclusion for Research Question Four

The study revealed that participants' perceptions of the organisation and the security of their jobs changed throughout the restructuring process. They evolved from feeling safe and secure to being insecure, anxious and uncertain about the security of their jobs. The study offered insight into the middle managers' thoughts and feelings about the security of their jobs, and their concerns regarding employability. Some of their feelings and thoughts were consistent with existing literature on surviving employees, however, they offered new insights into middle managers.

6.6.3.1 Participants' Feelings and Perceptions of the Organisation

The participants' feelings and perceptions of the organisation negatively changed during the course of the restructuring process. In the beginning of the restructuring process, the participants held their organisations in high esteem and they felt that the leaders cared about them, and the security of the jobs. Negative feelings developed during the restructuring process, where the participants felt like the leaders were focused on self-benefit and profits, they were not loyal to the employees, and they could not be trusted. These feelings continued even after the restructuring. As such the participants' trust, loyalty and commitment were negatively affected throughout the process.

6.6.3.2 Participants' Feelings and Perception of their Job Security

Before the restructuring process, the participants were feeling safe and secure in their jobs. Their perception of job security changed during the restructuring process, they were now experiencing feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, fear, insecurity and worry.

For most of the participants, the feelings of security returned after the restructuring process. They were also now more concerned about their career growth post the restructuring, more than they were concerned about the security of their jobs.

6.7 Overall Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the findings of the research in relation to existing literature. The research set out to explore and understand how surviving middle managers are affected by the restructuring process. This chapter highlighted that the middle managers, in many instances, are affected by a restructuring process in a similar way to how employees have been found to be affected in the literature. However, there

were also additional effects on middle managers that have not been explored fully in the literature.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the findings from the data in relation to the literature review in Chapter 2 and the research questions. This chapter aims to consolidate the discussion and results in a cohesive set of key findings so as to meet the research objective. Based on these key findings, the chapter offers implications to business leaders. The limitations of the research are outlined, and the chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

The objectives for this study were to establish how surviving middle managers are affected by a restructuring process; what caused the surviving middle managers to experience or exhibit the negative and/ or positive attitudes associated with the restructuring; and what can be done to moderate the negative effects and behaviours associated with the restructuring process.

7.2 Key Findings

7.2.1 Observations on Middle Managers' Behaviour

Through this study, it was observed that the surviving middle managers were affected by certain aspects of the restructuring process; however, they were not completely affected by the process as it been noted in literature on surviving employees, as they did not exhibit all the behaviours (survivor syndrome) that tend to be experienced by surviving employees.

Through the review of all the participants' responses, there were certain traits that were observed about the surviving middle managers which differentiate them from surviving employees (and the supporting literature). These traits are that middle managers tend to rationalise and analyse each of the aspects of the restructuring process separately and within the context they apply to. This means they take each issue or decision, evaluate it, and then consider its merits and the benefits it brings to the organisation. In essence, after evaluating and analysing the various aspects of the restructuring, they may find a certain aspect of the process to be unfair, unjustified, unwarranted, or not well executed; however, that may not necessarily result in the whole process being considered and perceived as unfair, unjustified or not well executed.

The opposite also hold true for the middle managers. If they agree with an aspect of the restructuring process that does not necessarily mean that they agree with the whole process. As such, they tend not to be accepting of general or generic reasons and decisions taken during the restructuring process, they rather prefer for decisions to be taken after consideration of the specific environment that will be affected. For example, most surviving middle managers found the employee selection process to be unfair, but that did not result in them finding the whole process to be unfair. Their acceptance of the restructuring process was not based on the explanations given by senior management and executives, it was based on their own assessment of the economic climate and the performance of the organisation.

As a consequence of their nature to rationalise and analyse various aspects or issues, the middle managers also question, interrogate and analyse, what is being communicated and done by the organisation's executives and senior management regarding the restructuring. They test the validity of the communication within the context of the organisation and the environment the organisation operates in. Furthermore, because of their ability to rationalise issues, they are also able to understand and accept the difficult decisions that have to be taken within the organisation, in order to ensure its financial sustainability.

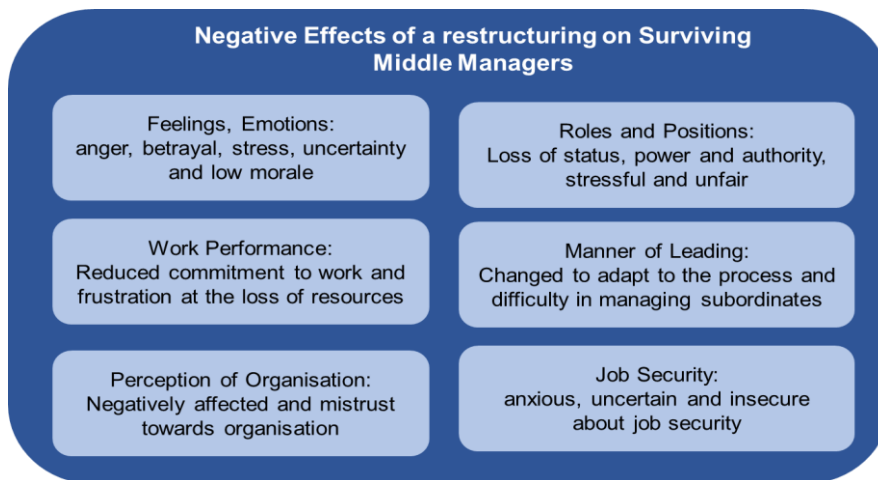
The surviving middle managers are also cognisant of their position and role within the organisation. They appear to understand that they are the link between the operational staff or executioners, and senior management. They are also aware that they represent the organisation and its decisions to the rest of the employees and as such they are cautious of how and what they communicate, how they motivate, and how they interact with their subordinates during the restructuring. They are cognisant of the fact that their actions affect the performance of their subordinates, which ultimately affects the fulfilment of the organisations' plans and goals. Due to the understanding of their roles, the surviving middle managers expressed the need for better communication, more information from senior management and more inclusion in designing the new structure.

7.2.2 How Surviving Middle Managers were Affected by the Restructuring Process

As stated, the middle managers were affected by the restructuring process. The key areas in which the surviving middle managers were personally affected by the process will be discussed below, as well as their resulting feelings, attitudes and behaviours.

Figure 6 represents a summary of how the surviving middle managers were affected by the process and the resulting feelings and behaviours.

Figure 6: Negative Effects of a Restructuring on the Surviving Middle Managers



Feelings and Emotions

The surviving middle managers experienced negative effects of the restructuring process. They felt angry, frustrated, vulnerable, alienated, rejected and betrayed by the organisation. They also experienced strong feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, stress and low morale. These feelings were heightened by the limited communication during the process, and the long duration of the restructuring process also increased their feelings of uncertainty.

The surviving middle managers responsible for informing their subordinates that they have been retrenched, struggled with the process. They found it difficult, stressful and filled with a range of emotions. This was the only time the surviving middle managers experienced feelings of guilt and they withdrew and distanced themselves from those affected by restructuring in order to cope with the process.

Roles and Positions

The surviving middle managers who had changes to their roles and/ or positions felt that the role change came with a loss of status, power and authority. They felt that it was unfair and as such, they were unhappy, annoyed, angry, and dissatisfied at the changes in their roles. They further found the adjustment into their new role, especially without training or guidance, to be frustrating and stressful, resulting in lower job satisfaction.

Work Performance

The surviving middle managers' commitment to their work was negatively affected, thus affecting their work performance. Although they still wanted to produce good results, their commitment to their work and the organisation was lower than before as they were no longer willing to dedicate more effort and time than what was expected of them. They were also very frustrated by the loss of skilled, dedicated, hardworking subordinates, which also negatively affected their performance and ability to produce good results.

Manner in Leading Subordinates

The manner in which the surviving middle managers led their subordinates was also affected by the restructuring process. They had to employ a collaborative and participative approach, whilst being more sympathetic, empathetic, and lenient towards their subordinates, to a point of relaxing the firm deadlines and performance requirements. They observed that there was a greater need for them to be open, honest and transparent in their communication with their subordinates, so as to foster and maintain relationships of trust.

Through this study, it was revealed that surviving middle managers found it very difficult to manage subordinates who were stressed, anxious, panicking and struggling to accept and come to terms with their restructuring. They also experienced difficulty in dealing with the restructuring process, setting up their new departments, and managing their subordinates' performance; resulting in an unintended neglect of their subordinates and their needs.

Perception of the Organisation

The restructuring process negatively affected the surviving middle managers' perceptions of the organisation. Their perception changed from being one where they held the organisation in high regard before the restructuring, to one where they felt the executives and senior management could not be trusted, were insensitive, lacked compassion and loyalty, and they did not care about the employees. They also felt that the executives and senior management were not transparent and honest in their conduct and communication, further creating feelings of mistrust.

Job Security

The restructuring process negatively affected the surviving middle managers' perceptions of job security. They experienced feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, fear,

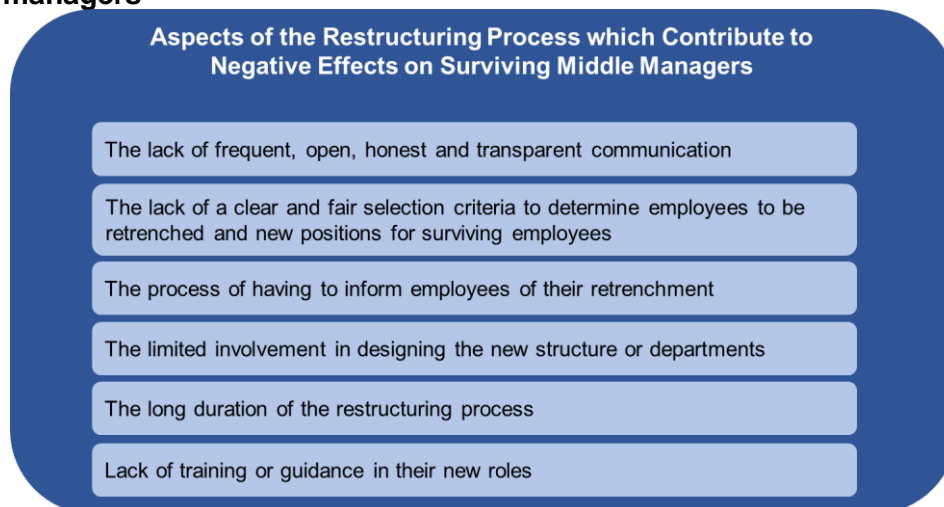
insecurity and worry about the security of their jobs. Whereas before the restructuring process, they felt secure and safe in their jobs.

The limited communication about the process gave rise to rumours which heightened the middle managers' feelings of mistrust, frustration, panic, and anxiety. This resulted in greater uncertainty and insecurity about their jobs. Post the restructuring, the surviving middle managers were concerned about their career growth and future employability.

7.2.3 Aspects of the restructuring that negatively affect managers

As discussed above, the surviving middle managers were personally affected by the restructuring process. Certain aspects of the restructuring process were identified as having contributed to the negative effects associated with a restructuring process. The following aspects of the restructuring process were identified as having contributed to middle managers experiencing negative feelings, attitudes and behaviours. These aspects are detailed in figure 7.

Figure 7: Aspects of the restructuring which negatively affect surviving middle managers

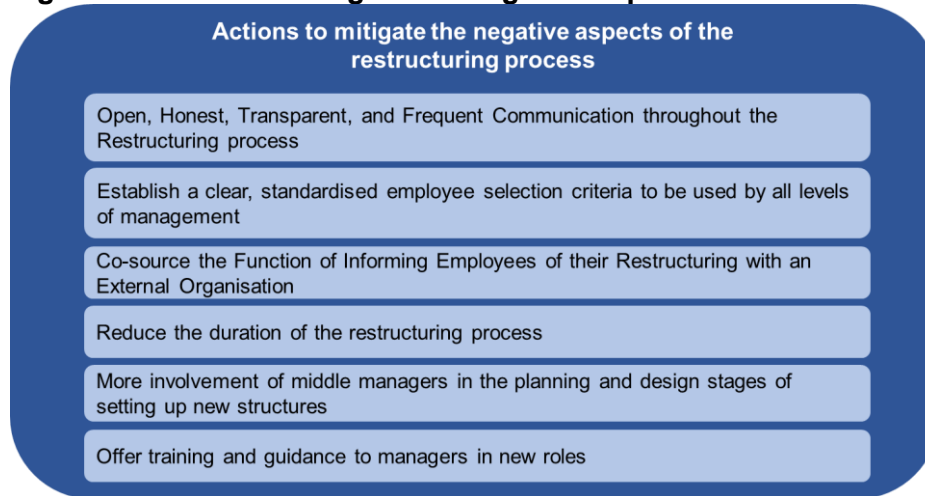


7.2.4 Actions to Moderate the Negative Effects of the Restructuring

It is suggested that by implementing actions to address these aspects of the restructuring, the negative effects associated with the process may be moderated or mitigated, thus ensuring better acceptance and execution of the restructuring process, and the maintenance of performance standards. Below are recommendations on actions that can be taken in order to moderate the negative effects brought on by these aspects of the restructuring. Figure 8 presents actions that can be taken by

organisations to mitigate or moderate the negative aspects of the restructuring process thus ensuring a better acceptance and implementation of the restructuring process.

Figure 8: Actions to mitigate the negative aspects of the restructuring process



Open, Honest, Transparent, and Frequent Communication:

The surviving middle managers observed that there was a lack of frequent, open, honest, and transparent communication during the restructuring process and for that reason, a number of the negative feelings they experienced were attributed to the lack of communication. It has also been suggested in literature that the negative effects of the restructuring process can be moderated or mitigated by having open, honest, transparent communication, thus improving trust, commitment, and perception of the organisation (Kowske et al., 2010; Lakshman et al., 2013; Levitt et al., 2008; Norman et al., 2010 and). By ensuring that there is a good communication strategy, organisations can moderate or mitigate a number of the negative feelings associated with a restructuring process.

As suggested, open, honest, transparent communication improves on the elements of trust and commitment, as well as the perception of the organisation. If an organisation focuses on improving on any of the elements through communication, then there will be a positive effect on other elements as they are all interconnected.

Clear, Standardised Employee Selection Criteria:

The surviving middle managers found the process of selecting employees and determining who should be retrenched quite unfair, biased, and open to manipulation, thereby causing them to lose faith and trust in the people involved in the process and the organisation. They also felt that having such an unfair process resulted in the loss of good, skilled, well performing subordinates which negatively affected their own performance. By establishing a standardised, reliable selection criteria that considers

factors such as the employees' performance, experience level, qualifications, and job requirements, the organisation can improve the perception of fairness. This may not eliminate all biases; however, it will provide those involved in the process with a reliable, standardised tool to measure the suitability of an employee for a role. This may give the perception of procedural fairness and as such positively affect the surviving managers' trust, commitment and perception of the organisation.

Co-source the Function of Informing Employees of their Retrenchment

The surviving middle managers who had to inform their subordinates that they had been retrenched, found the process to be difficult and emotional, to an extent where they thought of resigning and allowing someone else to execute the process. Organisations should consider sourcing the services of an external company which will be involved in the process, aiding the surviving middle managers in executing the retrenchments. This may alleviate some of the stress, emotional difficulties and guilt associated with executing restructurings.

Reduce the Duration of the Restructuring Process

Restructuring processes that are carried out for an extended period of time increase feelings of uncertainty and instability. The surviving middle managers experienced difficulties working in this environment and they found that their subordinates did not perform at the expected levels because of the stress, anxiety and uncertainty associated with the restructuring process. The long duration of the restructuring process negatively affected the performance of the surviving middle managers. By shortening the restructuring process, the organisation will return to a state of normality more quickly, thus creating a stable environment, and a sense of security that is needed by surviving middle managers and their subordinates, to perform at the expected levels.

Involvement of Surviving Middle Managers in Designing New Structures

The surviving middle managers felt that they were not involved in the process of designing the new departments or structures and because their input was not sought in the process, the new structures were not necessarily the most practical for their environment. Such impracticalities frustrate the surviving middle managers as they have to ensure that their department functions efficiently with the available resources. By involving the surviving middle managers in designing the structure, and not just filling it with resources, they will be able to offer input into the best way to set up the new structure, considering their environment and the available resources. This will

ensure that their departments function efficiently and therefore, may improve efficiencies and the performance of the surviving middle managers and their subordinates.

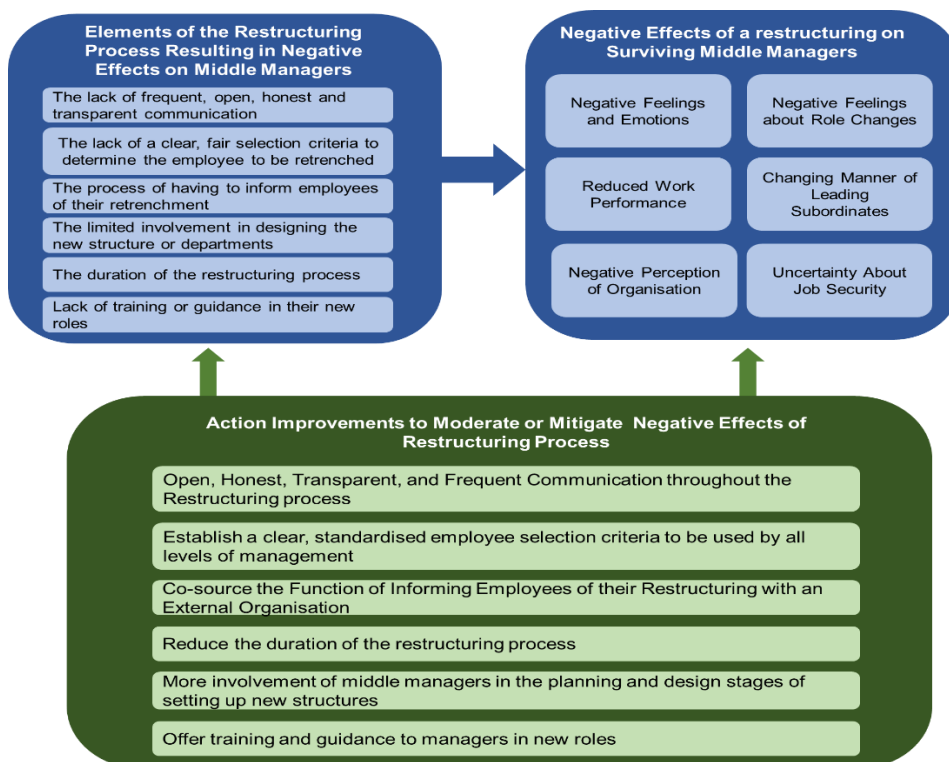
Training and Guidance for New Roles

The surviving middle managers who experienced changes in their roles expressed difficulty in adjusting into the new roles and its requirements, indicating that the lack of training and guidance increased their levels of stress, frustration and feelings of loss of power and authority. By offering some form of guidance and training, the surviving middle managers will be assisted into their new roles and enlightened on the requirements thereof. This may reduce their level of stress and frustration, thereby enabling them to assert their power and authority in the new positions.

7.2.5 Actions to Moderate the Negative Effects of the Restructuring

By taking action to address the negative aspects of the restructuring process, organisations may be able to mitigate those negative aspects, thus moderating the effects of the restructuring process. By implementing these actions, organisations may be able to have improve upon the implementation and acceptance of the restructuring process, resulting in better achievement of business goals. Figure 9 represents an approach to improve the implementation of the restructuring process.

Figure 9: Actions towards an improved restructuring process



7.3 Recommendations for Business Leaders

In order to ensure better acceptance and implementation of the restructuring process, business leaders should consider addressing the aspects of the restructuring which have been identified as contributing to the negative feelings, attitudes and behaviours associated with the process by having:

- Open, honest, transparent, and frequent communication:
- Clear, standardised Employee selection criteria:
- Co-sourcing the function of informing employees of their retrenchment
- Reducing the duration of the restructuring process
- Better involvement of surviving middle managers in planning and designing of new structures
- Training and guidance for managers in new roles

Taking the recommend actions will to minimise the negative aspects of the restructuring process.

7.4 Research Limitations

7.4.1 Sampling Bias

The population was limited to middle managers within large organisations in the manufacturing and resources sector, and which were listed on the JSE. This may affect the ability to generalise the results as managers in mid-sized or smaller organisations and other sectors may not have responded in a similar manner as those in large organisations.

The use of purposive, snowball, and quota sampling resulted in a number of the respondents being from one organisation. Although the respondents were from different departments and different locations, the respondents may have shared a similar experience due the restructuring process being carried out in a similar manner or due to their proximity to each other.

7.4.2 Researcher Bias

Exploratory research is subjective and may be influenced by the researcher's own perspectives. The researcher acknowledges that there may be some element of bias as, according to Creswell (2013) and Saunders and Lewis (2012), the researchers' context may influence how they interpret the research findings.

The researcher was not expertly trained in interviewing and this could have had also affected the manner in which the interviews were conducted.

7.5 Recommendations for Future Research

- The researcher noted that the surviving middle managers did not give clear, comprehensive answers on how they felt about their jobs and their attitudes towards their job. Research could be conducted to further explore more details on how the surviving middle managers' attitude towards their work is affected throughout a restructuring process.
- This study only considered change in the manner that surviving middle managers led their subordinates. Future research could be conducted to explore the change in leadership styles and the best leadership style to effectively lead during a restructuring process, taking into account leadership theories.
- This study was not able to garner rich, detailed data on the changes in behaviours and attitudes of middle managers before, during and after the restructuring process. A study could be conducted, focusing only on the changes in attitude and behaviours of surviving middle managers, considering how they were before, during and after the restructuring.
- An in-depth study with a wider scope could be conducted to explore the role and challenges experienced by middle managers as implementers.
- A quantitative study could be conducted to explore the relationship between the communication and the effects associated with the restructuring process.

7.6 Conclusion

Through the research, it was noted that surviving middle managers were negatively affected by the restructuring process. Aspects of the restructuring process which caused or contributed to the negative effects were identified and moderating factors to reduce the negative effects were suggested.

As a result of the restructuring process, the surviving middle managers' experienced negative feelings such as anger, frustration, betrayal, loss of power and authority, fear, and they felt anxiety, uncertainty, and insecurity towards their jobs. Their level of trust, loyalty, and commitment towards the organisation and its leaders were lowered; their perception of the organisation was negatively affected and their propensity to leave the organisation was heightened.

The lack of communication was identified as the greatest contributor to the negative effects of the restructuring and it was suggested that by improving the communication, a number of other factors can be positively affected, such as trust, commitment, security and the perception of the organisation.

8 Reference List

- Ashman, I. (2015). The face-to-face delivery of downsizing decisions in UK public sector organizations. *Public Management Review*, 17(1), 108-128. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2013.785583>
- Boyd, C. M., Tuckey, M. R., & Winefield, A. H. (2014). Perceived effects of organizational downsizing and staff cuts on the stress experience: The role of resources. *Stress and Health*, 30(30), 53-64. doi:10.1002/smi.2495
- Bragger, J., Evans, D., Kutcher, G., Summer, K., & Fritzkly, E. (2015). Factors affecting perceptions of procedural fairness of downsizing: A policy capturing approach. *Human Resources Development Quarterly*, 26(2), 127-154. doi:10.1002/hrdq.21208
- Cambridge Dictionary. (2017). Attitude. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/attitude>
- Carbery, R., & Garavan, R. N. (2005). Organisational restructuring and downsizing: Issues related to learning, training and employability of survivors. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 29(6), 488-508. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/03090590510610272>
- Carter, T. (2010). Risk and uncertainty. *Journal of Hospital Marketing & Public Relations*, 20(1), 66-86. doi:10.1080/15390940903451014
- Cascio, W. F. (2002). Restructuring in perspective. *Responsible restructuring: Creative and profitable alternatives to layoffs* (pp. 1-15) Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Clair, J. A., Dufresne, R., Jackson, N., & Ladge, J. (2006). Being the bearer of bad news: Challenges facing downsizing agents in organizations. *Organizational Dynamics*, 35(2), 131-144. doi:10.1016/j.orgdyn.2006.03.001
- Clair, J. A., Ladge, J. J., & Cotton, R. (2016). This is how we do it: How perceived prosocial impact offsets negative personal outcomes associated with carrying out

- necessary evils. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 25(3), 301-321.
doi:10.1177/1056492615612577
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.) Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice*, 39(3), 124-130. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3903_2
- Datta, D. K., Guthrie, J. P., Basuil, D., & Pandey, A. (2010). Causes and effects of employee downsizing: A review and synthesis. *Journal of Management*, 36(1), 281 - 348. doi: 10.1177/0149206309346735
- De Muse, K. P., & Dai, G. (2013). Organizational downsizing: Its effect on financial performance over time. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, XXV(4), 324-344.
- Dewitt, R., Trevino, L. K., & Mollica, K. A. (2003). Stuck in the middle: A control-based model of managers' reactions to their subordinates' layoffs. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, XV(1), 32-49.
- Dierendonck, D., & Jacobs, G. (2012). Survivors and victims, a meta-analytical review of fairness and organizational commitment after downsizing. *British Journal of Management*, 23, 96-109. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8551.2010.00724.x
- Dwyer, D. J., & Arbelo, M. (2012). The role of social cognition in downsizing decisions. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 27(4), 383-405. doi:10.1108/02683941211220199
- Farrell, M. (2014). Leading from the middle. *Journal of Library Administration*, 54, 691 - 699. doi: 10.1080/01930826.2014.965099
- Florah, O. M., Nyagol, M. O., & Oluoch, N. G. (2013). Effects of downsizing on surviving employees of dominion farms Siaya county, Kenya. *Business Management Dynamics*, 3(6), 1-9.
- Gandolfi, F. (2007). How do large Australian and Swiss banks implement downsizing? *Journal of Management & Organization*, 13, 145-159.

- Gandolfi, F. (2008). Cost reductions, downsizing-related layoffs, and HR practices. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, 73(3), 52-58.
- Gandolfi, F. (2008). Surviving corporate downsizing: An Australian experience. *Icfai Journal of Soft Skills*, 11(2), 13-26.
- Gandolfi, F., & Hansson, M. (2011). LITERATURE REVIEW, Causes and consequences of downsizing: Towards an integrative framework. *Journal of Management and Organization*, 17(4), 498-521.
- Gandolfi, F., & Hansson, M. (2015). A Global Perspective on the Non-Financial Consequences of Downsizing. *Revista de Management Comparat International*, 16(2), 185.
- Gandolfi, F., & Oster, G. (2009). Sustaining innovation during corporate downsizing. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, 74(2), 42-53.
- Gopaldas, A. (2016). A front-to-back guide to writing a qualitative research article. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 19(1), 115 - 121. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/QMR-08-2015-0074>
- Grunberg, L., Anderson-Connolly, R., & Greenberg, E. S. (2000). Surviving layoffs: The effects on organizational commitment and job performance. *Work and Occupations*, 27(1), 7-31.
- Grunberg, L., Moore, S., & Greenberg, E. S. (2006). Managers' reactions to implementing layoffs: Relationship to health problems and withdrawal behaviors. *Human Resource Management*, 45(2), 159-178. doi:10.1002/hrm.20102
- Guo, C., & Giacobbe-Miller, J. K. (2012). Understanding survivors' reactions to downsizing in china. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 27(1), 27-47. doi: 10.1108/02683941211193848
- Guthrie, J. P., & Datta, D. K. (2008). Dumb and dumber: The impact of downsizing on firm performance as moderated by industry conditions. *Organizational Science: A Journal of the Institute of Management Sciences*, 19(1), 108-123. doi: 10.1287/orsc.1070.0298

- Habel, J., & Klarmann, M. (2015). Customer reactions to downsizing: When and how is satisfaction affected? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(6), 768-789. doi: 10.1007/s11747-014-0400-y
- Hansson, M. (2015). A global perspective on the non-financial consequences of downsizing. *Review of International Comparative Management*, 16(2), 185-204.
- Hart, A. L., Thomson, N. F., & Huning, T. M. (2016). The mediating role of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice on the relationship between downsizing and organisational citizenship behaviour. *Journal of Organizational Culture, Communications and Conflict*, 20(1), 132-142.
- Hassard, J., Morris, J., & McCann, L. (2012). My brilliant career: New organizational forms and changing managerial careers in Japan, the UK, and USA. *Journal of Management Studies*, 49(3), 571-599. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6486.2011.01032.x
- Iverson, R. D., & Zatzick, C. D. (2011). The effects of downsizing on labour productivity: The value of showing consideration for employees' morale and welfare in high-performing work systems. *Human Resource Management*, 50(1), 29-44. doi:10.1002/hrm.20407
- Kalyal, H. J., Berntson, E., Baraldi, S., Naswall, K., & Sverke, M. (2010). The moderating role of employability on the relationship between job insecurity and commitment to change. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 31(3), 327-344. doi:10.1177/0143831X09351214
- Kowske, B., Lundby, K., & Rasch, R. (2010). Turning 'survive' into 'thrive': Managing survivor engagement in a downsized organization. *IEEE Engineering Management Review*, 38(4), 79-90. doi:10.1109/EMR.2010.5645759
- Lakshman, C., Ramaswami, A., Alas, R., Kabongo, J. F., & Pandian, J. R. (2014). Ethics trumps culture? A cross-national study of business leader responsibility for downsizing and CSR perceptions. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 125, 101-119. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1907-8
- Lee, J., & Corbett, J. M. (2006). The impact of downsizing on employees' affective commitment. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 21(3), 176-199. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/02683940610659542>

- Levitt, K., Wilson, T., & Gilligan, E. (2008). Corporate downsizing: An examination of the survivors. *Journal of Global Business Issues*, 2(2), 13-22.
- Levitt, K., Wilson, T., & Gilligan, E. (2008). Corporate downsizing: An examination of the survivors. *The Journal of Global Business Issues*, 2(2), 13-21.
- Luan, C., Tien, C., & Chi, Y. (2013). Downsizing to the wrong size? A study of the impact of downsizing on firm performance during an economic downturn. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(7), 1519-1535. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2012.725073>
- Luan, C., Tien, C., & Chi, Y. (2013). Downsizing to the wrong size? A study of the impact of downsizing on firm performance during an economic downturn. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(7), 1519-1535. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2012.725073>
- MacLean, R. (2009). Operating in lean times. *Environmental Quality Management*, 18(4), 101-106. doi: 10.1002/tqem.20230
- Maertz Jr, C. P., Wiley, J. W., LeRouge, C., & Campion, M. A. (2010). Downsizing effects on survivors: Layoffs, offshoring, and outsourcing. *Industrial Relations*, 49(2), 275-285.
- Magan-Diaz, A., & Cespedes-Lorente, J. (2012). Why are Spanish companies implementing downsizing? *Review of Business*, 32(2), 5-22.
- Mason, M. (2010). Sample size and saturation in PhD studies using qualitative interviews. *Forum Qualitative Social Research*, 11(3), 1-19.
- Mayton, S. M. (2011). Survivor coping: A fresh look at resiliency in the wake of downsizing. *Organisational Development Practitioner*, 43(1), 42-47.
- McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview* Sage Publications.
- Macmillan Dictionary (2017). Frame of mind. Retrieved from <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/frame-of-mind>

- Molinsky, A., & Margolis, J. (2006). The emotional tightrope of downsizing: Hidden challenges for leaders and their organizations. *Organizational Dynamics*, 35(2), 145-159.
- Mollica, K. A., & Gray, B. (2001). When layoff survivors become layoff victims: Propensity to litigate. *Human Resource Planning*, 24(1), 22-32.
- Monippally, M. M. (2003). The kinder cut: A macro communication strategy for delivering news of job termination. *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, 28(3), 31-44.
- Musteen, M., Liang, X., & Baker III, V. L. (2011). Personality, perceptions and restructuring decisions of managers in response to decline: Evidence from a decision-making study. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22, 926-941. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.07.012
- Neves, P. (2014). Taking it out on survivors: Submissive employees, downsizing, and abusive supervision. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 87, 507-534.
- Norman, P. M., Butler, F. C., & Ranft, A. L. (2012). Resources matter: Examining the effects of resources on the state of firms following downsizing. *Journal of Management*, 39(7), 2009-2083.
- Norman, S. M., Avolio, B. J., & Luthans, F. (2010). The impact of positivity and transparency on trust in leaders and their perceived effectiveness. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21, 350-364. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.03.002
- Noronha, E., & D'Cruz, P. (2005). Achieving downsizing: Managerial perspectives. *Global Business Review*, 6(1), 77-94. doi:10.1177/097215090500600106
- Noronha, E., & D'Cruz, P. (2006). A necessary evil: The experiences of managers implementing downsizing programmes. *The Qualitative Report*, 11(1), 88-112.
- Omoruyi, Q., Chipunza, C., & Samuel, M. O. (2011). Perceptions of justice and extra-role behaviours of survivors after organisational restructuring at a consolidated bank in Nigeria. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 9(1), 125-138. doi:10.4102/sajhrm.v9i1.344

- Parks-Yancy, R. (2011). The impact of downsizing on the social capital resources and career prospects of African– American survivors. *Journal of African American Studies*, 15, 307-326. doi: 10.1007/s12111-010-9147-9
- Parzefall, M. (2012). A close call: Perceptions of alternative HR arrangements to layoffs. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 27(8), 799-813. doi: 10.1108/02683941211280166
- Paterson, T. T., & Husband, T. M. (1970). Decision-making responsibility: Yardstick for job evaluation. *Compensation Review*, 2(2), 21-31.
- Perry, C. (2001). Case research in marketing. *The Marketing Review*, 1, 303-323.
- Petty, N. J., Thomson, O. P., & Stew, G. (2012). Ready for a paradigm shift? part 2: Introducing qualitative research methodologies and methods. *Manual Therapy*, 17(5), 378-384. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.math.2012.03.004>
- Petzall, B. J., Parker, G. E., & Stoeberl, P. A. (2000). Another side to downsizing: Survivor's behaviour and self-affirmation. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 14(4), 593-603.
- Rai, S., & Lakshman, C. (2014). Organizational culture and commitment among lay-off survivors: A tale of two MNCs in India. *South Asian Journal of Management*, 21(4), 7-26.
- Reinardy, S. (2011). Journalism's layoff survivors tap resources to remain satisfied. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 19, 285-298. doi: 10.1080/15456870.2011.623075
- Rust, K. G., McKinley, W., Moon, G., & Edwards, J. C. (2005). Ideological foundations of perceived contract breach associated with downsizing: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 12(1), 37-52.
- Saldaña, J. (2012). An introduction to codes and coding. *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (pp. 1-31) Sage.
- Saunders, M., & Lewis, P. (Eds.). (2012). *Doing research in business and management* Pearson: Edinburgh Gate.

- Shook, L., & Roth, G. (2011). Downsizings, mergers, and acquisitions: Perspectives of human resource development practitioners. *Journal of European Industrial Training, 35*(2), 135-153.
- Southern African development community (SADC) in crisis. (2016). *Mining World, 13*, 5.
- Travaglione, A., & Cross, B. (2006). Diminishing the social network in organizations: Does there need to be such a phenomenon as 'survivor syndrome' after downsizing? *Strategic Change, 15*(1), 1-13. doi: 10.1002/jsc.743
- Tzafrir, S. S., & Eitam - Meilik, M. (2005). The impact of downsizing on trust and employee practices in high tech firms: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of High Technology Management Research, 16*, 193-207.
- Uen, J. F., Chen, S., Chen, H., & Lin, C. (2016). The effect of employer's moral obligation violation on survivor's commitment. the mediating role of justice climate. *Personnel Review, 45*(2), 214-231. doi:10.1108/PR-09-2014-0200
- Vaughn, P., & Turner, C. (2016). Decoding via coding: Analyzing qualitative text data through thematic coding and survey methodologies. *Journal of Library Administration, 56*(1), 41-51. doi:10.1080/01930826.2015.1105035
- Walker, S. (2015). Psychological disconnect: The impact of managerial narrative on perceptions of the cessation of the employee-employer relationship. *Academy of Business Research, IV*, 60-75.
- Waraich, S. B., & Bhardwaj, G. (2012). Perception of workforce reduction scenario and coping strategies of survivors: An empirical study. *South Asian Journal of Management, 19*(3), 34-49.
- Waraich, S. B., & Bhardwaj, G. (2012). Perception of workforce reduction scenario and coping strategies of survivors: An empirical study. *South Asian Journal of Management, 19*(3), 34-49.
- Zatzick, C. D., Deery, S. J., & Iverson, R. D. (2015). Understanding the determinants of who gets laid off: Does affective organizational commitment matter? *Human Resource Management, 54*(6), 877-891. doi:10.1002/hrm.21641



Appendix 1: Details of Participants

Participant	Area of specialisation	Years of service	Province of employment	Role change	How was the role affected	Number of subordinate before the restructuring	Number of retrenched employees	Participant informed employees of retrenchment
Participant 1	Audit	10	Gauteng	No	Not affected and they did not have to apply for role.	No direct reports	N/A	No
Participant 2	Forensics	10	Gauteng	No	Not affected and they did not have to apply for role.	9	No, direct reports reduced to 6, they chose to accept their voluntary packages and change in roles	No
Participant 3	Legal services	8	Gauteng	Yes	Lateral move to a new position which was similar to the previous role	9	No, direct reports reduced to 6, they chose to accept their voluntary packages and change in roles	No
Participant 4	IT Governance	20+	Gauteng	Yes	Had to apply for their position, however, they did not get their position. They ended up receiving a junior position (demotion).	6	No, the number of junior staff grew from 6 to 19	No
Participant 5	Mining operations	9	Mpumalanga	Yes	Lateral move to a new position in a different department, the new role which was very different from the previous role.	Approximately 450 people (including direct reports and the levels below)	Yes, the department was left with 48 people, the 400 was either placed in other departments or retrenched.	No

Participant	Area of specialisation	Years of service	Province of employment	Role change	How was the role affected	Number of subordinate before the restructuring	Number of retrenched employees	Participant informed employees of retrenchment
Participant 6	BU Manager/ HOD	9	Mpumalanga	No	N/A	Approximately 350 people (including direct reports and the levels below)	Yes, approximately 70 people were retrenched.	Yes
Participant 7	Stakeholder engagement/ Strategy	5	Gauteng	Yes	Accepted a new position in a different department as a contractor, the new role which was very different from the previous role.	No direct reports	N/A	No
Participant 8	Technical services	8	Mpumalanga	Yes	Got a new job in a different section of the organisation at a similar position as the previous role	40 direct reports but the respondent had to plan for the restructuring of a section, affecting 1000 people	38 direct reports were retrenched and over 700 in that section of the organisation were retrenched	Yes
Participant 9	Human Resources	10	Gauteng	No	Although their role did not change, they had to go through the application process to secure their job/ role.	6	3 people were retrenched.	No
Participant 10	Supply Chain	12	Gauteng	Yes	At the time of the interview, the respondent was planned to move to a new position in a different department	13	6 people were placed in other departments within the organisation	No
Participant 11	Audit/ Forensics	22	Freestate	Yes	Had to apply for their position, however, they did not get their position. They ended up receiving	7	Does not have direct reports in their new position	No

Participant	Area of specialisation	Years of service	Province of employment	Role change	How was the role affected	Number of subordinate before the restructuring	Number of retrenched employees	Participant informed employees of retrenchment
					a junior position (demotion).			
Participant 12	Operations	5	Mpumalanga	Yes	Got promoted to a new position	2 direct reports and over 40 people at the next level.	No retrenchments.	No
Participant 13	Operations	8	Mpumalanga	No	Although their role did not change, they had to go through the application process to secure their job/ role.	5 direct reports and over 80 people at the next level	3 direct reports were retrenched (The respondent was not certain of the number of people retrenched at the second level of command)	Yes
Participant 14	Operations	8	Mpumalanga	No	Although their role did not change, they had to go through the application process to secure their job/ role.	8 direct, over 400 people at the next level	4 direct reports were retrenched (The respondent was not certain of the number of people retrenched at the second level of command)	Yes
Participant 15	Technology	10	Mpumalanga	Yes	Accepted a new position in a different business unit, the new role which was very different from the previous role.	Approximately 30 direct, over 480 people at the next level	Yes, approximately 100 people were retrenched.	Yes
Participant 16	Procurement	10	Mpumalanga	No	Although their role did not change, they had to go through the	5	Yes, however, the department grew as two departments	Yes

Participant	Area of specialisation	Years of service	Province of employment	Role change	How was the role affected	Number of subordinate before the restructuring	Number of retrenched employees	Participant informed employees of retrenchment
					application process to secure their job/ role.		were merged	
Participant 17	BU Manager/ HOD	9	Limpopo	Yes	Got a new job in a different section of the organisation at a similar position as the previous role	Was responsible for a section with over 800 people	Yes, approximately 100 people were retrenched.	Yes

Appendix 2: Interview Guideline

Interview guideline

Name:

Start Time:

Organisation:

End Time:

Job Title:

Date:

This study aims to explore and understand how retrenchments may affect middle managers' feelings, behaviour and their perception of the organisation; and how these influence their productivity, work performance and commitment towards the organisation

The nature of this research and interview is both conversational and exploratory. You are encouraged to speak freely and be confident in the fact that the information shared in this interview will be confidential.

Before we begin, may I ask you to please sign the consent form and can you please confirm that you are happy for me to record the interview using an audio recording device?

The interview consists of five key standard questions, the rest of the questions will arise from your responses.

Introductory questions

In order to gain a bit more understanding of the restructuring process you went through, please answer the following introductory questions

- I1. How long ago was the restructuring, please state when it commenced and when it was concluded.
- I2. What was your role in the restructuring process?
- I3. How large was the staff complement within your scope of management before and after the restructuring?

The following questions will focus on the different stages of the restructuring process i.e. before, during, and post the restructuring process.

Question 1

What are your overall thoughts on how the restructuring process was carried out?

Question 2

How did this affect you and how did it make you feel?

Question 3

Before the restructuring process

- a. How did you generally feel about your job?
- b. How would you describe your attitude towards your job
- c. How would you characterise/ describe your behaviour as a leader (towards your team)?
- d. What were your feelings and behaviour towards the organisation and its leadership?
- e. How did you feel about the security of your role/ job within the organisation?

Question 4

During the restructuring process

- a. How did you generally feel about your job?
- b. How would you describe your attitude towards your job?
- c. How would you characterise your behaviour as a leader (towards your team)?
- d. What were your feelings and behaviour towards the organisation and its leadership?
- e. How did you feel about the security of your role/ job within the organisation?

Question 5

Post the restructuring process

- a. How did you feel about your job at the end of?
- b. How would you describe your attitude towards your job?
- c. How would you characterise your behaviour as a leader (towards your team)?
- d. What were your feelings and behaviour towards the organisation and its leadership?
- e. How did you feel about the security of your role/ job within the organisation?

Appendix 3: Interview Consent Form

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

The effects of the retrenchment process on the surviving middle managers' perception, behaviour and work performance.

Researcher: Ashanti Mabena, MBA Student at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria

I am conducting research which aims to explore and understand how retrenchments may affect middle managers' feelings, behaviour and their perception of the organisation; and how these influence their productivity, work performance and commitment towards the organisation

The interview is expected to last about an hour, and the information and insights gained through the interview will hopefully help me to better understand how your feelings and behaviour (towards the organisation and your work) may have been affected by the retrenchment process.

Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. The audio recording of this interview is also voluntary and you may choose not to be recorded. All data will be kept confidential and any quotations used will be anonymised.

If you have any concerns, please contact me or my supervisor. Our details are provided below:

Researcher
Ashanti Mabena
23236397@mygibs.co.za
[REDACTED]

Supervisor
Hayley Owens
Pearsonh@gibs.co.za
011 771 4180

Participant's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 4: Ethical clearance

Dear Ashanti Mabena
Protocol Number: Temp2016-02066

Title: The effects of retrenchments on middle managers who survived retrenchments Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been APPROVED.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data. We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

Kind Regards,
Adele Bekker