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# The pisteis (or forms) of persuasion: A measure of the effect of rhetoric on commitment to change, in times of crisis

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A research project submitted to the  
**Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria,**  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
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1 December 2020

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## **Abstract**

The ability to effectively influence is a useful talent that can be of great value for leaders in organisations undergoing change. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused a shift in the employer-employee dynamic, with many employees in organisations working-from-home, requiring shifts in communication mediums and influence tactics. The change management brought about by the economic downturns from enforced lockdowns requires an even greater need for managers and leaders to understand which influence levers are most useful with their employees.

Using the three rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, and pathos), each was quantitatively examined to determine the extent to which they persuade an employee in a crisis. The independent variable in the study was organisational commitment to change (affective, normative, and continuance). The medium of delivery was also assessed to determine whether sending an influence message via email or video is more effective. Vignettes were used in the research design to determine how respondents would behave in a hypothetical situation.

The results suggest that pathos and logos are more effective than ethos, while sending influence messages via video is more suitable than email. A further analysis of each of the components of organisational change showed that employees with affective and normative commitment to change were influenced more by the use of logos, and preferred video as a medium of delivery, while those with continuance commitment to change preferred the use of pathos to influence and video as a medium of delivery.

## **Keywords**

Rhetoric; Influence; Persuasion; Commitment to Change

## **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.

Lauren Smith

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1 December 2020

## **List of Acronyms**

OC – Overall Commitment

AC – Affective Commitment

CC – Continuance Commitment

NC – Normative Commitment

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## **Nature of study**

This research project is based on a quantitative study.



## **Chapter 1: Introduction and research problem**

*“Persuasion is one of the great forces of the modern world, as it has always been. Persuasion is an activity that garners positive evaluation, and for excellent reasons. Persuasion works, persuaders sell products well, persuadees vote well and fight well. Lucky is he who has the knack for persuading people; this person can become president.” (Plantin, 2012, p. 90)*

Life is a constant dance between understanding others, and having others understand us. Those of us who can master the art of bringing our view across so that people walk with us on a journey are at a major advantage than those who cannot. Getting an influence target from view A to view B, merely using appropriate language, tone, media, and expression, is a powerful tool that, fortunately, can be learnt (Borg, 2013). It is therefore a powerful skill to possess, in both life and business.

The potent power of persuasion and influence can be seen in many instances throughout our existence: When compatriots are compelled to fight wars in foreign lands, motivated to give their lives in honour of their country, spurred into battle by their commander; when we cast our ballots, entrusting politicians with the safekeeping of our country; when we are convinced to pay yet another few hundred rand for that bright pink pair of shoes we know we will never wear; or even when we have to make difficult choices in a crisis, seeking guidance from our leaders.

The effectiveness of a successful influence message can coax us into action, giving the person doing the persuading (the influence agent) the power to change the mind of the person being persuaded (the influence target). By merely by using the appropriate balance of persuasion tactics, and the correct medium of delivery, can a leader change the actions and perceptions of those under his/ her influence.

## 1.1 The Covid-19 crisis

At the time of writing of this report, the total confirmed cases of Covid-19 globally, stood at 61 036 793 million and 1 433 316 confirmed deaths (The World Health Organization, 2020). In South Africa, the total confirmed cases were 778 571 with 21 289 confirmed deaths (The World Health Organization, 2020). Coupled with the health crisis, the global economic contraction is predicted at 3% and is predicted to be worse than the 2008/9 economic crisis (The New York Times, 2020).

Covid-19 is a pervasive crisis that has brought economic and financial uncertainty, due to restrictions placed on trade, with people asked to stay indoors to help 'flatten the curve' of spread. In South Africa, the potential impact on the economy triggers a sharp increase in unemployment, due to an increase in business failures, increased healthcare costs and increases in government expenditure on stimulus packages and healthcare services (National treasury, 2020). All this, coupled with the downgrade of South Africa to sub-investment-grade by rating agencies, plunged the country, like many economies the world over, further into crisis.

## 1.2 Business facing crisis

Crisis is defined as *"a serious threat to the basic structures of the fundamental values and norms of a system, which, under time pressure and highly uncertain circumstances, necessitate making critical decisions"* (Davis & Gardner, 2012, p. 920).

On the evening of 23 March 2020, a 21-day national lockdown, to commence at midnight on Thursday 26 March, was announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa (South African Government, 2020). This lockdown was extended indefinitely, and at the time of writing this report, South Africa was in its 249<sup>th</sup> day of lockdown. Upon the announcement of the lockdown, within a matter of days, organisations were required to equip their workforces to work remotely for an indefinite period (after an extension of the initial 21-days), to comply with lockdown regulations. As a result, many leaders found themselves in an environment where most, if not all, of their workforce became employees who work-from-home.

### 1.3 Business rationale for research project

With 83% of employees willing to work remotely post-Covid-19 and a 6% increase in efficiency through virtual working (McKinsey & Company, 2020), many organisations are grappling with the reality that most of their workforce will be remote for many months to come, if not longer. Leadership of organisations are now faced with the challenge of leading their organisations through video-conferencing, emails, texts, and telephone calls, all this while facing a global health and economic crisis. Leaders of organisations plummeted into an environment where they had to manage a dwindling economy, a work-from-home workforce, and a health crisis. Employees, on the other hand, are seeking leadership, faced with more specific and urgent needs. Leaders now need to run organisations remotely, all while ensuring they pull the correct levers to get the correct messages across to their teams.

During times of crisis, management must communicate and influence effectively (Davis & Gardner, 2012). This is difficult when leaders and followers can physically be together, but even more so when distance plays a role. Context plays a very important role when leaders consider how to effectively influence (Davis & Gardner, 2012). With the complexity in the environment and the multiple crises faced by leadership, many difficult decisions have had to be communicated to employees, either via video-conference or email, during a time when leaders would have been better placed to deliver these messages to the staff personally.

With the South African economy set to contract by between 6% and 7% in 2020 (National treasury, 2020), many organisations have had to re-negotiate terms with financial institutions, suppliers and employees, in order to weather the financial impact of the national lockdown. From retrenchment notices, to price renegotiations, the approach and structure of these messages have become an important element in leadership communication. These conditions appear set to stay with business for the foreseeable future, as the world recovers from an ongoing global pandemic. Change in organisations will therefore be the new way of being and employees need to buy-in to change for organisations to remain competitive.

The structure of influential messaging during times of crisis will therefore be the focus of this research paper. Together with the structure of these messages, delivery mediums will also be examined, to determine their effect on leadership to influence commitment to change.

#### **1.4 Theoretical need for the research**

Although researchers on the topic differ on which element of rhetoric is more effective than the other, when persuading an audience, many agree that the most effective method of persuasion is the combination of all three forms of rhetoric in harmony (Heracleous & Klaering, 2014). In their study, Heracleous and Klaering (2014) found, depending on ethos perceived, pathos and logos are adjusted to compensate, in order to effectively persuade. There appears, however, to be a gap in the literature, where each rhetorical appeal is studied, in isolation, and measured for degree of influence, together with the degree to which each appeal influences commitment to change, in an organisational crisis setting.

#### **1.5 Conclusion**

In times of crisis, the rhetoric leaders are required to use, in order to effectively influence outcomes depends on whom they want to influence, the words they use, gestures conveyed, medium of delivery, the audience, and the leaders themselves. The literature shows that a combination of these elements is best, but specific measures of these tactics, in this context, will be the focus of this research project.

## Chapter 2: Literature review

### 2.1 Rhetoric: Logos, ethos, and pathos

#### 2.1.1 The history of rhetoric

The study and practice of rhetoric began in fifth-century Greece (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007). During this time, the democratic government gave citizens the right to participate in their government's policy-making decisions. Assemblies of male citizens, where decisions on public policies were debated and decided, were held. For a policy to be heard and tabled, individuals called rhetores would convincingly persuade lawmakers of their view (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007). While some possessed a natural gift for communicating in this persuasive way, others needed to learn the art of rhetoric in order to persuade the assembly on their stance (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007).

Socrates and his student, Plato, distrusted this form of speech, citing the dangers in the manipulation that may be sought through its use. Aristotle was one of the first scholars of rhetoric to view it as a neutral art form, he believed that it can be used for both good and evil, depending on how the orator uses the tools of rhetoric in his speech (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007).

#### 2.1.2 The three appeals of rhetoric

Aristotle showed that persuasion is based on three appeals:

*“The truth and logical validity of what is being argued, the speakers’ success in conveying to the audience a perception that he or she can be trusted, and the emotions that a speaker is able to awaken in an audience to accept the views advanced and act in accordance with them”* (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007, p. x).

These three elements of rhetoric are referred to as logos (the logical argument), ethos (the perception that the speaker can be trusted), and pathos (the emotions elicited by the speaker) (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007).



Figure 1: The three appeals of rhetoric

“Most arguments derive their power of persuasion from a *fusion* of ethos, pathos and logos” (Braet, 1992, p. 309).

### 2.1.3 Ethos – Appealing to the audience’s sense of credibility, authority, and integrity in the speaker

#### 2.1.3.1 Ethical proof and credibility of the speaker

Braet (1992, p. 311) defined ethos as the ethical proof that is formed from the credibility of the speaker and is demonstrated through the delivery of the speech so as “to persuade the audience to believe in the credibility of the speaker”. He further states, according to Aristotle, the credibility of the speaker is demonstrated when the audience attributes three qualities to the speaker: “good sense, virtue, and goodwill” (Braet, 1992, p. 311). The perception the audience therefore has of the speaker plays an important role in determining how influential the speaker is.

The concept of ethos is defined as “moral character as reflected in a deliberate choice of actions and as developed into a habit of mind” (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007, p. 148). The text further recommends, for an orator to be successful at ethos, they must seek to understand the moral character of the audience (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007).

The element of trust between the audience and the speaker is therefore brought to the fore. Interestingly, this text describes the understanding the speaker should have of the audience, rather than the trust the audience feels towards the speaker. Effective speakers therefore must first seek to comprehend their audience if they aim to be perceived as sincere and therefore credible.

#### 2.1.4 Logos – Appealing to the audience’s sense of logic, reason, and argumentation

Logos is the appeal to the audience’s sense of logic, reason, and argumentation (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007; Braet, 1992): in other words, how the audience makes sense of what the speaker is saying. In the context of crisis, sense-making involves a process whereby people take a view on what is happening around them through external cues, and develop a logical meaning about the occurrence (Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010). How people make sense of a crisis is therefore important when it comes to logos as an input to influence and persuasion. This will determine the information they require and the conclusions they draw from the information they receive.

The role of time for sense-making in the context of organisational change is also important in that opposition to the change message could be a signal to management that insufficient time was afforded for sense-making (Brown & Starkey, 2000). The logic behind the change should therefore be clearly articulated by the influence agent, to bring understanding and alignment to the organisation of the change underway. This is supported by Kieran, MacMahon and MacCurtain (2020), who assert that the neglect of sense-making could lead to a misalignment of objectives if not carefully considered and actioned. Compliance with a change message is therefore an outcome of sense-making, in this context.

## 2.1.5 Pathos – Appealing to the audience’s sense of emotion

### 2.1.5.1 Eliciting emotion from the audience

When deciding on matters where emotional engagement is high (pathos), anecdotal evidence is more persuasive than statistical data (logos) (Freling, Yang, Saini, Itani, & Abualsamh, 2020). The results of this study showed it is better to use logical data (logos), when trying to persuade on an issue not eliciting emotional investment from decision-makers, but to use anecdotal evidence when emotions on the topic at hand are high. The context of a crisis environment, such as a global pandemic, would certainly be emotive for the audience; this implies that pathos may be most effective for this particular context.

The study done by Freling, et al. (2020) does not lean more towards any one element of rhetoric, but prescribes the type of evidence to use when persuasion is required and emotional engagement from the audience is either high *or* low. The content of the influence message, appropriate tactics, and the audience’s state of mind appear to be the suitable blend for effective rhetoric. This is further confirmed by Bauer, et al. (2016), who concluded that charismatic leaders use a multi-layered approach to sell their visions to their followers.

Although Plato warned against the exploitation of emotive language in rhetoric, leaders elicit emotion through the use of words, to paint a picture of the future for their followers (Carton, Murphy, & Clark, 2014), thereby creating an image in the minds of followers. When sharing a company mission and vision, using more vision-imagery rhetoric, in conjunction with fewer values, leads to more effective organisational performance, as it creates a sense of shared purpose. When vision is communicated without imagery, and when values are over-utilised, performance suffers (Carton, Murphy, & Clark, 2014). The more a speaker is then able to paint a mental image for their audience, the more persuasive they are likely to be. This is probably because the audience is then able to *see* the message the speaker is delivering, rather than drawing their own inferences.



The importance of emotion and emotive language can therefore be demonstrated, because visionary content inspires followers to emotionally connect to the future, as laid out by the speaker, through the words used to deliver a message (Caspi, Bogler, & Tzuman, 2019). Clark and Greatbatch (2011) confirm that visionary leadership is a prerequisite for charismatic communicators, and that the choice of words is a key component in a leader crafting a persuasive message to their followers. Aristotle gives a detailed description and analysis of no less than 14 emotions that can be incited through effective use of rhetoric: anger; “calmness; friendliness and enmity; fear and confidence; shame and shamefulness; kindness and unkindness; pity and indignation; envy and emulation” (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007, p. 24). Aristotle further gives recommendations as to how an orator may trigger these emotions from an audience through the rhetoric of his/her speech.

#### 2.1.6 Rhetoric and context

In understanding the link between charismatic leadership and rhetoric, Heracleous and Klaering (2014) set out to determine whether leaders adjust their rhetoric according to the different contexts they may find themselves in. They point out that speakers, such as Steve Jobs, did not use the same style of rhetoric for all situations (Heracleous & Klaering, 2014).

The study also found that, although rhetorical strategies calling for the continuation of certain styles are valuable, customisation to suit a particular audience and context plays an even more important role in charismatic rhetoric (Heracleous & Klaering, 2014).

Another influential orator, Barack Obama, was said to have won the 2008 presidential election because of the eloquence and charismatic delivery and content of speech, in the context of the financial crisis in 2008, when his country was faced with deep uncertainty and needed a renewed vision of the future (Bligh & Kohles, 2009). Context therefore matters, when determining the most effective persuasion tool in rhetoric.

The literature further examines the significance that context plays when change management is at play, concluding that the approach to change management is highly dependent on context (Nylstrom, Hoog, Weinehall, & Ivarsson, 2013). Since a crisis typically forces organisations to change, the same principles should be applied.

### 2.1.7 Rhetoric in times of crisis

When in a crisis situation, managers tend to use formal, referent, and expert power together with upward influence. They also tend to be less open to consultation, which they use in non-crisis situations, to effect influence (Mulder, Koppelaar, De Jong, & Verhage, 1986). In communicating in a situation requiring change, it is shown that managers will be more prescriptive about action, rather than about visionary and consultative forms of communication. However, followers still need to relate to their leaders in times of crisis (Davis & Gardner, 2012). Crisis situations therefore require leaders to have and use expert and referent power, but they must use rhetoric for relatability, empathy and understanding, to effectively influence. This is especially true when followers are in an emotion-invoking crisis.

Hunt, Boal, and Dodge (1999) showed that an effective crisis-responsive leader begins with requiring actions from followers (in order to deal with the crisis situation), thereafter articulating a vision of a situation post-crisis, contrasting an effective visionary charismatic who begins with articulating a picture of the future and seeking action based on the vision. This is especially true in times of uncertainty, when the force of negative emotions, such as fear, anxiety, and panic need to be tempered, and that managers who attend to the negative emotions of their colleagues are more likely to succeed in their change efforts (Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010).

In crisis-situations, the charismatic attributions of the leader are short-lived in the memories of followers, unless the leader can link the crisis-charismatic leadership to another situation, whereas visionary charismatic leadership attributes are likely to endure (Hunt, Boal, & Dodge, 1999). Successful leaders should therefore adapt their styles to an action-based approach in times of crisis but need to re-establish a visionary approach when the crisis ends.

## 2.1.8 Direction of influence

### 2.1.8.1 Upward versus downward influence

A consistency in the likelihood of the use of a tactic was found where downward influence was required, regardless of situation (Aguinis, Neslar, Hosoda, & Tedeschi, 1994). The rank-order of persuasion tactics, from most to least likely used are: rationality; ingratiation; assertiveness; and exchange, are recommended. This was confirmed after testing the likelihood of use of each tactic in downward influence situations, combined with different situations (Aguinis, Neslar, Hosoda, & Tedeschi, 1994). In delivering a crisis message, and in the context of an organisation, the influence agent is typically looking to persuade an influence target in a downward direction.

Another observation is, depending on the direction of the influence situation (upward or downward), the tactics used differ, but should be used in multiple combinations to obtain a more effective outcome (Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995). In other words, a mix of tactics is more effective than the use of a singular tactic, when being persuasive (Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995).

## 2.1.9 Tactics of influence and persuasion

“Successful persuasion is a negotiation that results in concrete impacts on the behaviour of other people or organisations” (Watkins, 2001, p. 115). Watkins (2001) sets out a framework that outlines five core persuasion tasks, to assist leaders in obtaining the outcomes they desire. These are “the mapping of the influence landscape; shaping perceptions of interests; shaping perceptions of alternatives; gaining acceptance of alternatives; gaining acceptance for tough decisions; and persuading at a distance” (Watkins, 2001, p. 116).

Nine influence tactics, namely, “rational persuasion; consultation; inspiration appeals; personal appeals; ingratiation; exchange; pressure; legitimating; and coalition tactics” (Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995, p. 275), were used to find the relationship between tactics and influence objectives, namely, “assignment of work; change of behaviour; getting assistance; getting support; and getting personal benefit”, by Yukl, Guinan and Sottolano (1995, p. 276). It was found that managers use different influence tactic patterns, depending on the upward or downward direction of the influence target, as well as the influence objective pursued (Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995). The appropriate use of these tactics is therefore important when effectively sending a message to an audience. Manning (2012), on the other hand, sets out seven skills to use in order to get your point across in a more persuasive manner. These are clarity; targeting your case; searching for common ground; simplicity; appealing to both head and heart; calmness; and interaction. He argues that influence tactics, styles and strategies should be adjusted to specific contexts and that these skills are learnable.

The tactics mostly focus on the person(s) being persuaded (the persuasion targets): how the targets feel, how they are receiving a message; and how much they trust the person delivering the message. This is confirmed by Woodward (2010), who states that leaders often try to make themselves more likeable, but that this is often an ineffective tactic, and leaders should instead seek to find features within their followers that they genuinely admire, because followers are attracted to leaders whom they view to be like them.

#### 2.1.10 Influence tactics in psychology

One of the great students of influence and persuasion is Robert Cialdini, PhD. He describes no more than six tactics to influence and persuade effectively. These are: reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity (Cialdini, 2007).

##### 2.1.10.1 Reciprocity

*“And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.”* (Luke 6:31, English Standard Version)

Reciprocation is probably one of the most powerful of the six tactics described by Robert Cialdini. It is part of our socialisation as human beings to give back what we receive. In fact, most cultures live by this rule (Cialdini, 2007).

Cialdini illustrates the power of this principle by referring to an example where, in 1985, Ethiopia (one of the poorest countries in the world) sent 5000 dollars of aid to Mexico City, to help in the relief efforts after an earthquake hit the country. When asked why such an impoverished nation would send money to another country, the answer was simple, because nearly 50 years prior, Mexico had sent aid to Ethiopia to help them when Italy invaded *their* country. The power of this rule was so strong, that 50 years after receiving help, Ethiopians felt compelled to show Mexico the same support they had received so many years before, even though they were poverty-stricken (Cialdini, 2007).

#### **2.1.10.2 Commitment and consistency**

Commitment and consistency in influence refer to the desire for people to keep up with the promises they make, especially when these commitments are made publicly (Cialdini, 2007).

Commitment and consistency provide a shortcut to how we should behave, and how we want to be perceived by others (Cialdini, 2007). People admire consistency. We value partners who are consistent, we listen to and follow leaders who provide consistent messages and criticise those who contradict themselves. When a persuasive message contains information that requires the influence agent to be consistent and commit to an outcome, the chances that the influence target will comply are increased, even more so when a commitment is publicly made (Cialdini, 2007).

#### **2.1.10.3 Consensus**

Consensus refers to our innate urge to follow others, particularly similar others (Cialdini, 2007). When we see others looking up at the sky, possibly pointing upward, should some follow, more and more will feel compelled to do so.

*“In general, when we are unsure of ourselves, when the situation is unclear or ambiguous, when uncertainty reigns, we are most likely to look to and accept the actions of others as correct” (Cialdini, 2007, p. 129).*

Given that uncertainty often drives consensus, as a tactic of persuasion, it should be quite useful under conditions of crisis (such as a global pandemic).

#### **2.1.10.4 Liking**

We tend to agree with those who are like us. We also like those who give us compliments, who are similar to us, and who agree with our ideas (Cialdini, 2020). An influence agent should therefore seek to be liked by the audience to influence. This is in contradiction with Watkins (2001), who believes that the audience prefer influence agents who are like them, and seek not to like the persuader.

#### **2.1.10.5 Authority**

We respect the opinions of those who are experts and who have knowledge of the topic we are being influenced on (Cialdini, 2007). It is therefore incumbent on influence agents to display their competence in the matter they are seeking influence on.

#### **2.1.10.6 Scarcity**

Scarcity refers to the perception created by the influence agent that a delay or inaction on the part of the influence target would cause some sort of loss. People feel a desire not to miss out on the things that they want, especially if there is a chance that those things may suddenly become unavailable (Cialdini, 2007).

### 2.1.11 Summary of influence tactics

<b>Tactics as described by Yukl et al. (1995)</b>	<b>Tactics as described by Cialdini (Cialdini, 2007)</b>
Rational persuasion	Reciprocation
Consultation	Commitment and consistency
Inspirational appeals	Consensus
Personal appeals	Liking
Ingratiation	Authority
Exchange	Scarcity
Pressure	
Legitimizing	
Coalition tactics	

*Table 1: Summary of influence tactics*

## 2.2 Medium and delivery

### 2.2.1 Delivery and content of message

When delivering a crisis message, the pitch and tone of the speaker influences how the message is received (De Waele, Claeys, & Cauberghe, 2019). Here it was found that these vocal cues are effective when organisations seek to rebuild from, rather than deny, a crisis situation, and are mediated by voice attractiveness. Further support for message modality and its effect on persuasion is presented by Braverman (2008), who found that a person who has a high interest in the subject matter being presented in a message will more likely be influenced by the information in the message rather than a testimonial to prove the message to be true. This result could mean that participants reading a message would be persuaded by the logic (logos) of a message, if there is a high rate of involvement in the content being presented; in other words, if the influence agent has high motivation to scrutinise the message, logos would be more effective.

#### 2.2.1.1 Pitch and tone

The pitch of voice is received differently by different genders in terms of attractiveness. Men prefer a higher pitch female voice, as this could be a sign of fertility, while too high a pitch in voice could signal sexual immaturity. Women prefer a lower pitch in men, as this signals dominance (Borkowska & Pawlowski, 2011). Therefore, depending on the desired outcome of the influence message, tone and pitch should carefully be considered. It is suggested that even election outcomes have been influenced by pitch and tone of voice, particularly when male and female candidates are in opposition (Klofstad, 2016).

The role of voice may play an important role because a separate study confirmed how important empathy is when communicating during a crisis (Schoofs, Claeys, De Waele, & Cauberghe, 2019). The research also draws a distinction between preventable and victim crisis. Here it is shown that empathy is more effective in situations where the organisation is not responsible for a crisis (victim crises) and stakeholders are more likely to empathise with the organisation, in which case it is important for crisis communication to be centred around empathy.



The personal involvement of leadership is a strong signal as to the urgency of change and is more likely to lead to a change outcome (Graetz, 2000). The Covid-19 crisis is a victim crisis, which would require leaders to show empathy, to effectively influence.

#### **2.2.1.2 Style of delivery**

In research conducted on marketing sales pitch presentations, it was found that potential buyers rely more heavily on presentation style (pathos) than message content (logos), especially when there is no previous sales history (Sparks & Areni, 2002). They also found that, even when there is a strong case for buying the product, when the sales pitch is poor, the customer finds it difficult to focus on the content of the pitch. This research leans towards favouring delivery over content. This implies that the delivery medium for the message affects the level of influence exerted onto the influence target and that video may be more influential than sending an email, for example.

The importance of delivery over content is confirmed by Caspi, Bogler, and Tzuman (2019), who found that how a message is delivered to an audience influences the perception of the speaker's charisma (ethos and pathos), more so than the content of the message (logos), and is more persuasive than the actual content, because the first impression of the speaker's charisma is processed before the persuasiveness of the content (Caspi, Bogler, & Tzuman, 2019). A speaker should therefore carefully consider what is the appropriate means of communication to effectively communicate a message.

#### **2.2.2 Cueing**

Human beings use verbal and non-verbal cues when communicating with each other. Some cues are physically visible, while others are not. Cues that are seen include factors like gender, race, age, facial expressions, hand gestures, and social status, etc. Cues that can be heard include factors like accent, pitch, and tone of voice, etc (Hall, Horgan, & Murphy, 2019). Cueing therefore becomes an important factor in the communication of a message because the receiver gets more information about the speaker through observing these cues.

### 2.2.3 First impression bias

*“First impression bias refers to a limitation of human information processing in which people are strongly influenced by the first piece of information that they are exposed to, and that they are biased in evaluating subsequent information in the direction of the initial influence” (Lim, Benbasat, & Ward, 2000, p. 115).*

Human beings disproportionately use the very first bits of information they encounter in passing judgement (Asch, 1946). The first impressions created through both written and verbal communication can therefore influence the perception the audience has of the speaker and is determined relatively early on. This could have an effect on the ethos of the influence message.

### 2.2.4 What it means to be a charismatic rhetorical communicator

If ethos, pathos, and logos are the tools orators use to influence, charisma could be said to be the attributes followers assign to a leader and the results achieved through these attributes (DuBrin, 2013). The ability of a leader to effectively articulate and persuade their followers is a key and valuable trait, because possessing this ability is perceived as a pre-cursor of the level of technical proficiency of the leader (Clark & Greatbatch, 2011). In the same study, charismatic oratory is assigned three generic factors: content, delivery, and speaker-audience interaction.

It is concluded that, although speakers who are able to deliver influential speeches are considered more charismatic, no one-size-fits-all approach can be taken, because audience members respond to different factors (Clark & Greatbatch, 2011). The results from this particular study further recommend that orators move away from speaker-centred approaches to more audience-centred approaches, to be more charismatic and therefore more persuasive.

### 2.2.5 The dark side of rhetoric and charisma

Plato, warned against the dark side of rhetoric (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007, p. xi), distrusted it and called it “a form of flattery – morally irresponsible, and not based on knowledge of truth or sound logic” (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007, p. x). He understood the potential for abuse when followers’ emotions are elicited for ill-gain, or when they are persuaded based on feelings rather than fact.

Emotional response to leadership is placed at the centre of charismatic oratory in the study conducted by Sy, Horton and Riggio (2018). Emotion is shown to be an iterative process between leader and follower, one feeding off the other. The dark side of charismatic leadership could lead organisations down immoral or even illegal paths (DuBrin, 2013). The stirring of emotion through rhetoric can therefore be used to illicit either ill or positive gains by a charismatic leader and should be used with care and responsibility.

## 2.3 Organisational commitment

### 2.3.1 A three-component model for organisational commitment

Commitment in an organisation is described, firstly, as a strong belief and acceptance of the goals of the employer, the exertion of effort by the employee in exchange for membership and acceptance within the organisation (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Commitment in the context of the organisation is therefore an exchange relationship between an employee and an employer, where the employer provides benefits in exchange for the effort, loyalty, and participation of the employee. Organisational commitment takes different forms and affects how an employee behaves when a change is proposed. Employees will typically exhibit either compliance or discretionary support for change (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Organisational commitment is categorised into three components: affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective commitment therefore refers to the commitment shown by employees because of their desire and attachment to their workplace. Continuance commitment is shown by employees who have a perceived sense of cost should they not commit to an organisational change, while normative commitment comes from a sense of obligation to comply (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Commitment to change, however, describes a notion of compliance, and a lack of commitment to a form of resistance (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). An employee is therefore deemed to have a commitment to change if they comply with a change put forward by leadership, the extent of which is measurable.



Figure 2: The three components of organisational commitment

### 2.3.2 Affective commitment to change

Employees with a high sense of affective organisational commitment will often exhibit the strongest behavioural support for change in an organisation. They will also provide more discretionary effort than employees who do not have a strong affective commitment to change (Meyer, Srinivas, Lal, & Topolnytsky, 2007). These employees will probably exert the most effort for the organisation when required, and often even when not required, because of their strong affinity to the organisation.

Tenure plays an important part in determining the level of affective commitment an employee displays in an organisation. It was found that employees with around a ten-year tenure display the most affective commitment, while employees with less than *and* more than around ten years' tenure will show less affective commitment (Ng & Feldman, 2011), implying that the ten-year mark is the affective commitment 'sweet spot'. There appears, therefore, to be a direct relationship between discretionary effort and tenure within the organisation. This would suggest a tendency for employees loyal to the organisation to display a higher level of affective commitment to change.

### 2.3.3 Continuance commitment to change

Continuance commitment is related to the costs associated with, and alternatives related to, leaving or staying with an organisation (Vandenberghe & Panaccio, 2012). Economic factors, such as a lack of employment options outside of an employee's current organisation, are related to their sense of continuance commitment (Vandenberghe & Panaccio, 2012). In a context like South Africa, where the unemployment rate is one of the highest in the world, together with extreme inequality, employees here would exhibit a high level of continuance commitment.

Continuance commitment is characterised by a lack of alternatives or a threat of loss of investments already made in time and other economic factors, such as employment. The higher the lack of alternatives, whether perceived or real, the higher the level of continuance commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

The Covid-19 pandemic therefore presents a threat to economic participation where countries have been in lockdown. The employees in these contexts would therefore exhibit a higher level of continuance commitment if their employment prospects have been threatened.

#### 2.3.4 Normative commitment to change

Normative commitment is referred to as the mindset of obligation in the context of the employer-employee relationship and is the feeling of duty on the part of the employee to remain within an organisation, based on norms set in culture, society, and the individual, among other factors (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). Employees who feel a strong sense of normative commitment will therefore remain within an organisation because they believe doing so is the right thing to do.

These employees may, therefore, feel a stronger sense to commit to organisational change because of their belief in showing loyalty to the organisation. This view is supported by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), who agreed that a feeling of obligation is felt by these employees. Normative commitment may then be linked to tenure since this sense of loyalty to remain is so strong for these employees.

There is a strong correlation in the factors that relate to normative commitment and those related to affective commitment, although they are different. The difference in the concepts is that affective commitment factors relate to need satisfaction and normative commitment factors relate to the creation of a sense of obligation (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010).

#### 2.3.5 Organisational change, demographics, and other factors

Research on the demographics influencing organisational change has shown varied results over time, with some studies showing modest variations in predictors of commitment to change and demographics.

Personal attributes (gender and age of a supervisor, the employee's attitude towards change, job involvement, and level of education), role-related factors (managerial level, work overload, years in organisation, skill level of subordinates, performance in promotion, technical skill in promotion, and seniority in promotion), and organisational factors (size, union presence, level of supervision, and centralisation of authority) were among the variables in a study carried out involving bus service workers. It was found that tenure, work overload, attitude towards change and job involvement greatly influenced employee commitment (Stevens, Beyer, & Trice, 1978). This could be because commitment in an organisation is a complex phenomenon that may not be easily explained.

In other studies, a positive relationship between job performance and commitment exists (Mowday, Porter, & Dublin, 1974), while a negative relationship between commitment and tardiness, absenteeism (Steers, 1977), and employee turnover (Hom, Katerberg, & Hulin, 1979) was found. Cultural differences also play a part when determining the level of commitment an employee is likely to exhibit in an organisation. In individualistic cultures, affective commitment is higher than it is in cultures that are more collectivist and where there is a high power distance within the culture, where normative and continuance commitment is stronger (Fischer & Mansell, 2009).

Turnover intentions are also important in observing the correlation with commitment. In individualist cultures, turnover intention does not play a major part in determining an employee's commitment, whereas collectivist cultures show a correlation between turnover intention and commitment (Fischer & Mansell, 2009). South African employees would likely show stronger normative and continuance commitment than affective commitment, due to the more collectivist nature of the society and the sharp economic downturn. The uncertainty brought on by lockdowns may increase turnover intentions, as people look for alternative employment because of the uncertainty they experience. In a study conducted on the level of organisational commitment in teachers, the effect of gender was studied where it was concluded that organisational commitment is in the favour of males on the level of identification and internalisation. Females, on the other hand, tend to find their commitment in their role as the mother in the family, rather than being committed to an organisation (Aydin, Sarier, & Uysal, 2011). Organisational commitment will therefore be higher for males than females, generally.

## 2.4 In conclusion

Rhetoric consists of three major constructs or appeals: ethos, pathos, and logos (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007). To be more influential, a speaker should use a combination of the three constructs and the degree to which each form of rhetoric is used is also situational (Caspi, Bogler, & Tzuman, 2019; Heracleous & Klaering, 2014; Sparks & Areni, 2002). Various tactics are available to leaders when they need to persuade an audience (Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995).

The medium of delivery influences the effect of the message when communicating during a crisis (De Waele, Claeys, & Cauberghe, 2019). First impressions influence how the audience sees the speaker and they often form a bias in the first moments of the influence message (Asch, 1946). Cues are important in determining what the audience takes in when hearing and seeing an influence message (Hall, Horgan, & Murphy, 2019). How a leader decides to deliver a message therefore plays an important role in determining how the audience will receive and be influenced or persuaded by the message.

Context matters when persuasion is required, and leaders should adjust their communication strategy for the situation they find themselves in (Heracleous & Klaering, 2014). A crisis is a specific context, requiring further adjustment to the rhetoric used to persuade an audience (De Waele, Claeys, & Cauberghe, 2019; Hunt, Boal, & Dodge, 1999).

Organisational commitment is grouped into three distinct categories: affective, continuance, and normative commitment to change, each of which represents the specific stance an employee would take in the buying-in of a change message (Meyer & Allen, 1991).



## 2.5 Literature review framework

The literature can be summarised in the following framework:

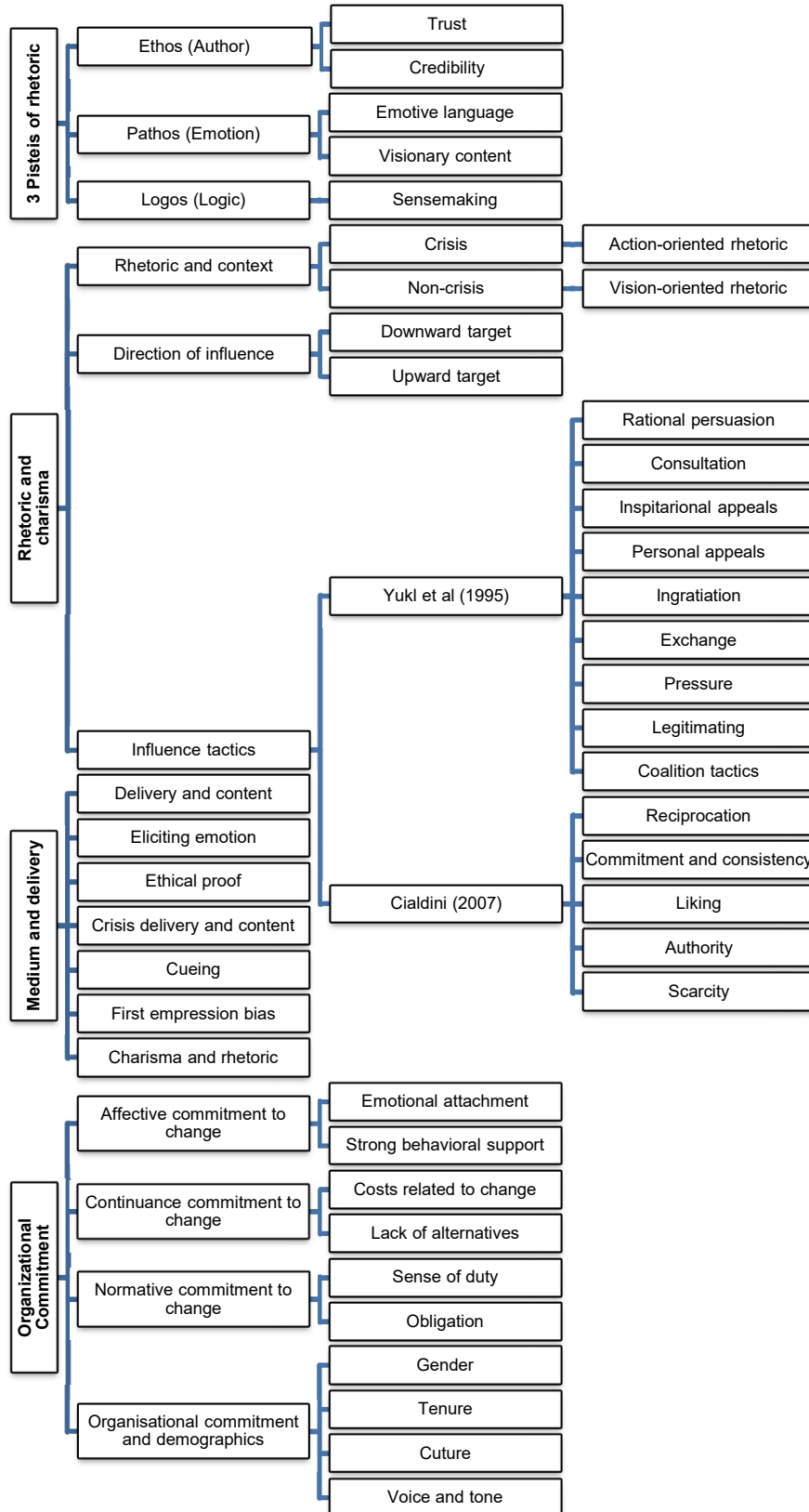


Figure 3: Literature review framework

## **Chapter 3: Research propositions, questions, and hypotheses**

The study performed by Bayraktar and Kabasakal (2020) is the basis of this research paper, with modification through the addition of rhetoric appeals as the independent variables and inclusion of medium of delivery as a moderator. The consistency maintained from the study conducted by Bayraktar and Kabasakal (2020) is the use of vignettes to gather data, and the measurement instrument used being commitment to change, as well as the study of commitment in a crisis setting. The measurement instrument was proven to be quite robust, developed by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), with a Cronbach Alpha reading of 0.81.

### 3.1.1 Research Question 1

This research question seeks to determine how leaders can be most influential, through rhetoric, during situations of crisis. With the uncertainty experienced in a crisis, leaders must have a robust communication strategy that will aid stakeholders in buying into a message.

When deciding on matters where emotional engagement is high (such as a crisis), the use of anecdotal evidence could be more persuasive than using statistical data (Freling, Yang, Saini, Itani, & Abualsamh, 2020). Inspirational appeal, consultation, personal appeals, and exchange were found to be most effective in commitment outcomes, as opposed to pressure, coalition, legitimating and rational persuasion, which are least effective (Falbe & Yukl, 1992). Pathos should therefore be more effective than ethos and logos in persuading the influence targets to commit. This is confirmed by Hunt et al. (1999), who assert that leaders are successful at influence in a crisis setting when they inspire followers to take action. This is done more effectively through inspirational appeal.

In crisis situations, however, people have a need to make sense of what is happening around them (Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010). This means the influence agent is required to give influence targets the information they need to make sense of the uncertainty they face. The logic behind the influence message would therefore be an important aspect in influencing the influence target in this situation.

**Research Question 1: Which of the three forms of rhetoric are most effective in influencing overall commitment to change?**

Hypothesis: Pathos and logos, rather than ethos, are most effective at influencing overall commitment to change.

3.1.2 Research Question 2

In a crisis such as the Covid-19 lockdown, when organisations could not physically meet with stakeholders, which communication medium will be most influential? This research question therefore seeks to aid leaders in determining which medium of communication is best under conditions of restricted physical contact.

As demonstrated in Section 2.2 in the literature review, the delivery of a message largely influences how the receiver of the message is influenced by the message. Followers are more likely to comply with a change message when the leader is seen to be actively involved and some level of personal connection from the leader is felt (Graetz, 2000). Caspi, Bogler, and Tzuman (2019) confirmed that the perception of a leader's charisma is decided in the first few moments of interaction, making the way a message is delivered even more important, if the leader seeks to influence. Charisma should be better demonstrated through face-to-face interaction than written text.

In agreement with the influence tactic of commitment and consistency, public commitments are more influential than personal commitments (Cialdini, 2007). Since a video format for an influence message could be considered more public than email, because the influence agent is putting their face to their statement, this format should be more influential than the written format.

**Research Question 2: To what extent does the medium of delivery affect the commitment to change?**

Hypothesis: Delivering the message via video will be more effective at influencing the receiver of the message.

### 3.1.3 Research Question 3

This research question seeks to determine the effect each form of rhetoric (ethos, logos, and pathos) will have on each category of organisational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance). Because of the varying characteristics of employees who exhibit the different categories of commitment to change, the drilldown into each type was of interest.

Employees who experience a high level of effective commitment to change exhibit behavioural support, discretionary effort (Meyer, Srinivas, Lal, & Topolnytsky, 2007), and loyalty to the organisation (Ng & Feldman, 2011). These employees should be most influenced by emotive influence messaging because of their emotional attachment to the organisation. Pathos would therefore influence them most.

Employees who experience a high level of continuance commitment have fewer alternatives in terms of employment (Vandenberghe & Panaccio, 2012), and are more susceptible to changes in economic factors (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). They should be most influenced by the information and logic of influence messages because they need to weigh up different (even if there are only a few) alternatives. Logos would therefore influence them most.

On the other hand, employees who experience a high sense of normative commitment have a “feeling of obligation to continue employment” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). These employees are bound by an inherent feeling of what is expected of them and should therefore be influenced by the emotive influence messaging. Pathos would be most influential for them.

#### **Research Question 3: To what extent does the rhetoric influence each category of commitment to change?**

Hypothesis 3a: Pathos is most influential for affective commitment to change

Hypothesis 3b: Logos is most influential for continuance commitment to change

Hypothesis 3c: Pathos is most influential for normative commitment to change

Note: all research questions assume a crisis (Covid-19) within an organisation.

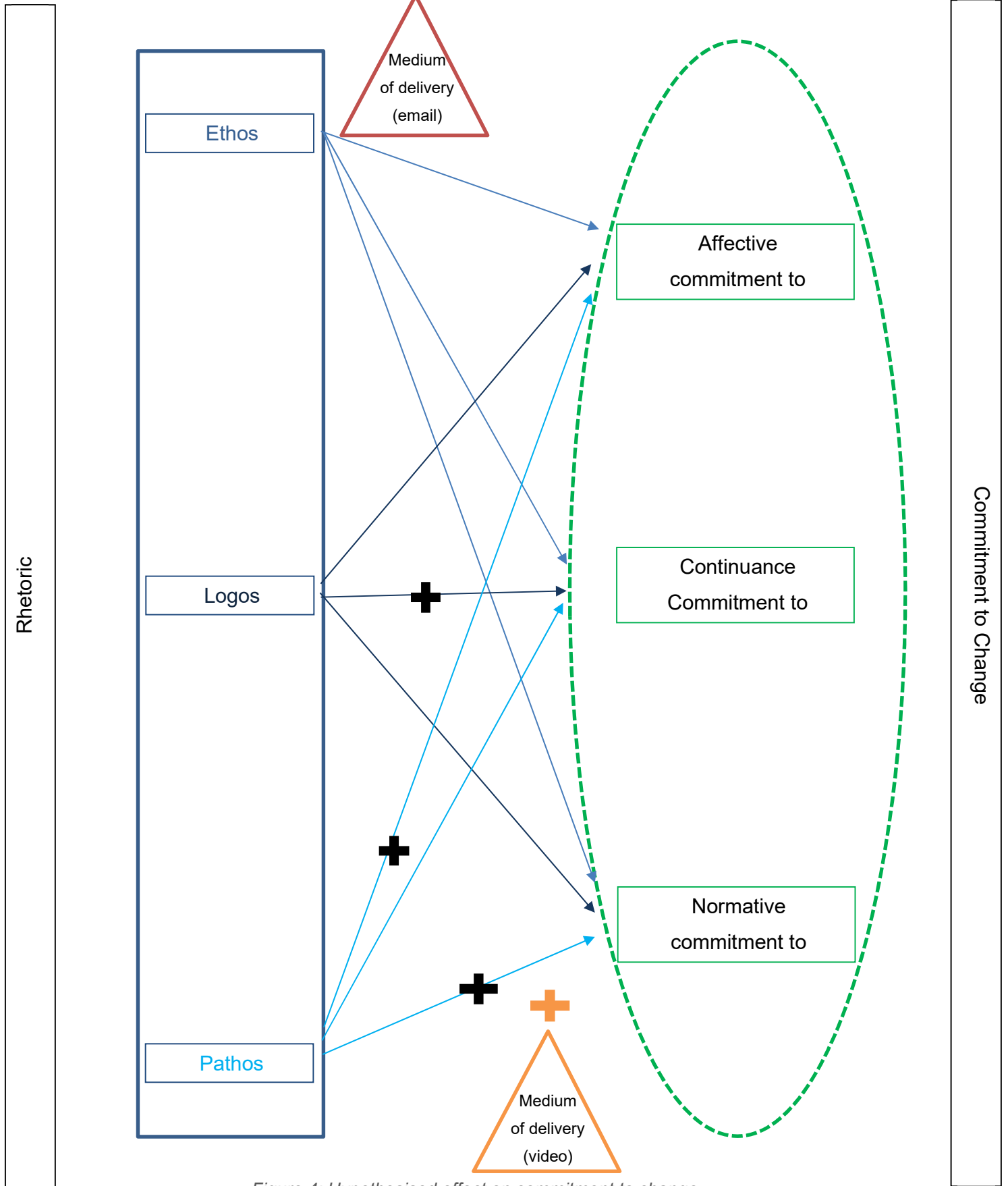


Figure 4: Hypothesised effect on commitment to change

## **Chapter 4: Research methodology and design**

### **4.1 Choice of methodology**

This section describes the research methodology and design of the study. A quantitative approach was taken, as the literature states, “there is quite diverse literature on leader oratory and charisma” (Clark & Greatbatch, 2011, p. 23). The quantitative effect of the constructs was therefore examined to confirm the theoretical base.

The research report stance was based on the positivism philosophy. This philosophy was utilised since existing theory will be used to develop hypotheses (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). This philosophy claims that the researcher disassociates herself and works objectively to reach an understanding (Žukauskas, Vveinhardt, & Andriukaitienė, 2018).

The research report took a deductive approach. This approach was used because the study begins with a proven theoretical base from which measures of the effect of the constructs are tested. This study was time-constrained and took place as a ‘snapshot’. Thus, a cross-sectional study was undertaken.

This study took the form of vignettes, based on hypothetical crisis situations in organisations, particularly Covid-19. This research design was selected because vignettes are an effective way of determining how people may behave if presented with a hypothetical situation that may be difficult to replicate in a real-life situation (Ganong & Coleman, 2006). Although Covid-19 is not a hypothetical situation, the persuasion techniques under examination were posed as hypothetical vignettes, under a crisis environment. Although vignettes are sometimes used as a method to allow participants to remove themselves from a particular situation and give their objective view (Hughes, 1998), the unifying element around the Covid-19 pandemic was used to draw personal experience, because the Covid-19 crisis is so pervasive in its affect, globally. Vignettes were developed using the framework set out by Bradbury-Jones, Taylor, and Herber (2014). This framework gives guidance as to the considerations for developing vignettes for research purposes. Refer to appendix 8 for the considerations as suggested by this framework.

A 3 (logos vs ethos vs pathos) x 2 (video vs email) factorial design was used, where random participants, who have been affected by the Covid-19 crisis (either positively or negatively) and are employed, were presented with three scenarios, where a rhetorical appeal (using specific tactics related to each appeal) was used.

Each scenario was based on a typical Covid-19 message that may have been required to be communicated by the management of an organisation during the crisis.

The same three scenarios (via two modes of delivery) were posed in both email and video format, to measure the mediating effect of the method of delivery (email versus video) on the persuasive strength on commitment to change. The scenario was kept consistent to control this variable of the research.

Each vignette contained a message from an influence agent to an influence target, where the agent requires of the target to agree to some sort of organisational change based on how effective the influence tactics(s) employed in the message was. The message required the target to agree to a condition in which the target may be left worse off (either financially or otherwise) because of the crisis, but for the better of the ecosystem housing the agent and the target, thus requiring a level of influence from the influence agent.

Primary data were collected through structured survey questions via mobile application and an internet application. Each scenario was read as an email, as well viewed as a short video clip.

## 4.2 Measures

### 4.2.1 Dependent variable

#### 4.2.1.1 Commitment to change

This measure was the dependent variable. Respondents were measured on a five-point Likert scale, requiring them to determine the likelihood of them being convinced by the arguments set out in the crisis message. Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The commitment to change measure was based on the “commitment to organisational change scale” developed by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002, p. 477).

“Alpha coefficients for the six-item Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment to Change Scales were .94, .94, and .86, respectively” (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002, p. 477).

*Factor Analysis of Commitment to Change Items (Study 1)*

Item	Factor		
	I	II	III
<b>Affective commitment items</b>			
1. I believe in the value of this change.	-.01	.91	.22
2. This change is a good strategy for this organization.	.02	.93	.25
3. I think that management is making a mistake by introducing this change. (R)	-.13	.83	.12
4. This change serves an important purpose.	-.09	.91	.23
5. Things would be better without this change. (R)	-.11	.81	.23
6. This change is not necessary. (R)	-.04	.78	.33
<b>Continuance commitment items</b>			
1. I have no choice but to go along with this change.	.87	-.03	.36
2. I feel pressure to go along with this change.	.76	-.08	.32
3. I have too much at stake to resist this change.	.93	-.03	.32
4. It would be too costly for me to resist this change.	.87	-.05	.28
5. It would be risky to speak out against this change.	.82	-.06	.31
6. Resisting this change is not a viable option for me.	.89	.03	.36
<b>Normative commitment items</b>			
1. I feel a sense of duty to work toward this change.	.28	.22	.82
2. I do not think it would be right of me to oppose this change.	.47	.31	.69
3. I would not feel badly about opposing this change. (R)	.24	.23	.65
4. It would be irresponsible of me to resist this change.	.38	.15	.58
5. I would feel guilty about opposing this change.	.32	.12	.76
6. I do not feel any obligation to support this change. (R)	.19	.21	.79

*Table 2: Reprinted from Herscovitch, L., & Meyer, J. P. (2002). Commitment to organisational change: Extension of a three-component model. Journal of Applied Psychology, 87(3), p. 477*



#### 4.2.2 Independent variables

##### 4.2.2.1 **Rhetorical appeal used**

Rhetorical appeals, based on the proactive influence tactics described by Yul, Guinan, and Sottolano (1995), were used as the independent variables. Influence tactics were categorised to fall into either of the three rhetorical appeals (logos, ethos, and pathos) as described by Aristotle (Aristotle & Kennedy, 2007). Scenarios contained only one appeal, along with the influence tactics related to that specific appeal.

##### 4.2.2.2 **Medium of delivery**

The mediator for this study was the medium of delivery of the influence message, being either email or video.

#### 4.2.3 Population

The population for this study was any employee in a South African organisation that has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic from the perspective of their employment in an organisation, in some way, to identify with the crisis setting.

#### 4.2.4 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis was the commitment to change.

#### 4.2.5 Sampling method and size

Convenience, non-probability sampling was used to collect data from participants, due to the large volume required for a quantitative study. The sample size was 117. Although the sample size for a similar study, using the vignette technique (Bayraktar & Kabasakal, 2020) was set at 200, the sample obtained in this study was determined to be sufficient to reliably conduct the tests to determine the outcome of the study.

#### 4.2.6 Measurement instrument

The commitment to change measure was based on the “commitment to organisational change scale” developed by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002, p. 477).

### 4.3 Data gathering process

This study used a self-administered, online survey to collect data. Google Forms was used for ease of completion as well as time considerations. The survey was sent to employees fitting the sample described and were sourced from corporate websites like LinkedIn, personal and academic networks. This method was selected because surveys are a convenient method to reach a large audience and to reduce error and cost (Zigmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010).

### 4.4 Analysis approach

The independent variable is rhetoric (ethos, logos, and pathos). The dependent variable was commitment to change (affective, normative, and continuance). The moderator in this study was delivery medium (email and video). Mean scores between the variables was compared to determine the degree of effect on the dependent variable.

The application of the appropriate statistical test was important for evaluating statistical-conclusion validity, since the underlying assumptions may limit their applicability (Scandura & Williams, 2000). “Analysis of variance (ANOVA) compares the means between multiple groups for significant difference” (Wegner, 2018, p. 317). This test was done because, where differences were found, attributing factors influencing these differences were determined (Wegner, 2018).

P-values were compared to determine the significance of the difference attributable to the groups. The statistical package ‘R’ was used to determine the ANOVA for the groups under scrutiny.

## 4.5 Quality controls

A pilot survey was performed before the final survey was released for data collection. This was done to limit the number of errors in the design of questions in the survey.

The confidentiality of the participants was important in obtaining honest answers from the participants. No questions that could reveal a participants identity were included in the survey.

Internal consistency was measured by the Cronbach's Alpha for this survey. Each form of commitment to change was measured separately.

The questionnaire required the forced completion of all questions.

Some further quality controls include:

1. Replication and transparency
  - a. Ability to self-replicate the study;
  - b. Ensuring sufficient data for replication (Anderson, Wennberg, & McMullen, 2019).
2. The researcher wrote the emails, and presented the videos, so as not to change writing and presentation style for the different tests.
3. As far as possible, any factors that could influence the respondents in terms of cues and heuristics were kept consistent (same presenter, same time of day in the video, same clothing in all videos, same background in all videos, etc).

## **Chapter 5: Results**

### **5.1 Summary of respondents**

A vignette study was chosen because vignette-type studies have successfully been applied in other studies, one where the fictitious scenario of a merger was put forward to university students and employees to test their support for the change (Geissner, Viki, Otten, Terry, & Tauber, 2006), and another where the contribution of content, context, and process of organisational change and the related openness of employees to this change was examined (Devos & Bouckenoghe, 2007). Vignette-type studies have the additional benefit of presenting real-life scenarios to participants through a snapshot view of a particular situation (Hughes, 1998). Several more studies also showed that vignette-style studies can be applied successfully in research (Mottola, Bachman, Gaertner, & Dovidio, 1997; Rentsch & Schneider, 1991; Van Oudenhoven & De Boer, 1995).

The participants for this study were employees in a South African organisation that had been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic from the perspective of their employment in an organisation in some way. This was a requirement so they could have the ability to place themselves in a crisis setting while being employed, as this was the basis of the vignette scenario. This strengthens the validity of the responses received since these respondents would have had experience in a crisis setting, and the vignettes would therefore be more realistic to them.

The sample consisted of 117 participants from different organisations, 62 males, 52 females, 1 gender variant, and 2 transgender females. Most (N=73) of the participants were millennials aged 21-37 years, 34 were in the Generation-X cohort, 9 were baby-boomers, and 1 represented the 'silent generation'. Because the gender of the respondents was more or less balanced (with 9% more males than females), no one gender is overrepresented in the sample.

The sample also represented a wide range of ethnicities, with 28.2% of the participants representing the African Black group, 26.5% representing the Coloured group, 11.1% representing the Indian group, 33.3% representing the White group, and 0.9% grouped as 'Other'. This range of ethnicities means the responses are not weighted in the direction of any one ethnicity, and therefore gives the sample a better range in terms of responses and viewpoints. Most of the participants (94.9%) received some form of formal education, with only 5.1% of participants classifying their highest level of education as 'Other'. Most of the participants (93.2%) were South African.

## 5.2 Summary of design

In this study, a 3x2 factorial design of vignettes was used where the three forms of rhetoric (ethos, logos, and pathos) were each presented in two types of media (email and video). All participants were first presented with an email for each form of rhetoric and asked to rate the extent of their commitment to change. They were then presented with the same information in video form, using the exact same wording so as not to influence any results through the use of different words for the same scenario, and again asked to rate the extent of their commitment to change. The only difference thus being the change in medium from email to video.

Vignettes were written using the persuasion tactics: "rational persuasion; consultation; inspiration appeals; personal appeals; ingratiation; exchange; pressure; legitimating; and coalition" (Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995, p. 275). Each rhetoric appeal was linked to a persuasion tactic as follows:

- Logos – Rational persuasion; exchange; consultation; coalition.
- Ethos – Legitimating.
- Pathos – Inspirational appeals; personal appeals; ingratiation; pressure.

The researcher herself wrote the emails and presented in the videos, so as not to change the style of writing and the perception of who the participants were seeing in each video.

A pilot survey was conducted on two respondents before the final survey was sent to the final respondents. The pilot results were disregarded from the results of the survey so as not to bias the data with generic responses.

### 5.3 Internal consistency for this data

The following section (Table 1) reported the Cronbach alpha values for each of the three factors (Commitment to Change groups). A value above 0.7 is seen as acceptable (Hair Jr, Page, & Brunsveld, 2019). Since all values are above 0.7, the data shows the questionnaire had a good reliability measure.

	Email			Video		
	Logo s	Etho s	Path os	Logo s	Etho s	Path os
<b>Affective commitment</b>	0,813 2	0,867 1	0,883 9	0,890 5	0,891 7	0,889 5
<b>Continuance commitment</b>	0,837 5	0,841 3	0,848 9	0,849 2	0,897 1	0,844 9
<b>Normative commitment</b>	0,762 9	0,766 4	0,816 9	0,809 5	0,795 3	0,832 7

*Table 3: Cronbach Alpha values per medium*

## 5.4 Control variables and qualifying questions

	Data (N = 117)																						
<b>What is your age?</b>																							
Missing Values	0	<table border="1"> <caption>Age Distribution Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Group</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>21-37</td> <td>73</td> <td>62.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>38-52</td> <td>34</td> <td>29.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>53-70</td> <td>9</td> <td>7.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>71+</td> <td>1</td> <td>0.9%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age Group	Count	Percentage	21-37	73	62.4%	38-52	34	29.1%	53-70	9	7.7%	71+	1	0.9%						
Age Group	Count		Percentage																				
21-37	73		62.4%																				
38-52	34		29.1%																				
53-70	9		7.7%																				
71+	1		0.9%																				
21-37	73 (62.4%)																						
38-52	34 (29.1%)																						
53-70	9 (7.7%)																						
71+	1 (0.9%)																						
<b>To which gender do you most identify?</b>																							
Missing values	0	<table border="1"> <caption>Gender Identification Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Gender</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>62</td> <td>53.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>52</td> <td>44.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender variant/ non-conforming</td> <td>1</td> <td>0.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transgender female</td> <td>2</td> <td>1.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transgender male</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Gender	Count	Percentage	Male	62	53.0%	Female	52	44.4%	Gender variant/ non-conforming	1	0.9%	Transgender female	2	1.7%	Transgender male	0	0.0%	Prefer not to say	0	0.0%
Gender	Count		Percentage																				
Male	62		53.0%																				
Female	52		44.4%																				
Gender variant/ non-conforming	1		0.9%																				
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Transgender female	2 (1.7%)																						
Transgender male	0 (0.0%)																						
Prefer not to say	0 (0.0%)																						
<b>Which of the following best represents your racial or ethnic heritage?</b>																							
Missing values	0	<table border="1"> <caption>Racial/Ethnic Heritage Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Race/Ethnicity</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>39</td> <td>33.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black African</td> <td>33</td> <td>28.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Coloured</td> <td>31</td> <td>26.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Indian</td> <td>13</td> <td>11.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>1</td> <td>0.9%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Race/Ethnicity	Count	Percentage	White	39	33.3%	Black African	33	28.2%	Coloured	31	26.5%	Indian	13	11.1%	Other	1	0.9%			
Race/Ethnicity	Count		Percentage																				
White	39		33.3%																				
Black African	33		28.2%																				
Coloured	31		26.5%																				
Indian	13		11.1%																				
Other	1	0.9%																					
Black African	33 (28.2%)																						
Coloured	31 (26.5%)																						
Indian	13 (11.1%)																						
White	39 (33.3%)																						
Other	1 (0.9%)																						
<b>What is your nationality?</b>																							
Missing values	0	<table border="1"> <caption>Nationality Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Nationality</th> <th>Count</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>South African</td> <td>109</td> <td>93.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>8</td> <td>6.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Nationality	Count	Percentage	South African	109	93.2%	Other	8	6.8%												
Nationality	Count		Percentage																				
South African	109		93.2%																				
Other	8	6.8%																					
South African	109 (93.2%)																						
Other	8 (6.8%)																						

<b>What is your highest level of education?</b>		
missing values	0	
Grade 12 - Matric	11 (9.4%)	
College diploma	10 (8.5%)	
Bachelor's degree	60 (51.3%)	
Master's degree	30 (25.6%)	
Doctoral degree	0 (0.0%)	
Other	6 (5.1%)	
<b>What is your occupation?</b>		
Missing values	0	
Manager	42 (35.9%)	
Supervisor	4 (3.4%)	
Professional	50 (42.7%)	
Administrator	6 (5.1%)	
Clerk	4 (3.4%)	
Other	11 (9.4%)	
<b>Have you been negatively impacted by the Covid-19 lockdown?</b>		
Missing values	0	
Yes	89 (76.1%)	
No	28 (23.9%)	

Table 4: Control variables and qualifying questions

## 5.5 Summary of overall commitment results

The treatment groups average mean scores (Table 5) show that overall commitment to change was highest for pathos ( $\bar{X} = 3.52$ ) and logos ( $\bar{X} = 3.51$ ), and video ( $\bar{X} = 3.50$ ), whereas overall commitment to change was lowest for ethos ( $\bar{X} = 3.38$ ), and email ( $\bar{X} = 3.44$ ). Notably, overall commitment to change using ethos alone returned the lowest score, overall ( $\bar{X} = 3.38$ ) (Table 5).



Rhetoric	Average of mean
Pathos	<b>3,52</b>
Logos	3,51
Ethos	3,38
Medium	Average of mean
Video	<b>3,50</b>
Email	3,44

Table 5: Average of mean scores per rhetoric category and delivery medium

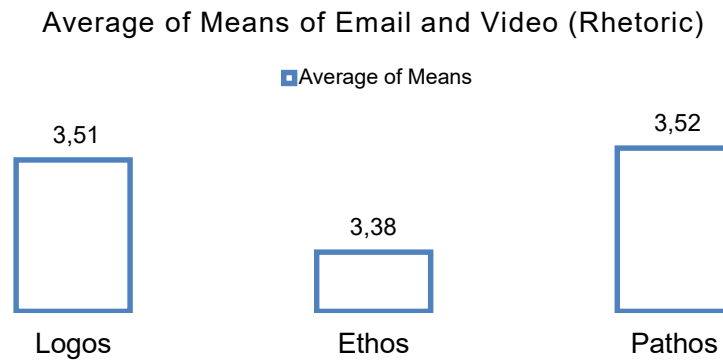


Figure 5: Average of means (Rhetoric)

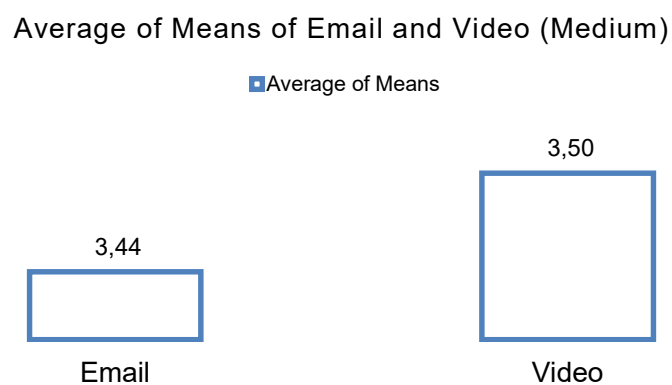


Figure 6: Average of means (Medium)

### 5.5.1 Detailed results for overall commitment to Change

Average mean scores (Table 6) show that overall commitment to change was highest for logos through the delivery medium of email ( $\bar{X} = 3.5$ ), and pathos through the delivery medium video ( $\bar{X} = 3.575$ ).

Mean scores were lowest for ethos through the delivery medium of email  $\bar{X} = 3.35$  and again for ethos through the delivery medium of video ( $\bar{X} = 3.405$ ).

Medium	Rhetoric	Variable	n	Mean	SD	Statistic	p
Email	Ethos	Overall	117	3.35	0.58	0.9766	0.03844
Email	Logos	Overall	117	<b>3.5</b>	0.51	0.9728	0.01775
Email	Pathos	Overall	117	3.468	0.58	0.9784	0.05606
Video	Ethos	Overall	117	3.405	0.621	0.979	0.06396
Video	Logos	Overall	117	3.51	0.54	0.97	0.01005
Video	Pathos	Overall	117	<b>3.575</b>	0.622	0.9818	0.1133

Table 6: Overall Commitment to Change Results

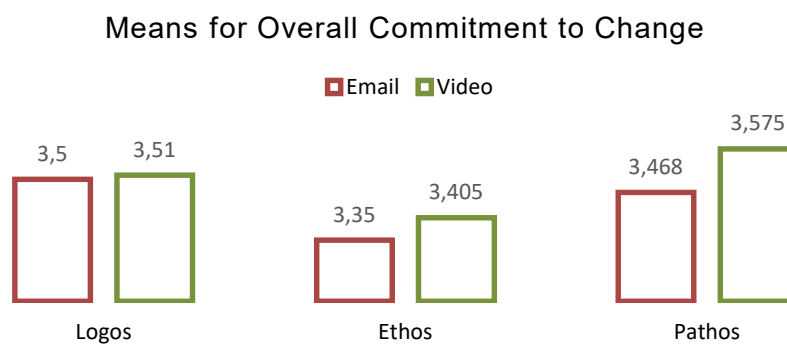


Figure 7: Means for Overall Commitment to Change

## 5.5.2 Rhetoric effect on overall commitment to change

### 5.5.2.1 Repeated Measures Two Way ANOVA

A univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test the significance of the interaction of rhetoric (logos, ethos, and pathos) and delivery medium (email and video) on the outcome variable, overall commitment to change. Since the interaction was not significant, the main effects for each of the two independent variables were interpreted, being: medium and rhetoric. Both medium and rhetoric were significant. The table below (Table 7) shows that video had a higher score than email.

Effect	DFn	DFd	F	p	p<.05	ges
Medium	1	116	5.568	0.02	*	0.002
Rhetoric	2	232	7.331	0.000818	*	0.012
Medium: Rhetoric	2	232	1.971	0.142		0.001

*Table 7: Repeated measures two-way ANOVA - Overall commitment to change*

Medium	Variable	n	Mean	SD
Email	Overall	351	3.44	0.56
Video	Overall	351	3.496	0.598

*Table 8: Post-hoc analysis – Medium*

For rhetoric, a follow up post-hoc analysis test was performed to determine between which of the three groups (ethos, logos, and pathos) the significant difference exists. As before, p-values were adjusted using the Bonferroni multiple testing correction method.

Rhetoric	Variable	N	Mean	SD	.y.	Group1	Group2	n1	n2	Statistic	df	p	p.adj	p.adj.signif
Ethos	Overall	234	3.377	0.6	Overall	Ethos	Logos	234	234	-3.857	233	0.000148	0.000444	***
Logos	Overall	234	3.505	0.524	Overall	Ethos	Pathos	234	234	-4.234	233	3.3e-05	9.9e-05	****
Pathos	Overall	234	3.521	0.603	Overall	Logos	Pathos	234	234	-0.4603	233	0.646	1	ns

*Table 9: Post-hoc analysis - Overall commitment to change*

The post hoc analysis showed that ethos was significantly lower than pathos and logos, and that no significant difference existed between pathos and logos.

## **5.6 Response per commitment to change category**

### **5.6.1 Results per commitment category**

Average mean scores (Table 10) show that commitment to change was highest for affective commitment using pathos through video ( $\bar{X} = 3.729$ ) and logos through email ( $\bar{X} = 3.745$ ), whereas commitment to change was lowest for normative commitment using ethos and email ( $\bar{X} = 3.222$ ).

		Affective Commitment				Continuance Commitment				Normative Commitment			
Medium	Rhetoric	Variable	n	Mean	SD	Variable	n	Mean	SD	Variable	n	Mean	SD
Email	Logos	AC	117	<b>3.745</b>	0.687	CC	117	3.413	0.804	NC	117	3.343	0.68
Email	Ethos	AC	117	3.534	0.786	CC	117	3.295	0.781	NC	117	<b>3.222</b>	0.703
Email	Pathos	AC	117	3.689	0.795	CC	117	3.282	0.787	NC	117	3.432	0.77
Video	Logos	AC	117	3.728	0.763	CC	117	3.39	0.785	NC	117	3.412	0.717
Video	Ethos	AC	117	3.581	0.842	CC	117	3.352	0.876	NC	117	3.281	0.759
Video	Pathos	AC	117	<b>3.729</b>	0.827	CC	117	3.419	0.791	NC	117	3.571	0.795

*Table 10: Results per commitment to change category*

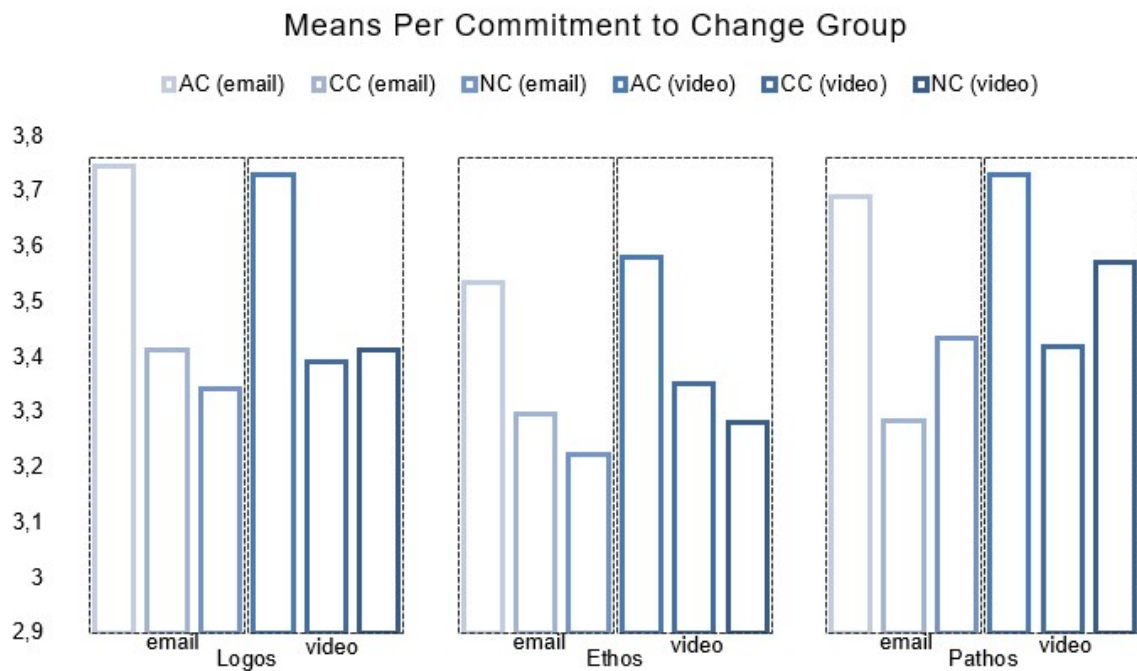


Figure 8: Means per commitment to change category

## 5.6.2 Rhetoric effect on affective commitment to change

### 5.6.2.1 Summary Statistics

Average mean scores (Table 11) show that affective commitment to change using email was highest for logos ( $\bar{X} = 3.745$ ), and pathos for video ( $\bar{X} = 3.50$ ), whereas affective commitment to change using email was lowest for ethos ( $\bar{X} = 3.534$ ), and ethos for video ( $\bar{X} = 3.581$ ).

Medium	Rhetoric	Variable	n	Mean	SD	Total Average of Mean
Email	Ethos	AC	117	3.534	0.786	<b>3.679</b>
Email	Logos	AC	117	<b>3.745</b>	0.687	
Email	Pathos	AC	117	3.689	0.795	
Video	Ethos	AC	117	3.581	0.842	
Video	Logos	AC	117	3.728	0.763	
Video	Pathos	AC	117	<b>3.729</b>	0.827	

Table 11: Affective commitment to change

### 5.6.2.2 Repeated measures two-way ANOVA

A univariate analysis of differences (ANOVA) was performed to test the significance of the difference between the effects of rhetoric and medium of delivery on the dependent variable, affective commitment to change. Univariate tests were significant for rhetoric ( $p < 0.05$ ), but not significant for medium, or medium: rhetoric.

Effect	DFn	DFd	F	p	p<.05	ges
Medium	1	116	0.42	0.518		0.000221
Rhetoric	1.85	215	5.612	0.005	*	0.01
Medium: Rhetoric	1.87	217	0.415	0.647		0.000337

*Table 12: Repeated measures two-way ANOVA - Affective commitment to change*

A post-hoc test was performed to determine between which of the three groups (ethos, logos, and pathos) the significant difference exists. As before, p-values were adjusted using the Bonferroni multiple testing correction method to protect the study from a type 1 error.



Rhetoric	Variable	n	Mean	SD	.y.	Group 1	Group 2	n1	n2	Statistic	df	p	p.adj	signif
Ethos	AC	234	3.558	0.813	AC	Ethos	Logos	234	234	-3.523	233	0.000513	0.002	**
Logos	AC	234	3.736	0.725	AC	Ethos	Pathos	234	234	-3.627	233	0.000352	0.001	**
Pathos	AC	234	3.709	0.81	AC	Logos	Pathos	234	234	0.5074	233	0.612	1	ns

*Table 13: Post-hoc analysis - Affective commitment to change*

The post hoc analysis showed that ethos was significantly lower than pathos and logos, and that no significant difference existed between pathos and logos.

### 5.6.3 Rhetoric effect on continuance commitment to change

#### 5.6.3.1 Summary statistics

Average mean scores (Table 14) show that continuance commitment to change using email was highest for logos ( $\bar{X} = 3.413$ ), and pathos for video ( $\bar{X} = 3.419$ ), whereas continuance commitment to change using email was lowest for pathos ( $\bar{X} = 3.282$ ), and logos for video ( $\bar{X} = 3.39$ ).

Medium	Rhetoric	variable	n	mean	sd	Total Average of Mean
Email	Ethos	CC	117	3.295	0.781	
Email	Logos	CC	117	<b>3.413</b>	0.804	3.33
Email	Pathos	CC	117	3.282	0.787	
Video	Ethos	CC	117	3.352	0.876	
Video	Logos	CC	117	3.39	0.785	<b>3.387</b>
Video	Pathos	CC	117	<b>3.419</b>	0.791	

Table 14: Summary statistics - Continuance commitment to change

#### 5.6.3.2 Repeated measures two-way ANOVA

A univariate analysis of differences (ANOVA) was performed to test the significance of the difference between the effects of rhetoric and medium of delivery on the dependent variable, continuance commitment to change.

Effect	DFn	DFd	F	p	p<.05	ges
Medium	1	116	1.877	0.173		0.001
Rhetoric	2	232	1.634	0.197		0.002
Medium: Rhetoric	1.86	215.4	2.302	0.107		0.002

Table 15: Repeated measures two-way ANOVA - Continuance commitment to change

No significant differences found.

#### 5.6.4 Rhetoric effect on normative commitment to change

##### 5.6.4.1 Summary statistics

Average mean scores (Table 16) show that normative commitment to change using email was highest for pathos ( $\bar{X} = 3.432$ ), and pathos for video ( $\bar{X} = 3.571$ ), whereas normative commitment to change using email was lowest for ethos ( $\bar{X} = 3.222$ ), and ethos for video ( $\bar{X} = 3.281$ ).

Medium	Rhetoric	Variable	n	Mean	SD	Total Average of Mean
Email	Ethos	NC	117	3.222	0.703	3.33
Email	Logos	NC	117	3.343	0.68	
Email	Pathos	NC	117	<b>3.432</b>	0.77	
Video	Ethos	NC	117	3.281	0.759	<b>3.421</b>
Video	Logos	NC	117	3.412	0.717	
Video	Pathos	NC	117	<b>3.571</b>	0.795	

*Table 16: Summary statistics - Normative commitment to change*

##### 5.6.4.2 Repeated measures two-way ANOVA

A univariate analysis of differences (ANOVA) was performed to test the significance of the difference between the effects of rhetoric and medium of delivery on the dependent variable, normative commitment to change. Univariate tests were significant for rhetoric and medium ( $p < 0.05$ ) but not significant for medium: rhetoric.

Effect	DFn	DFd	F	p	p<.05	ges
Medium	1	116	6.819	0.01	*	0.004
Rhetoric	2	232	8.731	0.000221	*	0.019
Medium: Rhetoric	2	232	0.78	0.46		0.000604

*Table 17: Repeated measures two-way ANOVA - Normative commitment to change*

Since the interaction was not significant, the main effects for each of the two variables were interpreted, being: medium and rhetoric. Both medium and rhetoric were shown to be significant. The table below shows that video had a significantly higher score than Email.

Medium	Variable	n	Mean	SD
Email	NC	351	3.332	0.722
Video	NC	351	3.421	0.765

*Table 18: Post-hoc analysis – Rhetoric*

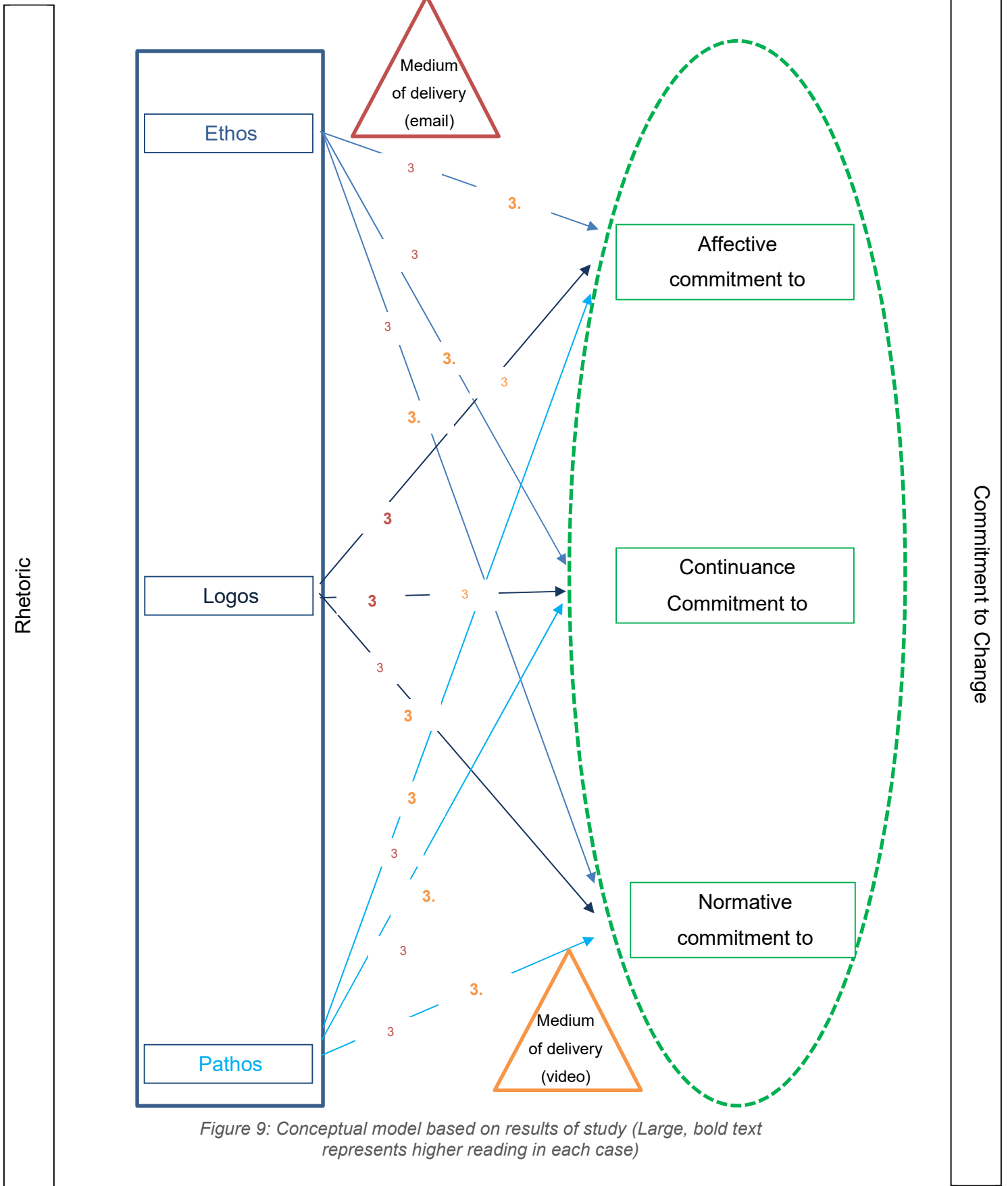
For rhetoric, a follow up analysis of a post-hoc test was performed to determine between which of the three groups (ethos, logos, and pathos) the significant difference exists. Again, p-values were adjusted using the Bonferroni multiple testing correction method.

Rhetoric	Variable	n	Mean	SD	.y.	Group 1	Group 2	n1	n2	Statistic	DF	p	p.adj	p.adj.signif
Ethos	NC	234	3.251	0.731	NC	Ethos	Logos	234	234	-2.655	233	0.008	0.025	*
Logos	NC	234	3.377	0.698	NC	Ethos	Pathos	234	234	-5.29	233	2.82e-07	8.46e-07	****
Pathos	NC	234	3.501	0.784	NC	Logos	Pathos	234	234	-2.365	233	0.019	0.057	ns

Table 19: Post-hoc analysis - Normative commitment to change

The post hoc analysis showed that ethos was significantly lower than pathos and logos, and that no significant difference existed between pathos and logos.

**5.7 Model based on results**



## **Chapter 6: Discussion of results**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the findings, as presented in Chapter 5 of the report, to the research questions in Chapter 3 are discussed, along with the literature review constructs in Chapter 2. Each research question will be discussed in detail, according to the results of the study.

#### **6.1.1 Objectives of study**

This study sought, firstly, to determine which of the three rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, and pathos) is most effective at persuading an audience in a crisis setting. Previous studies have focussed on the blend of all three rhetorical appeals in structuring a persuasive message (Braet, 1992; Bauer, et al., 2016). Some studies have even examined each influence tactic separately (Falbe & Yukl, 1992; Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995). However, this research paper focused on separating each rhetorical appeal, as well as the medium of delivery.

A further separation of commitment to change was also examined. Because of the difference in each component, as well as the difference in the behaviour of the employees who exhibit each of the components of commitment to change, having the ability to influence commitment while catering to the various needs of each employee could greatly assist organisations in crisis. All these separate elements of content and delivery are studied in the context of a crisis environment (Covid-19).

The purpose of the study was also to determine how people process information using each separate rhetorical input, to guide managers on how to effectively influence when giving a change message, given the new environment we find ourselves in, with most workers working from home. It is therefore important for managers to understand that, even though a blend of influence tactics is most effective (Braet, 1992; Bauer, et al., 2016), understanding which specific rhetoric levers to pull, as well as which medium to use in each instance, can be a powerful tool in an uncertain environment.



### 6.1.2 Selection of design

The use of a vignette study gave the additional benefit of allowing respondents to place themselves within the specific context of having to make a group decision on retrenchments in the wake of a regulated lockdown and subsequent business loss. Because most people, the world over, are currently in enforced lockdowns, this situation is not too far a stretch for people to find relatable, and so the vignette focussed on the decision to retrench staff based on the lockdown, rather than placing people in the middle of a crisis, because they already find themselves in a global crisis.

## 6.2 Discussion of research Question 1

Research Question 1: Which of the three forms of rhetoric are most effective in influencing overall commitment to change?

This research question sought to determine how leaders can most effectively influence, through rhetoric, during situations of crisis.

Hypothesis: Pathos and logos, rather than ethos, are more effective at influencing commitment to change.

Result: Both pathos and logos are more effective at influencing overall commitment to change than ethos. As the results in Chapter 5 show, the rhetorical appeals of pathos and logos showed higher means than ethos, when attempting to influence in a crisis message.

The results show that, although pathos was most effective, it was only marginally more effective than logos. The mean score for ethos was considerably lower than pathos and logos. This result supports the hypothesis in Chapter 3.

### 6.2.1 The use of rhetoric and the effect of each appeal

An influence agent should always have the needs of the audience in mind (Heracleous & Klaering, 2014). People are influenced, not by what the speaker wants, but the extent to which the speaker gives them what *they* want. Persuasion is also defined as the outcome of getting the influence target to do something they would not have done, had the influence agent not asked them (Borg, 2013). As discussed in Chapter 2, using the appropriate mix of rhetorical appeals is most effective at delivering an influence message (Braet, 1992). In this section, the effect of each appeal will be analysed for effectiveness.

### 6.2.2 The role of uncertainty

The effect of logos in this study stemmed from the need for people to make sense of the uncertainty they face. Because the vignette required respondents to place themselves in the shoes of employees who have to make decisions that affect the livelihoods of their colleagues and themselves, coupled with the fact that they, in reality, are in the middle of arguably the greatest crisis the world has faced in recent times, the degree of uncertainty would have been a key factor in their level of commitment to the change. When uncertainty is great, the need to make sense of the uncertainty is great. This desire made the logical side of persuasion that much more important to the participants. This view is supported by Maitlis and Sonenshein (2010), who assert that sense-making after, an uncertain event has taken place, puts the organisation on a trajectory of recovery from the crisis. Getting a feel of going into recovery gives people a better sense of certainty.

It could be argued that a lockdown and subsequent business interruption is as uncertain as job insecurity because many businesses were closed as a result but, because the effects of a global lockdown are so pervasive, coupled with the threat of possibly losing lives through the disease, the uncertainty is so severe that many people feel the emotional toll more than just the threat of a job loss. In normal circumstances, people may be able to find alternative employment, but in a global economic shutdown, this is unlikely for many.

When emotions are high, emotive messaging is more effective than informational messaging (Braverman, 2008). But not all participants would have felt that their jobs were under threat (this was a part of the message in the vignette and 29 respondents answered in the negative when asked if the lockdown had negatively affected them). These employees would have experienced a higher influence level through emotive messaging because they were in a state of relative job security (Bayraktar & Kabasakal, 2020). This is confirmed by Witte (1992), who argues that people respond to their individual sense of fear differently, depending on the perceived threat.

### 6.2.3 The need for both certainty and the pull of emotion

The union of the need for information to make sense of the uncertainty and the emotional pull of this particular crisis, as well as its pervasiveness, is what makes the results so interesting. The effective degree to which respondents were influenced is so close between logos and pathos because they needed both almost in equal measure. This result is consistent with the literature which states that statistical evidence is more effective than anecdotal evidence when emotional engagement is high, whereas the opposite is true in situations where emotional engagement is low (Freling, Yang, Saini, Itani, & Abualsamh, 2020). The fact that the result for logos and pathos was so close is evidence of the need for both emotional assurance and certainty in this crisis. Managers would therefore succeed in delivering change messages with both logos *and* pathos in a crisis and must consider the emotional engagement in the crisis to determine which appeal is best.

Effective managers use more authoritative tactics, like expert and referent power, in a crisis and tend not to use consultation (Mulder, Koppelaar, De Jong, & Verhage, 1986). These tactics are consistent with the rhetorical appeal of ethos. However, the element of uncertainty is so pervasive in this crisis, that these ethos-linked tactics have resulted in lower scores than tactics linked to logos and pathos.

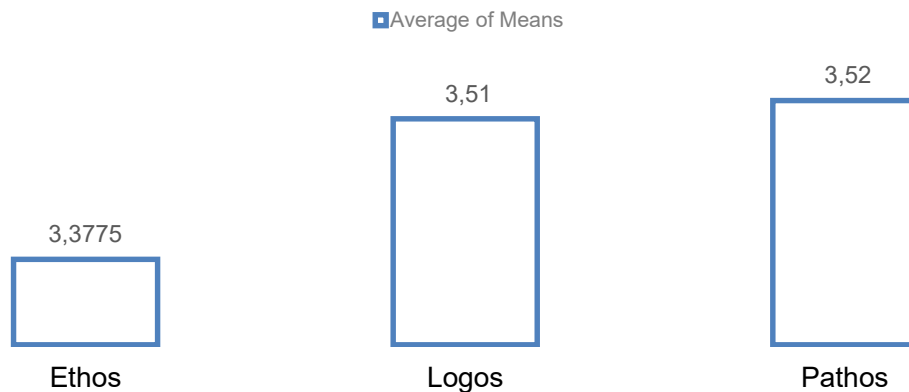
#### 6.2.4 The use of vignettes

Finally, when considering the scenario in the vignette, respondents would have had to place themselves in the shoes of an employee asked to decide on whether salary cuts should be implemented across the company, affecting all staff, or keeping salaries as they are, but retrenching some staff to make up for the lost sales. In a study conducted where commitment to change was measured in a context of job (in)security and the use of weak versus strong delivery of the change message was compared (Bayraktar & Kabasakal, 2020), job insecurity was considered an uncertain event, where staff needed additional information to feel less uncertain about the situation they were in. Here, logical arguments (logos) were more effective than emotive messages. The reason for this is that respondents needed information to make sense of uncertain events, but possibly felt less inclined to hear emotive messaging.

This is further supported by Braverman (2008), who concluded that individuals who have a high involvement and interest in a subject, will be influenced by informational messaging (logos), rather than emotive messaging (pathos), and that emotive messaging will be more persuasive for individuals who have reduced interest in a subject. In uncertain events such as the Covid-19 crisis, the level of involvement would be high because of the threat of unemployment and exposure to disease.

### 6.3 Summary of research Question 1

When shaping an influence message in a crisis, influence targets require the messages to make sense of uncertainty and to cater for their emotional state, especially when the crisis is pervasive. In typical crises, people need their leaders to be more instructive, so that they know how to respond, and are given a sense of certainty. But effective influence agents will do well in sending influential messages when they also cater for the emotional needs of their audience. Influence targets appear less interested in the speaker's credibility in a pervasive crisis, possibly because they understand that even leaders cannot be experts or authorities in crises of this nature. Using more logos and pathos, and less ethos, is therefore the best way to influence in this situation, as shown in the results (Figure 11).



*Figure 10: Average of means of email and video*

## 6.4 Discussion of research Question 2

### **Research Question 2: To what extent does the medium of delivery affect the commitment to change?**

In a crisis such as the Covid-19 lockdown, when organisations could not physically meet with stakeholders, it is important to understand which communication medium is most influential. This research question sought to aid leaders in determining which medium of communication is best under conditions of restricted physical contact, particularly when delivering a change message, which was what many organisations were required to do.

Hypothesis: Delivering the message via video is more effective than email at influencing the receiver of the message.

Result: Delivering the message via video is more effective than email at influencing the receiver of the message.

As the results in Chapter 5 show, the video medium showed a higher mean score than email, when attempting to influence in a crisis, although only marginally so. This effect was true for every rhetorical appeal considered (Figure 12).

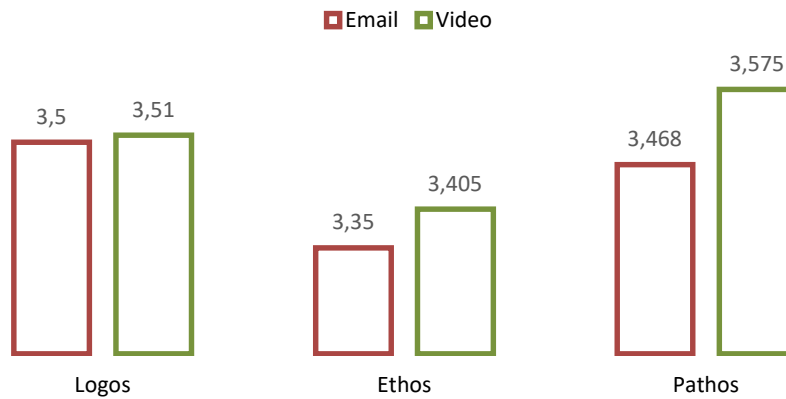


Figure 11: Means for overall commitment to change

#### 6.4.1 Medium effect on rhetoric

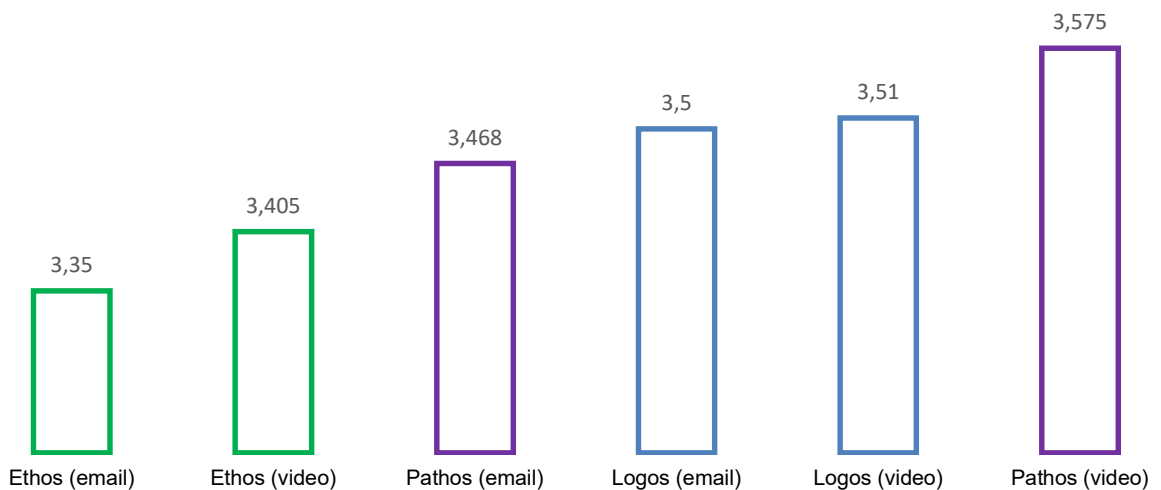
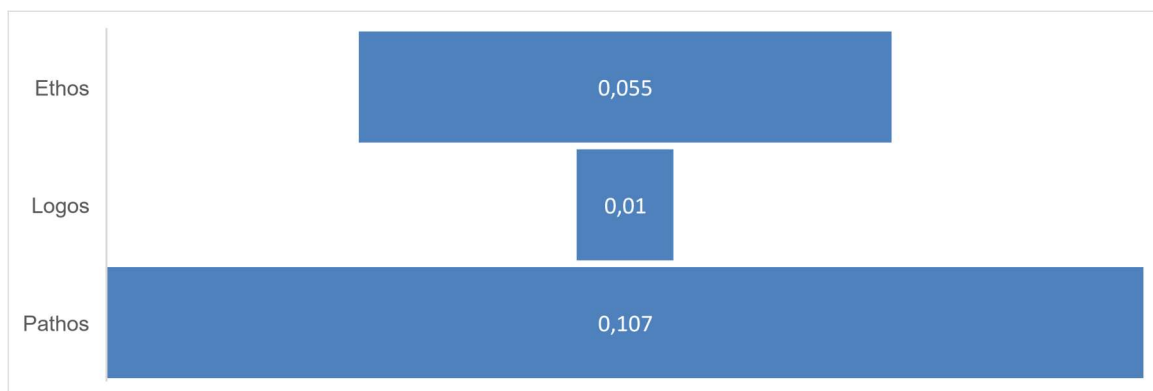


Figure 12: Rhetoric effect from least to most effective

The variance between the mean scores for logos for the two media forms is modest (email  $\bar{X} = 3.5$ ; video =  $\bar{X} = 3.351$ ). The similarity in these readings could be because this rhetorical appeal depends on the logic of the message and does not take much visual stimulus into consideration, unless the additional information that the respondent sees gives more information related to the logic of the message. Because the message was the same in the email format as the video format, there was no additional information for the audience, other than heuristic cues they may have used to make sense of the message.

The largest variance between mean scores, when comparing media of delivery, was for pathos (email  $\bar{X}$  = 3.468; video =  $\bar{X}$  = 3.575). This is evidence of the effect of giving influence targets the opportunity to not only read influence messages but also to see the influence agent delivering the same message, acting as a multiplier for the potency of the same message.



*Figure 13: Increase in mean score (email to video)*

There are many reasons why the spoken word can be more effective than the written word, because people read many cues when communicating. We look at cues that can be seen, and cues that can be heard (Hall, Horgan, & Murphy, 2019). How a speaker articulates themselves, their gender, their tone and pitch of voice, their social and personality traits, the use of hand gestures, status, attractiveness, mood, and socioeconomic factors are among the cues that are read through communication (Hall, Horgan, & Murphy, 2019). Respondents would have picked up on these cues and reacted accordingly.

Many of these cues cannot be determined through written text alone. More information about the speaker is therefore conveyed to audiences when they can see the speaker. In the video format of the survey, the presenter's gender, race, tone of voice, pitch of voice, mood, and facial gestures can be examined by the respondents, while only factors such as writing style, use of language, and possibly level of education can be examined in the email format. This additional information gives the respondents an opportunity to gather more information about their level of commitment, based not only on the message, but also on the person delivering the message.

Ethos would naturally have a higher reading in the video format than ethos using only email, because respondents make a deduction about the character of the speaker with both formats, but have more information at their disposal to do so when viewing the video format. As is shown in figure 13, ethos showed a higher mean score in the video format than in the email format.

#### 6.4.2 Engagement with videos and first impression bias

One of the limitations of this study, as mentioned in Chapter 7, was that the length of the survey may have caused respondents either to drop off or not engage completely with the videos. Although the official view count was lower than the 117 respondents who answered the survey (Table 20), there was a minimum length of viewing time required for the views to be counted as legitimate views on YouTube. The viewing-time measurement therefore shows that not all respondents viewed the complete videos to answer each question.

One of the explanations for this could be that the respondents would have realised that the same words were being used as in the email and made a decision about the impression they had felt about their level of persuasion without going through the video in its entirety. This view is supported by Asch (1946) and Lim, Benbasat, and Ward (2000), who assert that people make decisions about their first impressions within the first few moments of an engagement. The survey made all questions compulsory, which forced the viewing of the video at the start of the questions in the video section but could not control the view duration.

<b>Rhetoric appeal</b>	<b>Actual duration of video</b>	<b>Average view duration</b>	<b>Average percentage viewed</b>	<b>*Views</b>
Logos	1:02	1:00	98.2%	64
Ethos	1:09	0:59	86.7%	58
Pathos	1:08	0.59	87.5%	49

*Table 20: Video engagement statistics*



\* The calculation of the number of views is based on an unknown algorithm that YouTube does not disclose because a large number of views gives videos exposure on the platform. The calculation is undisclosed to protect users of the platform from falsely inflating the number of views to gain exposure. Views are counted as a full view based on a number of factors, such as minimum viewing time (30 seconds), and intentional viewing behaviour such as clicking 'play' as a signal of actually watching the video (Funk, 2020).

### 6.4.3 The perception of making a public statement

Commitment and consistency play a role in the level of influence achieved from the video format of this influence message. As confirmed by Cialdini (2007), when a public statement is made, the person is more likely to commit to the statement because they want to be *perceived* as being consistent. The viewers of the video format are therefore more likely to be influenced by a leader who not only writes a statement about a change message but puts their face to the statement as well. Seeing and hearing a statement is more powerful than only reading it.

### 6.4.4 Results of ANOVA

The results of the ANOVA showed that both medium and rhetoric had a p-value of less than 0.05, although the p-value for medium was higher than rhetoric. This means that the variance in means was explained by both rhetoric and medium, but the variance was explained more by the difference in rhetoric than medium, although the variance is also explained by medium of delivery. The effect of rhetoric was therefore more influential in the outcome of the study (Table 21) than medium of delivery was (Table 22).

Effect	DFn	DFd	F	p	p<.05	ges
Medium	1	116	5.568	0.02	*	0.002
Rhetoric	2	232	7.331	0.000818	*	0.012
Medium: Rhetoric	2	232	1.971	0.142		0.001

*Table 21: Repeated measures two-way ANOVA*

Medium	variable	n	mean	sd
Email	Overall	351	3.44	0.56
Video	Overall	351	3.496	0.598

Table 22: Mean scores (medium)

## 6.5 Summary of research Question 2

Influence messages are more effective when influence targets can engage with the speaker. In all instances of rhetoric appeal used, the reading for the video medium of delivery was higher than the reading for email. Even when influence targets did not engage with the videos for the entire duration, they had decided on their level of influence within the first few moments of watching the video, even though the words used were the same.

This gives good guidance to leaders sending change messages in times of crisis. Taking the time to engage with their people goes a long way in influencing them to follow your vision rather than merely stating your message in writing.

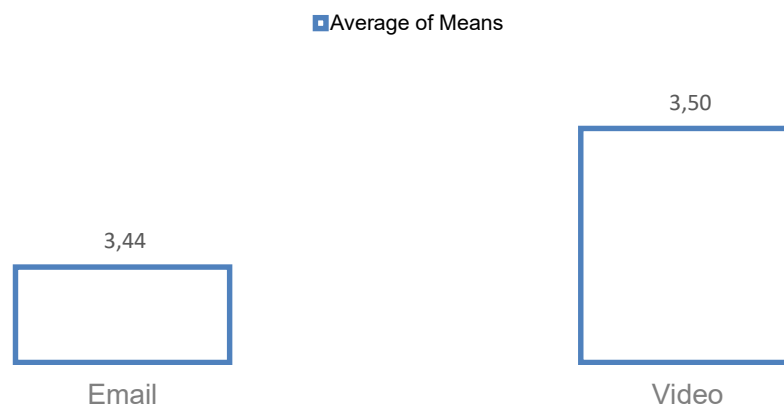


Figure 14: Average of means of email and video

## 6.6 Discussion of research Question 3

### **Research Question 3: To what extent does the rhetoric influence each category of commitment to change?**

This research question sought to determine the extent to which each rhetorical appeal, being ethos, logos, and pathos, has on the category of commitment to change, being affective, normative, and continuance commitment to change.

Hypothesis 3a: Pathos is most influential for affective commitment to change

Hypothesis 3b: Logos is most influential for continuance commitment to change

Hypothesis 3c: Pathos is most influential for normative commitment to change

Result 3a: Logos is most influential for affective commitment to change

Result 3b: Logos is most effective for continuance commitment to change

Result 3c: Pathos of most effective for normative commitment to change

	AC	CC	NC
Logos	<b>3,7365</b>	<b>3,4015</b>	3,3775
Ethos	3,5575	3,3235	3,2515
Pathos	3,7090	3,3505	<b>3,5015</b>
Average	3,6677	3,3585	3,3768

*Table 23: Average of means for email and video*

## 6.6.1 Affective commitment to change

### 6.6.1.1 The need for information over emotion and credibility

As mentioned in Chapter 2, employees who have a high sense of affective commitment to change will show high behavioural support for the organisation; they will exert additional discretionary effort, and will have a strong emotional affinity to the organisation (Meyer, Srinivas, Lal, & Topolnytsky, 2007). These employees are also loyal to the organisation and tend to keep tenure of around ten years (Ng & Feldman, 2011). As hypothesised, these employees should then be most influenced by the emotional rhetoric leadership put forward because affective commitment is an emotive form of commitment to change.

The results of the study, though, show that, on average, these employees were more influenced by logos, which is the logic of the message. This could be because of the pervasiveness of the effect of the crisis on their ability to be influenced. They were more interested in seeking information to feel secure about the uncertainty they faced than the emotive parts of a change message. Employees behave in this way when they need to make sense of their environment and seek cues to help them find answers in the uncertainty they face (Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010). Where employees with affective commitment would typically have been influenced more by emotion, the degree of anxiety and doubt they face seemed to have swayed the tactics they find most influential.

In the context of their workplaces, employees seek security in times of crisis, especially if their employment is at risk. The fact that they face a health crisis simultaneously has amplified their need for information and logic, rather than the need for emotional stimuli. This is not to say that pathos was the weakest of the forms of influence for these employees. It, in fact, was ranked second to logos, and only marginally so. But these employees shifted their primary need for emotive messaging (employees with affective commitment have an emotional connection with the organisation) to logos. When comparing the means for each form of rhetoric as well as the delivery medium, logos still had the highest mean score and the lowest standard deviation readings (Table 24). Again, this talks to the need to find information to dilute uncertainty.

Affective Commitment to Change					
Medium	Rhetoric	Variable	n	Mean	SD
Email	Logos	AC	117	<b>3,745</b>	0.687
Email	Ethos	AC	117	3,534	0.786
Email	Pathos	AC	117	3,689	0.795
Video	Logos	AC	117	3,728	0.763
Video	Ethos	AC	117	3,581	0.842
Video	Pathos	AC	117	<b>3,729</b>	0.827

*Table 24: Mean scores for affective commitment to change*

Affective commitment was still the highest scoring of the three categories of commitment (Table 23). This implies that these employees had a higher likelihood of being influenced by persuasive messaging than their counterparts who display continuance and normative commitment.

#### 6.6.1.2 Credibility wanes

Because 100 years have passed since the world last experienced a global pandemic, there are no real experts who know exactly what the right thing is to do in this circumstance. Credibility (ethos) would therefore rank lowest because employees know that no one really knows what the correct approach to solving the problems we have now is. It is therefore not surprising that ethos was the least effective in influencing employees who face this crisis.

Employees therefore want to know that leaders have sought the correct information in uncertain times rather than wanting to understand the credibility of the person delivering the message. This possibly speaks to employees' knowledge of the volume of fake news, as well as their own ability to find information. They need their employers to demonstrate rigour in the quality of information put forward to make decisions, especially when these decisions affect their livelihoods. They need decisions in uncertain times to make sense, regardless of who is delivering these messages. Another argument for the low mean score for ethos could be the loss of trust in leadership in recent times. People may trust information more than they do leaders.

### 6.6.1.3 The effect of delivery

As shown in the results of the ANOVA in Chapter 5, a significant difference, explained by rhetoric (not medium), exists between the groups. The change in medium from email to video did not explain the variance between the groups.

The fact that affective commitment was not influenced by delivery medium possibly means that employees who show this category of commitment to change have such a strong affinity to the organisation that it does not matter how they receive influence messages, only *what* is contained in the message. Their loyalty to the organisation remains, whether leadership sends them written messages or whether they see their leaders deliver the message, in a crisis. This result is evidence of the value of loyalty in an organisation.

### 6.6.2 Continuance commitment to change

Employees who have a high continuance commitment to change have few alternatives outside the organisation (Vandenberghe & Panaccio, 2012). They also typically are greatly impacted by a change in economic factors (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Employees in the South African context who typically fit this description would be low-level, unskilled workers, who are sensitive to unemployment, and do not have the educational background to seek employment outside of their current jobs. Older employees would also fall into this category because of their fading employability.

#### 6.6.2.1 The shift to greater uncertainty

The sample of respondents in this study were moderate to highly educated individuals. They were also quite young, with most falling in the millennial category. They were therefore not employees who would typically have few alternatives outside of their employment. However, in a country with a high unemployment rate, compounded with the uncertainty brought about by the Covid-19 lockdown and subsequent economic decline, even these employees would have felt a decline in alternatives should they lose their current jobs. The uncertainty they face is only made more real by the fact

that they may be faced with the reality of not only losing their jobs but also that they may not find alternative employment in this country and others.

When alternatives are few, people may find it difficult to be influenced by leadership. This is consistent with the findings of the study, with continuance commitment scoring the lowest of the three categories of commitment to change (Table 23). This means that these respondents, on average, were least influenced by both rhetoric and medium of delivery, when compared to the other categories of commitment to change.

Further evidence for this assertion is the results of the ANOVA, as shown in Chapter 5. There were no significant differences explained by either rhetoric or medium of delivery for the variances between the groups when looking at continuance commitment to change. It would therefore be more difficult to influence these employees, and they are indifferent to the medium of delivery of the influence message.

Continuance Commitment						
Medium	Rhetoric	variable	n	mean	sd	
Email	Logos	CC	117	<b>3,413</b>	0.804	
Email	Ethos	CC	117	3,295	0.781	
Email	Pathos	CC	117	3,282	0.787	
Video	Logos	CC	117	3,39	0.785	
Video	Ethos	CC	117	3,352	0.876	
Video	Pathos	CC	117	<b>3,419</b>	0.791	

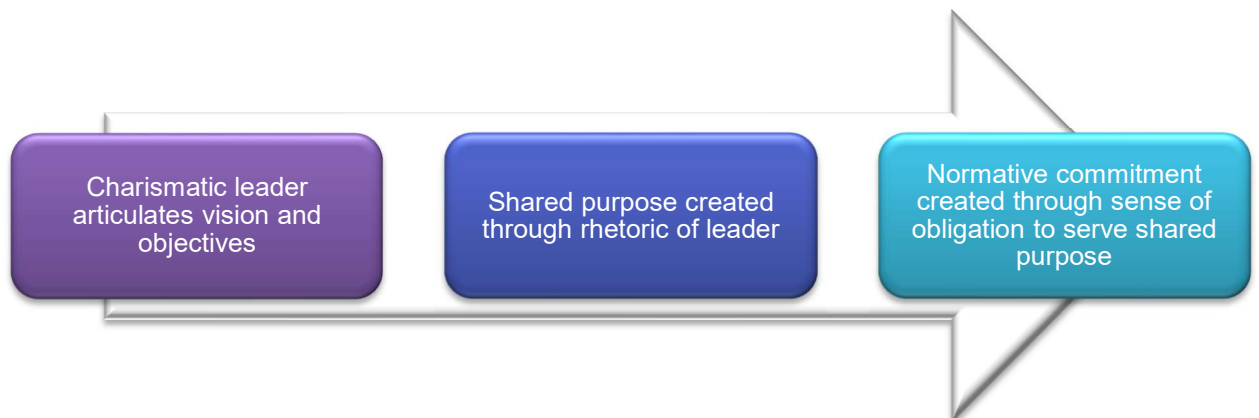
*Table 25: Mean scores for continuance commitment to change*

### 6.6.3 Normative Commitment to Change

Employees who feel a sense of duty and obligation to commit to organisational change are said to have a normative commitment to change (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This sense of obligation and duty may come from a sense of remaining with an organisation because of a lifetime commitment that is typical of collectivist societies such as South

Africa. These employees are willing to make sacrifices for the good of the organisation because it is perceived as the right thing to do (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). This feeling of duty is internalised through their sense of duty and responsibility to the organisation.

Normative commitment is developed in organisations where the organisational objectives are strongly held with employees. These objectives typically foster collectivist values (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). The values of an organisation can be successfully articulated by charismatic leaders who are able to influence organisational performance by how well they articulate the goals and vision of the organisation (Carton, Murphy, & Clark, 2014). As mentioned in Chapter 2, charismatic leaders appeal to the sense of emotion of the audience (DuBrin, 2013). Since normative commitment comes from a sense of obligation, partly because of a shared sense of duty to organisational outcomes, pathos would be most influential to these employees.



*Figure 15: The role of charismatic leadership in creating normative commitment*

As hypothesised, the outcome of the study proved that employees who have a high degree of normative commitment will mostly be influenced by pathos. This was true for both email and video formats of the influence messages, with both mean scores showing the highest readings (Table 26).



Normative Commitment						
Medium	Rhetoric	Variable	n	Mean	SD	
Email	Logos	NC	117	3,343	0.68	
Email	Ethos	NC	117	3,222	0.703	
Email	Pathos	NC	117	<b>3,432</b>	0.77	
Video	Logos	NC	117	3,412	0.717	
Video	Ethos	NC	117	3,281	0.759	
Video	Pathos	NC	117	<b>3,571</b>	0.795	

*Table 26: Mean scores for normative commitment to change*

### 6.6.3.1 The role of rhetoric and medium of delivery in influencing normative commitment to change

As shown in Chapter 5, the results of the ANOVA showed that both rhetoric *and* delivery medium accounted for significant differences for normative commitment to change. The post hoc analysis showed that ethos was significantly lower than pathos and logos, and that no significant difference existed between pathos and logos. This implies that people are less likely to be influenced by ethos.

Under normal circumstances, employees who feel a sense of duty to commit to an organisation would typically do so because they relate to the values and objectives put forward in the organisation (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). Under conditions of uncertainty brought about by a crisis, these employees would seek a shared purpose even more than when they are in non-crisis situations. They would also want a shared purpose to make sense. Therefore, both logos and pathos scored higher means and did not return a significance score in the post-hoc analysis.

As shown before, people in crisis are less likely to be influenced by credibility. This could be dangerous because they are desperate for a sense of certainty and could easily be lead astray if their leaders do not give them the correct answers.

## 6.7 Summary of research Question 3

The effect of emotion has again been shown in the results of this research question. The highest average scores were shown for affective commitment to change, the category most associated with an emotional connection to the organisation. All forms of rhetoric were most effective on affective commitment than the other categories.

Continuance commitment to change was the least likely to be influenced by rhetoric, followed closely by normative commitment; however, the use of pathos to influence normative commitment proved most useful.

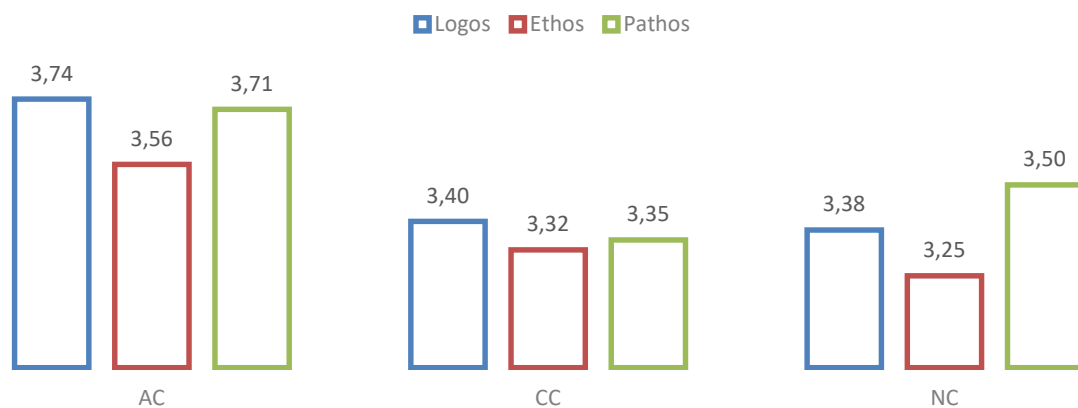


Figure 16: Mean scores for categories of commitment to change

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

### **7.1 Brief review of main objectives**

As stated in Chapter 1, the structure of influential messaging during times of crisis was the focus of this research paper. Together with the structure of these messages, delivery medium was also examined, to determine their effect on leadership to influence commitment to change. A further objective was to determine the extent to which both rhetoric and delivery medium effects each category of commitment to change. A summary of the findings of the report, contributions and practical implications, recommendations for future study, as well as limitation of this study will be discussed in this chapter.

### **7.2 Research objectives**

In the introduction chapter of this report, the importance of the structure of an influence message, in the context of the Covid-19 crisis, was put forward. With many organisations having to adapt to their staff working from home, as well as facing losses in revenue as a result of the lockdowns enforced, business leaders are faced with learning new ways to communicate difficult messages to their staff.

In a typical pre-Covid business setting, when a change message was required to be communicated, an in-person staff meeting would be called, where leadership would have the opportunity to deliver these messages to staff, without concerns over internet connectivity, technical difficulties, bandwidth, data costs, home interruptions, or muting. The post-Covid staff meeting room is now on a video-conferencing platform, beset with all the additional internet concerns mentioned.

With all the additional complexities, it has become imperative for leaders to effectively structure change messages to appropriately influence their audiences. The importance of, not only the wording of the message, but also the medium used to communicate the message, is what the focus of this research paper was. The paper further examined the three different categories of organisational change to determine which tactics and

media are most influential to the employees falling into these change categories, as a guide to leaders in crafting these influence messages.

With the uncertainty brought about by Covid-19 lockdowns, many employees found themselves leaning more on leadership for answers. The economic downturn, rising unemployment, and health concerns from a possible contraction of the disease make the way leaders communicate during these difficult times more and more critical to the success of organisations.

### **7.3 Summary of conclusions**

#### **7.3.1 The effect of rhetoric on overall commitment to change**

The first research question sought to determine the extent to which each of the three appeals of rhetoric influence overall commitment to change. The results show that the most effective lever is pathos, followed closely by logos, with ethos trailing behind.

What these results suggest is the need for messages, not only to make sense, but also to inspire employees and cater for the emotions of the audience, since they are in a pervasive crisis, affecting most parts of their lives. They need leadership to understand what they are facing and give them solutions that are logical. They are less interested in the authority of the person delivering the message, possibly because there are very few experts in this crisis.

#### **7.3.2 The use of medium of delivery on commitment to change**

Influence messages are received more effectively when influence targets can not only hear the message, but also see the person delivering the message. Influence targets use more information to assess the influence agent when they can see them.

When considering each rhetorical appeal and the effect the change of media had on the level of influence on overall commitment to change, pathos was found to have the highest difference in reading from email to video, followed by logos and then by ethos.

### 7.3.3 The effect of rhetoric on each category of organisational commitment

Employees exhibit varying degrees and categories of commitment to an organisation. Each category of commitment requires a different influence approach because employees respond differently to influence messages, depending on which category they belong to in terms of organisational commitment. These categories, namely, affective, normative, and continuance commitment, should be considered by leadership when crafting change messages.

The effect of emotion has again been demonstrated in the results of this research question. The highest average scores were shown for affective commitment to change, the category most associated with an emotional connection to the organisation. All forms of rhetoric were most effective on affective commitment than the other categories.

Continuance commitment to change was the least likely to be influenced by rhetoric, followed closely by normative commitment; however, the use of pathos to influence normative commitment proved useful.

Affective commitment was shown to be most influenced by rhetoric, while continuance commitment was least affected. Even though pathos was the most effective at influencing overall commitment, when the categories were split, the effect of logos began to appear for the different categories, as shown in the table below.

### 7.3.4 In summary

	<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>OC</b>	<b>AC</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>CC</b>
<b>Typical attributes of these employees</b>			Loyal, Emotional connection to organisation, Tenure	Sense of duty to organisation	Few options outside of the organisation
<b>Medium rank</b> (1 = highest rank 2 = lowest rank)	<i>Email</i>	2	2	2	2
	<i>Video</i>	1	1	1	1
<b>Rhetoric rank</b> (1 = highest rank 3 = lowest rank)	<i>Logos</i>	2	1	1	2
	<i>Ethos</i>	3	3	3	3
	<i>Pathos</i>	1	2	2	1

*Table 27: Ranking of rhetoric and medium on organisational change*

## 7.4 Contributions of the study

### 7.4.1 Practical usefulness in organisations undergoing change

Three major constructs comprise the rhetoric as described by Aristotle and Kennedy (2007). These appeals—ethos, logos, and pathos—together synthesise an effective influential message. When used in harmony, they enable leaders to create a shared vision of the future for their followers (Carton, Murphy, & Clark, 2014). In crisis, these leaders become invaluable in guiding a strategy for organisations, particularly when change is an outcome of the crisis. For leaders to have the knowledge of which appeals of rhetoric to use in these situations could be of value to both leaders and followers.

In addition to having the knowledge of which form of rhetoric to employ, knowing which category of commitment employees display, and therefore what would be most effective at influencing these employees, is an additional benefit that this study brings to the research base. Understanding that, when the economy declines, employees

require different messages than when the economy is prosperous, is part of what motivates employees to buy into an influence message and what moves change forward.

With the work-from-home culture set to continue indefinitely, knowing *how* to communicate with employees is another element of influence leaders will find useful. Understanding when employees need to see leadership versus when an email will suffice, could save both time and reputation in organisations. As shown in table 27, leaders who understand the type of employees in the organisation, in terms of the type of commitment they exhibit, could benefit from having a rank order of tactics and mediums to use to influence change in organisations.

## 7.5 Recommendations for future study

Although this study focused on ethos, logos, and pathos as appeals of influence, other forms of influence could be analysed. This study also focused on specific tactics, while many tactics exist.

With far more employees working-from-home, it would be useful to determine what they now value in the context of their work, and therefore whether there has been a shift in what influences them. As an example, many parents may find that they now value the freedom of having the ability to spend more time with their families, taking children to school, or even having the freedom to schedule more time for leisure activities. On the other hand, value may be placed on what they no longer have, or what they miss about the workplace. Particularly in the South African context, many employees do not have a conducive home environment, prompting value in physically being in an office environment where they have space and equipment to perform their duties.

## 7.6 Limitations of study

The results of this study should be interpreted with the limitations in mind. Some possible limitations include the following:

The vignette-type experimental method has been criticised because respondents may change their responses if they were in a real-life situation, rather than being asked to respond to a vignette (Hughes, 1998). Vignettes may not have the desired effect of placing the participant in the shoes of the characters created by the researcher, which may skew the results. This limitation is mitigated by the fact that respondents find themselves in crisis, in reality.

Because audiences are persuaded by different elements, a result may still be objective, even though this is a quantitative study. Audiences who are persuaded by heuristics may have been swayed either way by the pitch of voice (De Waele, Claeys, & Cauberghe, 2019), appearance, tone, race, accent, writing style, gender, etc, of the presenter in the survey. This is mitigated by the spread of different ethnicities and a balanced representation of gender in the respondent pool, although these biases are always present and will affect responses and the level of persuasion.

The extensive length of the survey {18 (commitment to change questions per scale) x 3 (ethos, logos, and pathos) x 2 (email and video) = 108 questions} may have dulled the responses regarding the video section of the survey (which was the second part of the survey), thereby causing a muted response to influence through video, and inflating the influence results for the email part of the study. The length of the survey may also have prompted some respondents not to view the entire length of the videos (which averaged 1 minute 6 seconds each). Respondents may have already decided the level of persuasion attained because they had read the entire email, which contained the exact same messaging as the video.



## 7.7 Conclusion

Rhetoric is a powerful tool that influences outcomes, if used effectively. Understanding which of the three rhetorical appeals to use in a crisis, which medium of delivery is most suitable, together with the knowledge of how different employees within varying categories of organisational commitment respond to these factors can be useful for leaders in organisations undergoing change. The findings of this research study can be a valuable tool for managers to draw from, when they must deliver difficult change messages in a challenging environment.

## Appendix

### 1. Consistency Matrix

Research questions	Literature review	Data collection tool	Analysis
<p><b>Q1: Which of the three forms of rhetoric are most effective in influencing commitment to change?</b></p>	<p>(Aristotle &amp; Kennedy, 2007);            (Bauer, et al., 2016);            (Bligh &amp; Kohles, 2009);            (Braet, 1992);            (Caspi, Bogler, &amp; Tzuman, 2019);            (Cialdini, 2007);            (Clark &amp; Greatbatch, 2011);            (Davis &amp; Gardner, 2012);            (Freling, Yang, Saini, Itani, &amp; Abualsamh, 2020);            (Heracleous &amp; Klaering, 2014);            (Hunt, Boal, &amp; Dodge, 1999)            (Maitlis &amp; Sonenshein, 2010);            (Manning, 2012);            (Mulder, Koppelaar, De Jong, &amp; Verhage, 1986)            (Sparks &amp; Areni, 2002),            (Watkins, 2001);            (Yukl, Guinan, &amp; Sottolano, 1995)</p>	<p>Vignettes 1-3 and videos 1-3,</p>	<p>ANOVA            Mean scores</p>

<p><b>Q2: To what extent does the <i>medium of delivery</i> affect the commitment to change?</b></p>	<p>(Borkowska &amp; Pawlowski, 2011)<sup>‡</sup> (Braverman, 2008)<sup>‡</sup> (Graetz, 2000)<sup>‡</sup> (Hall, Horgan, &amp; Murphy, 2019)<sup>‡</sup> (Klofstad, 2016)<sup>‡</sup> (Lim, Benbasat, &amp; Ward, 2000)<sup>‡</sup> (Sparks &amp; Areni, 2002)</p>	<p>Vignettes 1-3 and videos 1-3,</p>	<p>ANOVA Mean scores</p>
<p><b>Q3: To what extent does the <i>rhetoric influence each category</i> of commitment to change?</b></p>	<p>(Aydin, Sarier, &amp; Uysal, 2011)<sup>‡</sup> (Fischer &amp; Mansell, 2009)<sup>‡</sup> (Herscovitch &amp; Meyer, 2002)<sup>‡</sup> (Meyer &amp; Allen, 1991)<sup>‡</sup> (Meyer &amp; Parfyonova, 2010)<sup>‡</sup> (Meyer, Srinivas, Lal, &amp; Topolnytsky, 2007)<sup>‡</sup> (Ng &amp; Feldman, 2011)<sup>‡</sup> (Stevens, Beyer, &amp; Trice, 1978)<sup>‡</sup> (Vandenberghe &amp; Panaccio, 2012)</p>	<p>Vignettes 1-3 and videos 1-3,</p>	<p>ANOVA Mean scores</p>

## 2. Survey Consent

I am currently a student at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science and completing my research in partial fulfilment of an MBA.

I am conducting research on the effect of influence tactics on commitment to change, in the context of a crisis. To that end, you are asked to complete an online survey, where a fictional scenario will be presented in several different styles. This will help us better understand which style is best at influencing a commitment to change.

**Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty.** Your participation is anonymous and only aggregated data will be reported. By completing the survey, you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research.

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

Researcher name: Lauren Smith

Email: 19386193@mygibs.co.za

Phone: +27721427011

Research Supervisor: Professor Gavin Price

Email: priceg@gibs.co.za

Phone: +27824998888

### 3. Draft questionnaire

#### 7.7.1 Control variables and qualifying questions

Age

To which gender identity to you most identify?

Male	Female	Transgender Female	Transgender Male	Gender variant/ Non- conforming	Prefer not to say
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Education

Grade 12 - Matric	College Diploma	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctoral Degree	Other
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Occupation

Manager	Supervisor	Professional	Administrato r	Other
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Have you been impacted by the Covid19 lockdown?

Yes	No
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Please read through the following scenarios and select the option most reflective of how committed you are to the change required in each scenario.

## 4. Vignette 1

### 4.1 Requirements

**Rhetorical appeal – Logos**

**Influence tactics – Rational persuasion, exchange, consultation, coalition**

**Medium of delivery – Email**

**Change required – Pay cuts instead of retrenchment**

**Scenario: Communication to staff to inform them about pay-cuts in the wake of lockdown restrictions that have adversely affected company turnover.**

*To whom it may concern,*

*Due to the restrictions placed on the country in the wake of the Covid-19 lockdown, our turnover has decreased to 10% of the level at the same time last year. We have sought loans to the value of R10 million to fund the anticipated liquidity requirements during the next few weeks.*

*After consultation with various stakeholders, the decision has been made to give staff the choice between two options:*

- 1. The entire organisation takes a 30% pay-cut, across the board. Should option 1 be chosen by more than 50% of staff, employees will be compensated with the equivalent percentage (30%) increase in leave-days per month, or*
- 2. Maintain pay cost at 100% but retrench 10% of the staff compliment, on a first-in-first-out basis.*

*Union representatives have been consulted on the implementation of these measures to assist in improving the liquidity of the firm.*

*Regards,*

*J. Doe*

Survey response options

Based on the above email, as an employee of the company, to what extent do you agree with the change required:

<b>Question</b>	<b>Select an option</b>
I believe in the value of this change	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
This change is a good strategy for the organisation	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I think that management is making a mistake by introducing this change	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
This change serves an important purpose.	Strongly

	agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
This change is not necessary.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I have no choice but to go along with this change	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I feel pressure to go along with this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree



	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I have too much at stake to resist this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
It would be too costly for me to resist this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
It would be risky to speak out against this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
Resisting this change is not a viable option for me.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree

	Strongly disagree
I feel a sense of duty to work towards this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I do not think it would be right of me to oppose this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I would not feel badly about opposing this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
It would be irresponsible of me to resist this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

I would feel guilty about opposing this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I do not feel any obligation to support this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

## 5. Vignette 2

### 5.1 Requirements

**Rhetorical appeal – Ethos**

**Influence tactics – Legitimizing**

**Medium of delivery – Email**

**Change required – Pay cuts instead of retrenchment**

**Scenario: Communication to staff to inform them about pay-cuts in the wake of lockdown restrictions that have adversely affected company turnover.**

*To all staff of Rhetoric (Pty) Ltd,*

*As leadership of the company, we have proven our trustworthiness over many years. Our reputation as a reliable, honest leadership unit has been upheld for many years and led to our company being a frontrunner when it comes to decisions on our valued employees.*

*Due to the restrictions placed on the country in the wake of the Covid-19 lockdown, our financial reports show a decrease in turnover. To this end, we are taking an industry standard approach in restoring liquidity.*

*After consultation with various stakeholders, the decision has been made to give staff the choice between two options:*

- 1. The entire organisation takes a pay-cut, across the board; or*
- 2. Maintain pay cost at 100% but retrench some of the staff complement, on a first-in-first-out basis.*

*Union representatives, with experience in these negotiations, have been consulted and have agreed on the implementation of these measures to assist in improving the liquidity of the firm.*

*Regards,*

*J. Doe (CEO)*

Question	Select an option
I believe in the value of this change	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
This change is a good strategy for the organisation	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I think that management is making a mistake by introducing this change	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
This change serves an important purpose.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

Things would be better without this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
This change is not necessary.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I have no choice but to go along with this change	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I feel pressure to go along with this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I have too much at stake to resist this change.	Strongly

	agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
It would be too costly for me to resist this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
It would be risky to speak out against this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
Resisting this change is not a viable option for me.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I feel a sense of duty to work towards this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral

	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I do not think it would be right of me to oppose this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I would not feel badly about opposing this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
It would be irresponsible of me to resist this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I would feel guilty about opposing this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly



	disagree
I do not feel any obligation to support this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

## 6. Vignette 3

### 6.1 Requirements

**Rhetorical appeal – Pathos**

**Influence tactics – Personal appeals, inspirational appeals, ingratiation**

**Medium of delivery – Email**

**Change required – Pay cuts instead of retrenchment**

**Scenario: Communication to staff to inform them about pay-cuts in the wake of lockdown restrictions that have adversely affected company turnover.**

*To our valued staff,*

*In March 2020, a sinister virus attacked our country, forcing the public into hiding to avoid infection. Due to the crippling restrictions placed on the country in the wake of the Covid-19 lockdown, our cherished livelihoods have come under the sword. As a result, we are faced with the grim decision to either effect pay cuts or suffer the heartbreak of retrenchment.*

*It is incumbent on us all, to see one another through to the other side of this war. To this end, we ask you all to consider one of two options, for our company to survive the financial calamity at hand:*

- 1. In solidarity, the entire organisation takes a pay-cut, across the board; or*
- 2. Maintain pay cost at 100% but retrench some of the invaluable staff complement, on a first-in-first-out basis.*

*We are in this together!*

*Your humble leadership team*

Question	Select an option
I believe in the value of this change	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
This change is a good strategy for the organisation	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I think that management is making a mistake by introducing this change	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
This change serves an important purpose.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

Things would be better without this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
This change is not necessary.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I have no choice but to go along with this change	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I feel pressure to go along with this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I have too much at stake to resist this change.	Strongly

	agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
It would be too costly for me to resist this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
It would be risky to speak out against this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
Resisting this change is not a viable option for me.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I feel a sense of duty to work towards this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral

	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I do not think it would be right of me to oppose this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I would not feel badly about opposing this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
It would be irresponsible of me to resist this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
I would feel guilty about opposing this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly

	disagree
I do not feel any obligation to support this change.	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neutral
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree

## 7. Vignette associated with research question

Commitment to change and medium of delivery	Email	Video
Logos	1	4
Rational persuasion		
Exchange		
Consultation		
Coalition		
Ethos	2	5
Legitimizing		
Pathos	3	6
Inspirational appeals		
Personal appeals		
Ingratiation		
Pressure		

*Table 28: Vignette associated with each research question*

*Note: Dependent variable = Commitment to change*

## 8. Considerations for vignette development

Table 2. Considerations in vignette development and administration.

Vignette development	Points to consider
Consideration #1: data sources for vignette construction	<i>Should the vignette be based on:</i> Research findings or literature review? Real life experiences? A singular source or eclectic mix?
Consideration #2: vignette format	<i>What format should the vignette take:</i> Paper vs. electronic? Short vs. lengthy? Single vs. multiple?
Consideration #3: capturing reality	<i>What level of authenticity is required?</i> <i>Should the vignette be:</i> Hypothetical or 'real'? If real, how can anonymity and confidentiality be protected?
Consideration #4: vignette/participant congruence	<i>How can a balance be achieved between:</i> Complexity vs. simplicity? Ambiguity vs. clarity? Colloquial vs. formal language?
<i>Vignette administration</i>	<i>Points to consider</i>
Consideration #5: data collection	<i>What is an appropriate form of data collection?</i> Group or individual sample?
Consideration #6: presenting the vignette	<i>What types of questions are required?</i> Open and/or closed? Unfinished sentences? How much information to share with participants?
Consideration #7: response perspectives	<i>How will participants be asked to respond to the vignette?</i> <i>As:</i> A vignette character? People more generally? Themselves (their own viewpoint)?

*Table 29: Considerations for vignette development as recommended by Bradbury-Jones, Taylor, and Herber (2014, p. 432). Reprinted from Bradbury-Jones, C., Taylor, J., & Herber, O. R. (2014). Vignette development and administration: A framework for protecting research participants. International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 17(4), 427-440.*



## 9. Descriptives per question

### 9.1 Medium – Email

	<b>Logos</b> DataA (N = 117)	<b>Email Ethos</b> DataA (N = 117)	<b>Pathos</b> DataA (N = 117)
<b>I believe in the value of this change</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.69 ± 1.01	3.58 ± 1.08	3.87 ± 0.97
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (4.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.69 (95% CI: 3.51, 3.88)	3.58 (95% CI: 3.39, 3.78)	3.87 (95% CI: 3.70, 4.05)
<b>This change is a good strategy for the organisation</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.74 ± 1.00	3.49 ± 1.04	3.78 ± 0.97
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (4.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.74 (95% CI: 3.56, 3.93)	3.49 (95% CI: 3.30, 3.68)	3.78 (95% CI: 3.60, 3.95)
<b>I think that management is making a mistake by introducing this change</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.62 ± 0.91	3.40 ± 1.06	3.39 ± 1.11
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.62 (95% CI: 3.46, 3.79)	3.40 (95% CI: 3.21, 3.59)	3.39 (95% CI: 3.19, 3.59)
<b>This change serves an important purpose</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	4.01 ± 0.86	3.79 ± 0.88	3.79 ± 0.92
median (iqr)	4.00 (4.00, 5.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (4.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	4.01 (95% CI: 3.85, 4.16)	3.79 (95% CI: 3.63, 3.95)	3.79 (95% CI: 3.62, 3.95)
<b>Things would be better without this change.</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0

min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.58 ± 1.00	3.32 ± 1.07	3.59 ± 1.04
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.58 (95% CI: 3.40, 3.76)	3.32 (95% CI: 3.13, 3.52)	3.59 (95% CI: 3.40, 3.78)

**This change is not necessary**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.82 ± 0.94	3.62 ± 0.95	3.72 ± 0.96
median (iqr)	4.00 (4.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.82 (95% CI: 3.65, 3.99)	3.62 (95% CI: 3.45, 3.80)	3.72 (95% CI: 3.54, 3.89)

**I have no choice but to go along with this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.32 ± 1.09	3.19 ± 1.11	3.22 ± 1.03
median (iqr)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.32 (95% CI: 3.13, 3.52)	3.19 (95% CI: 2.99, 3.39)	3.22 (95% CI: 3.04, 3.41)

**I feel pressure to go along with this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.21 ± 1.11	3.16 ± 1.05	3.06 ± 1.05
median (iqr)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.21 (95% CI: 3.01, 3.41)	3.16 (95% CI: 2.97, 3.35)	3.06 (95% CI: 2.87, 3.25)

**I have too much at stake to resist this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.63 ± 1.05	3.52 ± 1.01	3.46 ± 1.00
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.63 (95% CI: 3.44, 3.82)	3.52 (95% CI: 3.34, 3.70)	3.46 (95% CI: 3.28, 3.64)

**It would be too costly for me to resist this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.62 ± 0.98	3.51 ± 0.99	3.49 ± 1.02
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)

mean (CI)	3.62 (95% CI: 3.44, 3.79)	3.51 (95% CI: 3.33, 3.69)	3.49 (95% CI: 3.30, 3.67)
<b>It would be risky to speak out against this change</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.20 ± 1.21	3.01 ± 1.10	3.04 ± 1.09
median (iqr)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.20 (95% CI: 2.98, 3.42)	3.01 (95% CI: 2.81, 3.21)	3.04 (95% CI: 2.84, 3.24)
<b>Resisting this change is not a viable option for me</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.50 ± 1.05	3.38 ± 1.01	3.42 ± 1.06
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.50 (95% CI: 3.31, 3.69)	3.38 (95% CI: 3.19, 3.56)	3.42 (95% CI: 3.23, 3.61)
<b>I feel a sense of duty to work towards this change</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.56 ± 0.94	3.45 ± 1.00	3.65 ± 1.05
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.56 (95% CI: 3.39, 3.73)	3.45 (95% CI: 3.27, 3.63)	3.65 (95% CI: 3.46, 3.84)
<b>I do not think it would be right of me to oppose this change</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.45 ± 1.00	3.36 ± 1.03	3.42 ± 1.10
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.45 (95% CI: 3.27, 3.63)	3.36 (95% CI: 3.17, 3.55)	3.42 (95% CI: 3.22, 3.62)
<b>I would not feel badly about opposing this change</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.15 ± 1.06	2.97 ± 1.05	3.26 ± 1.06
median (iqr)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.15 (95% CI: 2.95, 3.34)	2.97 (95% CI: 2.78, 3.16)	3.26 (95% CI: 3.07, 3.46)

**It would be irresponsible of me to resist this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.42 ± 0.99	3.28 ± 1.06	3.44 ± 1.06
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.42 (95% CI: 3.24, 3.60)	3.28 (95% CI: 3.09, 3.47)	3.44 (95% CI: 3.25, 3.64)

**I would feel guilty about opposing this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	2.98 ± 1.07	3.07 ± 1.03	3.40 ± 1.06
median (iqr)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	2.98 (95% CI: 2.79, 3.18)	3.07 (95% CI: 2.88, 3.26)	3.40 (95% CI: 3.21, 3.59)

**I do not feel any obligation to support this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.50 ± 0.97	3.20 ± 1.05	3.41 ± 1.06
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.50 (95% CI: 3.32, 3.67)	3.20 (95% CI: 3.01, 3.39)	3.41 (95% CI: 3.22, 3.60)

Table 30: Descriptive statistics per question - Email

## 9.2 Medium – Video

	Logos DataA (N = 117)	Video Ethos DataA (N = 117)	Pathos DataA (N = 117)
<b>I believe in the value of this change</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.83 ± 0.96	3.79 ± 1.00	3.92 ± 1.00
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (4.00, 5.00)
mean (CI)	3.83 (95% CI: 3.66, 4.00)	3.79 (95% CI: 3.61, 3.97)	3.92 (95% CI: 3.74, 4.10)
<b>This change is a good strategy for the organisation</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0

min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.78 ± 0.96	3.62 ± 1.03	3.82 ± 1.06
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (4.00, 5.00)
mean (CI)	3.78 (95% CI: 3.60, 3.95)	3.62 (95% CI: 3.44, 3.81)	3.82 (95% CI: 3.63, 4.01)

**I think that management is making a mistake by introducing this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.57 ± 0.95	3.43 ± 1.07	3.64 ± 1.11
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.57 (95% CI: 3.40, 3.74)	3.43 (95% CI: 3.23, 3.62)	3.64 (95% CI: 3.44, 3.84)

**This change serves an important purpose**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.96 ± 0.84	3.75 ± 0.96	3.91 ± 1.03
median (iqr)	4.00 (4.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (4.00, 5.00)
mean (CI)	3.96 (95% CI: 3.80, 4.11)	3.75 (95% CI: 3.58, 3.93)	3.91 (95% CI: 3.72, 4.09)

**Things would be better without this change.**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.51 ± 1.02	3.30 ± 1.15	3.49 ± 1.12
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.51 (95% CI: 3.33, 3.70)	3.30 (95% CI: 3.09, 3.51)	3.49 (95% CI: 3.28, 3.69)

**This change is not necessary**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.72 ± 0.95	3.60 ± 1.05	3.82 ± 1.02
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.72 (95% CI: 3.54, 3.89)	3.60 (95% CI: 3.41, 3.79)	3.82 (95% CI: 3.64, 4.01)

**I have no choice but to go along with this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.40 ± 1.03	3.31 ± 1.09	3.42 ± 1.08

median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.40 (95% CI: 3.22, 3.59)	3.31 (95% CI: 3.11, 3.51)	3.42 (95% CI: 3.22, 3.61)

**I feel pressure to go along with this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.22 ± 1.11	3.28 ± 1.08	3.21 ± 1.12
median (iqr)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.22 (95% CI: 3.02, 3.42)	3.28 (95% CI: 3.09, 3.48)	3.21 (95% CI: 3.01, 3.42)

**I have too much at stake to resist this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.54 ± 1.01	3.55 ± 1.05	3.57 ± 1.00
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.54 (95% CI: 3.35, 3.72)	3.55 (95% CI: 3.36, 3.74)	3.57 (95% CI: 3.39, 3.75)

**It would be too costly for me to resist this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.58 ± 0.97	3.50 ± 1.06	3.57 ± 1.03
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.58 (95% CI: 3.41, 3.76)	3.50 (95% CI: 3.30, 3.69)	3.57 (95% CI: 3.39, 3.76)

**It would be risky to speak out against this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.07 ± 1.13	3.05 ± 1.12	3.14 ± 1.08
median (iqr)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.07 (95% CI: 2.86, 3.27)	3.05 (95% CI: 2.85, 3.25)	3.14 (95% CI: 2.94, 3.33)

**Resisting this change is not a viable option for me**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.53 ± 0.99	3.43 ± 1.06	3.60 ± 1.01
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.53 (95% CI: 3.35, 3.71)	3.43 (95% CI: 3.24, 3.62)	3.60 (95% CI: 3.42, 3.78)

**I feel a sense of duty to work towards this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.65 ± 0.95	3.46 ± 1.06	3.78 ± 1.01
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.65 (95% CI: 3.48, 3.82)	3.46 (95% CI: 3.27, 3.65)	3.78 (95% CI: 3.59, 3.96)

**I do not think it would be right of me to oppose this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.46 ± 1.05	3.36 ± 1.07	3.60 ± 1.08
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.46 (95% CI: 3.27, 3.65)	3.36 (95% CI: 3.17, 3.55)	3.60 (95% CI: 3.40, 3.79)

**I would not feel badly about opposing this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.15 ± 1.06	3.10 ± 1.18	3.52 ± 1.05
median (iqr)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.15 (95% CI: 2.96, 3.35)	3.10 (95% CI: 2.89, 3.32)	3.52 (95% CI: 3.33, 3.71)

**It would be irresponsible of me to resist this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.59 ± 0.94	3.44 ± 1.07	3.62 ± 1.07
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.59 (95% CI: 3.42, 3.76)	3.44 (95% CI: 3.25, 3.64)	3.62 (95% CI: 3.42, 3.81)

**I would feel guilty about opposing this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.16 ± 1.03	3.03 ± 1.08	3.42 ± 1.12
median (iqr)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	3.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.16 (95% CI: 2.98, 3.35)	3.03 (95% CI: 2.84, 3.23)	3.42 (95% CI: 3.22, 3.62)

**I do not feel any obligation to support this change**

Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.45 ± 0.97	3.28 ± 1.01	3.50 ± 1.13
median (iqr)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (2.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.45 (95% CI: 3.28, 3.63)	3.28 (95% CI: 3.10, 3.46)	3.50 (95% CI: 3.29, 3.70)

Table 31: Descriptive statistics per question – Video

## 9.3 Descriptive per Commitment to Change group

### 9.3.1 Medium – Email

	<b>Logos</b> DataA (N = 117)	<b>Ethos</b> DataA (N = 117)	<b>Pathos</b> DataA (N = 117)
<b>Affective commitment</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1.666667	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.75 ± 0.69	3.53 ± 0.79	3.69 ± 0.79
median (iqr)	3.83 (3.50, 4.00)	3.67 (3.00, 4.00)	3.83 (3.33, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.75 (95% CI: 3.62, 3.87)	3.53 (95% CI: 3.39, 3.68)	3.69 (95% CI: 3.55, 3.83)
<b>Continuance commitment</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1.666667	2	1.666667
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.41 ± 0.80	3.29 ± 0.78	3.28 ± 0.79
median (iqr)	3.50 (3.00, 4.00)	3.33 (2.67, 4.00)	3.33 (2.67, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.41 (95% CI: 3.27, 3.56)	3.29 (95% CI: 3.15, 3.44)	3.28 (95% CI: 3.14, 3.42)
<b>Normative commitment</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.34 ± 0.68	3.22 ± 0.70	3.43 ± 0.77
median (iqr)	3.50 (3.00, 3.83)	3.33 (2.67, 3.83)	3.33 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.34 (95% CI: 3.22, 3.47)	3.22 (95% CI: 3.09, 3.35)	3.43 (95% CI: 3.29, 3.57)
<b>Overall commitment</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	2	1.444444	1.444444
max	4.555556	4.5	4.777778



mean (sd)	3.50 ± 0.51	3.35 ± 0.58	3.47 ± 0.58
median (iqr)	3.61 (3.11, 3.89)	3.39 (3.00, 3.78)	3.56 (3.00, 3.89)
mean (CI)	3.50 (95% CI: 3.41, 3.59)	3.35 (95% CI: 3.25, 3.46)	3.47 (95% CI: 3.36, 3.57)

Table 32: Descriptive statistics - Email

### 9.3.2 Medium – Video

	<b>Logos</b> DataA (N = 117)	<b>Ethos</b> DataA (N = 117)	<b>Pathos</b> DataA (N = 117)
<b>Affective commitment</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.73 ± 0.76	3.58 ± 0.84	3.73 ± 0.83
median (iqr)	3.83 (3.33, 4.17)	3.83 (3.00, 4.00)	4.00 (3.17, 4.17)
mean (CI)	3.73 (95% CI: 3.59, 3.87)	3.58 (95% CI: 3.43, 3.73)	3.73 (95% CI: 3.58, 3.88)
<b>Continuance commitment</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1.5
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.39 ± 0.79	3.35 ± 0.88	3.42 ± 0.79
median (iqr)	3.50 (3.00, 4.00)	3.33 (3.00, 4.00)	3.50 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.39 (95% CI: 3.25, 3.53)	3.35 (95% CI: 3.19, 3.51)	3.42 (95% CI: 3.28, 3.56)
<b>Normative commitment</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1	1	1.666667
max	5	5	5
mean (sd)	3.41 ± 0.72	3.28 ± 0.76	3.57 ± 0.80
median (iqr)	3.50 (3.00, 3.83)	3.33 (2.83, 3.83)	3.67 (3.00, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.41 (95% CI: 3.28, 3.54)	3.28 (95% CI: 3.14, 3.42)	3.57 (95% CI: 3.43, 3.72)
<b>Overall commitment</b>			
Missing Values	0	0	0
min	1.444444	1.222222	1.666667
max	4.5	4.611111	5
mean (sd)	3.51 ± 0.54	3.40 ± 0.62	3.57 ± 0.62
median (iqr)	3.56 (3.17, 3.89)	3.44 (3.00, 3.89)	3.67 (3.22, 4.00)
mean (CI)	3.51 (95% CI: 3.41, 3.61)	3.40 (95% CI: 3.29, 3.52)	3.57 (95% CI: 3.46, 3.69)

Table 33: Descriptive statistics - Video

## 10. YouTube video statistics

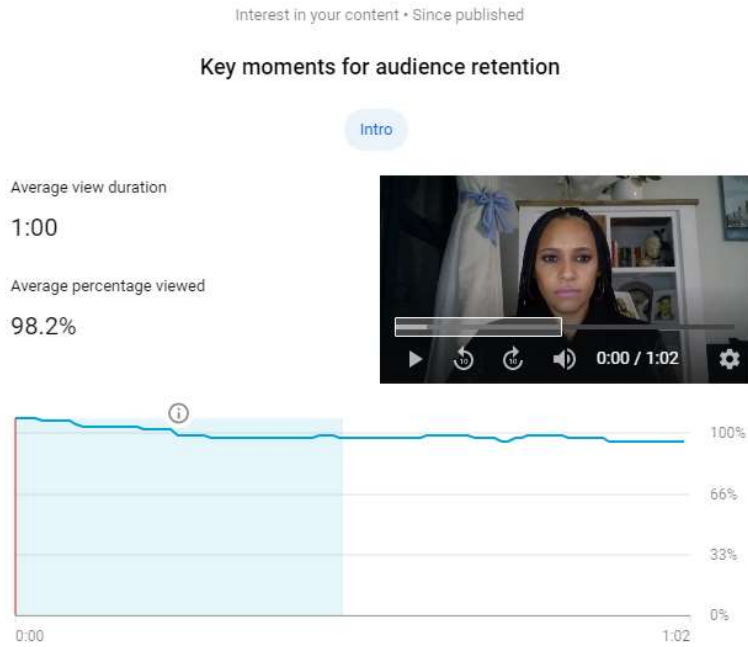


Figure 17: Logos video statistics

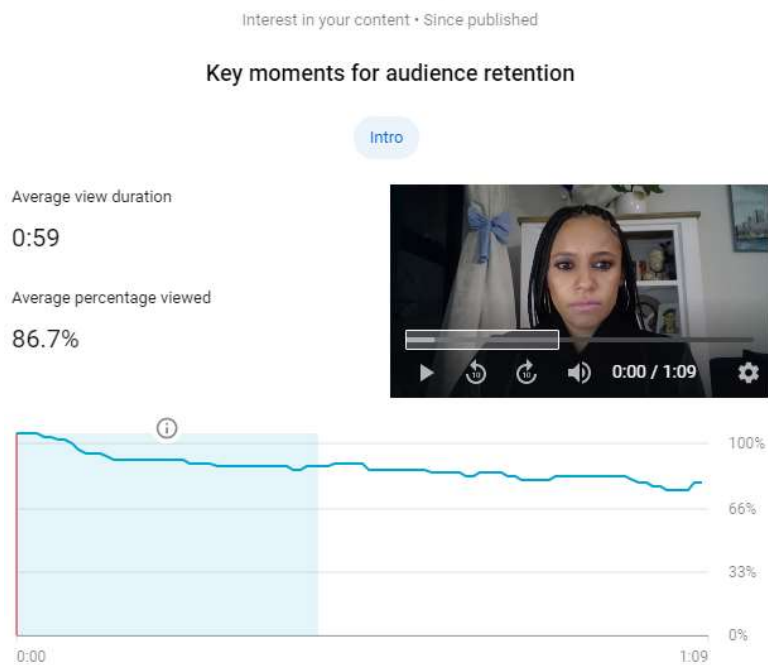


Figure 18: Ethos video statistics

Interest in your content • Since published

### Key moments for audience retention

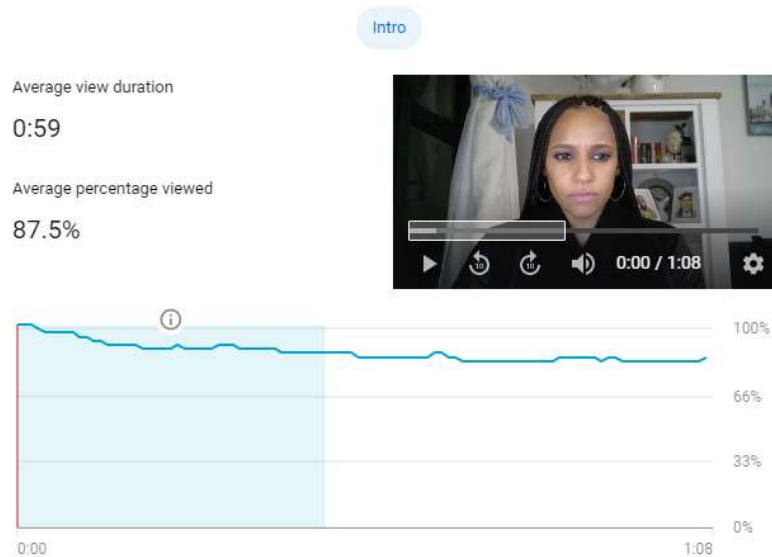


Figure 19: Pathos video statistics

## 11. Ethical Clearance

### 11.1 Approval

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

**Ethical Clearance  
Approved**

Dear Lauren Smith,

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.

[Ethical Clearance Form](#)

Kind Regards

Figure 20: Ethical clearance approval

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