Guidelines to facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy.

Guidelines to facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy

By

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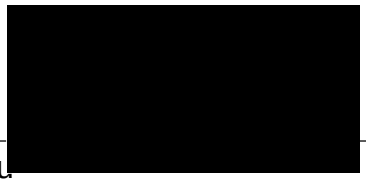

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my family, whose unwavering support and belief in my abilities have been my constant source of strength. I deeply appreciate your continuous support and understanding throughout the extensive hours of research and writing. Your encouragement has been invaluable, and this achievement would not have been attainable without your consistent guidance. I am truly thankful for the sacrifices you've made and the inspiration you've instilled in me during this academic journey.

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ABSTRACT

The South African automotive industry, pivotal to the nation's economy, confronts significant challenges, leading to a noticeable downturn in performance. Extensive research underscores the industry’s predicament, notably exemplified by a discernible drop in GDP contribution from 6.4% to 4.9% between 2019-2020 and a profound 7.8% contraction in production in 2022. These harsh conditions, deepened by the recent Covid-19 pandemic, have aggravated underlying issues, such as skills shortages, an innovation deficit, process inefficiencies, resistance to change, and a failure to align with evolving market dynamics. Amidst these challenges, this research paper tunnels into the multifaceted world of learning organisation strategy (LOS) implementation. Drawing insights from international and South African success cases, the study aimed to comprehend the intricacies of LOS adoption. The research journey encompassed analysing success cases, exploring the impact of LOS on worker performance and productivity, and formulating guidelines tailored to the South African automotive industry. Desktop research, employing a systematic approach, uncovered key insights from various success cases, both local and international. Thematic categorisation revealed three vital aspects: learning organisation strategy, employee performance and productivity, and the nuanced context of LOS in South Africa. The analysis showcased that organisations, both local and global, have successfully utilised specific features within LOS, leading to their achievements. From this study emerged an LOS adoption framework featuring six pivotal factors discussed in the upcoming chapters. It is essential to highlight that the research journey has not been one of mere exploration, but one of illumination. The guidelines set forth in this study have the potential to be the catalyst for transformative change within the South African

automotive industry, leading to a new era of learning, adaptation, and enduring success.

Keywords: *Guidelines, Continuous Learning, Learning Organisation, Organisational Learning, Success Cases, Worker Performance, Productivity, and Strategy.*

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GLOSSARY

LEARNING ORGANISATION:	An organisation that has the ability to create, gather, and distribute knowledge, and adapt to new information and insights, and characteristics of a learning organisation.
LEARNING ORGANISATION STRATEGY:	A strategy that ensures that knowledge is shared effectively within the organisation as well as occurring at an individual, group, intergroup and organisational level.

ABBREVIATIONS

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ITA	International Trade Administration
LO	Learning Organisation(s)
LOS	Learning Organisation Strategy
MIDP	Motor Industry Development Programme
NAAMSA	National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa
ROI	Return on Investment
SA	South Africa
SAAM	South African Automotive Masterplan
SANRAL	South African National Roads Agency Limited
TBP	Toyota Business Practices
WTO	World Trade Organisation

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the labour force has persistently evolved in the last ten (10) years due to the digital revolution, gradually competitive commercial landscape and growing complexity that are reshaping worker characteristics (Van Wyk, 2021: 794). Intangible resources, like expert workers, outstanding leadership, and added knowledge, are now the leading foundation for market capitalisation and significant employee percentages in institutions (Leitão, Pereira & Gonçalves, 2019: 2). The goal of the research will be to establish the guidelines required for overcoming factors hindering the learning organisation strategy's implementation. The following aspects will be discussed: the study's background, problem statement, literature review, and benefits of the research, as well as the research methodology that will be utilised to gather, analyse, and interpret the study results.

1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Tripathi and Sankaran (2021: 301) contend that, without research-based assessments of the outcomes linked to becoming a learning organisation, the strategy of a learning organisation is in danger of turning into some other management trend endorsed as a solution to several organisational problems. To survive the extremely competitive and unstable international marketplace, the adoption of a learning organisation strategy (LOS) enables an organisation to sustain its competitive advantage (Edwards, Sellnow, Sellnow, Iverson, Parrish & Dritz, 2021: 49). The supporters of a learning organisation strategy maintain that implementing strategies of a learning organisation promotes

collective knowledge acquisition, which eventually yields better performance gains within organisations (Khan & Ahmed, 2019: 1).

Few contributions in the literature on learning organisations are founded on practice because the majority are largely prescriptive or descriptive (Goh, 2019: 317). With fewer studies addressing the vital methods for establishing learning organisations, general approaches to assessment and the potential effect on performance, numerous deliberations centre around why learning is vital (Pham & Hoang, 2019: 259). Therefore, few current studies clarify the way the learning organisation strategy helps to achieve improvements in performance and productivity (Jerez-Gómez, Céspedes-Lorente & Perez-Valls, 2019: 189). Lee (2022: 67) acknowledged that there is limited evidence linking return on investment (ROI), learning and results, which convince businesspersons of the risk investment in the learning organisation strategy. The key research obstacle identified in the existing literature is about establishing the connections between learning organisation characteristics and organisational performance (Law & Chuah, 2019: 1442). For Waruwu et al. (2020: 378), the generation of a learning workplace atmosphere grounded in diffusion and the creation of knowledge helps an organisation position itself for continued improvement, productivity, increased worker capabilities and performance. While traditional firms are intended for effectiveness, learning organisations are intended for problem-solving (Bilginoğlu, 2019: 61).

According to the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (NAAMSA), the South African automotive industry consists of

manufacturers as well as exports of motor components and vehicles (NAAMSA, 2022). In 2020, the automotive industry in South Africa contributed about 4.9% of the gross domestic product (GDP), that is, 2.8% from manufacturing as well as 2.1% from retail, down from 6.4% in 2019 (Chigbu & Nekhwevha, 2022b: 726). In 2022, manufacturing production dropped by 7.8%, after the 0.6% downwardly revised decrease and 2.6% drop in market expectations. The automobile industry is the biggest manufacturing industry in the economy of South Africa, deriving about 18.7% of its additive value of the local manufacturing production from automotive as well as vehicle components (Redda & Surujlal, 2021: 208). Manufacturing continues to position the automobile industry and value chain as key players in the national industrialisation landscape (Sharma & Naude, 2021: 438). Hence, the declining performance of the automotive industry, while it is the largest in South African manufacturing, negatively impacts the country's economy.

Deloitte South Africa (2022) insists that, regardless of its vast employment potential, the automobile industry in South Africa faces various obstacles, including high costs of manufacturing, costly yet with raw materials of low-quality, increasing labour costs, and expensive and unpredictable electricity. The automobile industry suffers from the deprived enforcement of tax rules and standards, as well as increased dumping of very sub-standard counterfeits and imports (Tradingeconomics, 2022: 3). The argument is that the automobile industry must repeatedly reposition itself as some learning entity by discovering new markets as well as approaches to customer acquisition, satisfaction, and retention (Zondo, 2020: 2).

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

South Africa's automobile sector is now managing a confluence of issues, which range from shortages brought on by pandemics to increasing commodity costs. The automobile industry in South Africa faces various obstacles, including high costs of manufacturing, costly yet low-quality raw materials and increasing labour costs. The industry is confronting a variety of obstacles that must be overcome in order for the sector to keep its competitive advantages. The locally manufactured products are highly priced, thereby limiting the industry's competitiveness in regional markets as well as limiting the utilisation of the sector's capacity (Manufacturing and Industry Sector Report, 2013). According to Bell and Monaco (2021: 457), South Africa's automobile industry lacks purpose, interest, and enthusiasm, due to deficiencies in robust vision and leadership. Research on South Africa's automobile industry recommends the deliberate implementation of the learning organisation strategy to overcome challenges posed by low competition in both international and regional markets (Bam, De Bruyne & Laing, 2021: 410). The argument suggests that the industry must continuously reinvent itself as a learning entity by exploring new markets and adopting innovative customer acquisition, satisfaction, and retention approaches (Zondo, 2020: 2). To achieve this, the industry should benchmark and integrate exceptional ideas, gather crucial information from suppliers, employees, competitors, and customers, and conduct comprehensive economic and market analyses. This begs the following question: could it be that manufacturing companies have not intentionally accepted and implemented the learning organisation concept, as evidenced by their low and limited competitiveness in local and worldwide markets? The current study was aimed

at establishing guidelines to facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy.

1.4. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this research paper is to provide guidelines that facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy. In pursuit of this aim, the research objectives were deduced.

1.1.1. Research objectives

These study objectives are designed to dive deeply, analyse the multifaceted impact on organisational dynamics and, at the same time, to offer clear and practical insights to implement this strategy effectively. These objectives are:

- To analyse international and South African success cases and the key factors contributing to their achievements
- To establish the influence of a learning organisation strategy on worker performance and productivity
- To provide recommendations and guidelines that facilitate the adoption of a learning organisation strategy in the South African automotive industry

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main Question: What are the guidelines that can facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy?

For a more strategic and methodical approach, the main question will be reinforced by the subsequent sub-questions below:

- What are the current global success cases and key factors that contributed to their achievements?
- What are the local (South African) success cases and key factors that contributed to their achievements?
- What is the impact of a learning organisation strategy on worker performance and productivity?
- Which recommendations and guidelines can be derived from the case studies and be utilised in the South African automotive industry to facilitate the adoption of a learning organisation strategy?

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The significance of the research lies in the fact that it sought to discover recommendations that make it easier to adopt LOS to improve the overall performance of workers and their productivity. Because the findings of the research will be used to guide the formation of human resource policy, this will be advantageous to the management bodies of enterprises in the beneficiary industry. The findings are also expected to guide policy formulation and implementation in a variety of sectors and companies, allowing them to be more effectively operational. Considering the fact that the successful achievement of an organisation is dependent on the efforts of its workforce, this research will enable organisations to build their competitive advantages by implementing the learning organisation strategy in managing human resources.

The research will be useful to both the commercial and public sectors, since it will provide insights into the operational issues that are encountered by organisations and the ways in which these challenges may be mitigated to improve worker performance and productivity. The research findings of this study may be used by management to develop strategies that help towards the achievement of an organisation's competitive advantage, which in turn leads to improved worker performance and productivity. For the academic community, this research will be a great contribution to the existing knowledge body in the management field.

1.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

In brief, the aim of this paper is to add to previous research that has been done on providing recommendations and guidelines for facilitating the adoption of a learning organisation strategy in relation to supporting enhancements to worker performance and productivity. This chapter provided an overview of the research background, objectives, questions, and the study's significance. The following chapter will delve into the literature review, structured around the research questions that were posed.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Scholarly publications have extensively examined the theoretical and practical aspects of an organisational learning strategy, from the early 1960s. Nonetheless, the nature of an organisational learning strategy continues to be the subject of heated discussion (Borge, Filstad, Olsen & Skogmo, 2018: 401). In general, the available literature is based on theory rather than empirical evidence (Boydell, Pedler & Burgoyne, 2019: 463). The literature to be evaluated in this chapter is organised into four sections: current challenges in worker performance and the productivity of the automotive industry in South Africa, the impact of a learning organisation strategy (LOS) on worker performance and productivity, factors that may hinder the adoption of LOS and recommendations and guidelines for overcoming factors that may hinder the adoption of LOS.

2.2. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Source, scope, keywords, and time frame were used to identify and choose relevant material. Information regarding the LO approach and its impact on worker performance and productivity is widely accessible in the public domain, although under a variety of titles, such as knowledge management, innovation, knowledge networking, and harnessing collective intelligence (Pedler & Burgoyne, 2017: 5). Most of the existing literature, according to the researcher's review, discusses the LOS impact on worker performance and productivity in economically developed nations, with less attention paid to emerging nations, like South Africa. Information is readily available through databases such as Google Scholar, Wiley, ScienceDirect, the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) library services, and

Emerald. To determine which papers are eligible for review, the scope of the papers was evaluated based on whether they met the following criteria: being situated within the context of learning strategy as an organisation and demonstrating the impact of LOS on worker performance and productivity. Since 1990, knowledge has been mostly published in books, journals, and dissertations, and the notion of the concept of the learning organisation was made popular through the book authored by Peter M Senge in 1990. The book was titled: "The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation" (DiBella, 2019: 220). In 1978, Chris Arygris, a Harvard professor, wrote a book outlining the characteristics of organisational learning. However, the notion failed to gain the attention of corporations until Senge's 1990 publication, The Learning Organisation (Flood & Finnestrand, 2019: 205). De Geus coined the term "learning organisation" in 1997, when he published a book that drew parallels between a learning organisation and the higher-order learning features of individuals (Goh, 2019: 322).

2.3. IDENTIFYING AND OPERATIONALISING THE CONCEPTS

2.3.1. Learning Organisation Strategy

The concept of the learning organisation was formulated by applying the learning organisation (LO) idea to human resource management (Hong & Mak, 2019: 363). The term "learning organisation" refers to organisations that are adept at producing, acquiring, and disseminating knowledge in order to change their behaviours to reflect new information and insights (Kaminska & Borzillo, 2018: 95). A company that encourages and supports its employees' learning is described by the term "learning organisation strategy", which is relatively new in the management sciences (Kyoungshin & Zhenqiu, 2019: 371). The goal of the learning organisation approach

is to enable the continuous development of the organisation through individuals and their respective teams and as a whole by methodically integrating learning and work as an ongoing process (Lam, 2019: 174). In the light of this, the learning organisation approach views learning as a continuous process that is interwoven with employees' day-to-day tasks. In other words, the strategy makes sure that information is efficiently disseminated throughout the company and that learning occurs at all levels – individual, group, intergroup, and organisational. The learning organisation plan, according to Marquardt (2019: 112), offers a clear vision and fosters agreement about the development of the organisation's workforce.

An organisation may thus develop dynamic skills via the successful execution of the learning organisation strategy, allowing it to maintain its competitive edge (Reese, 2020: 11). Therefore, implementing a learning organisation approach encourages creativity and efficient change management. Given uncertain business contexts, an organisation's implementation of the learning organisation approach is crucial for fostering organisational resilience (Reese & Sidani, 2018: 357). For instance, the South African automotive sector is dealing with rapid technological change as new, more energy-efficient car models are released, including the usage of electricity and other cleaner forms of energy. Therefore, a learning organisation strategy's focus on ongoing and integrated learning is essential for fostering innovation and empowering businesses to take the initiative. The learning organisation approach improves strategic management and company agility, which has a favourable effect on employee performance and productivity (DiBella, 2019: 221).

The adoption and implementation of an organisational learning strategy can be argued to be essential in the readiness improvement of organisations in the motor industry to embrace and seek opportunities for change so that they can maintain their competitive advantage in the light of the increased competition caused by globalisation and disruptions in supply chains due to natural disasters. Continuous learning that results in organisational transformation is the stated promise of the definitions of learning organisations, and organisations are implicitly expected to learn how to adapt to change. Although efforts have been made to define LO, there is still uncertainty over the theory's weakly anchored guiding principles and the fact that it is difficult to quantify when an organisation has attained the status of a learning organisation (Doyle & Johnson, 2019: 4). Additionally, there has not been much progress made in resolving workplace requirements for LO deployment in the contemporary world of global competition (Boydell et al., 2019: 401).

2.3.2. Learning Organisation Dimensions

Senge (1990) highlighted five aspects, namely, systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, and team learning, as being integral to the process of organisational learning (DiBella, 2019: 222).

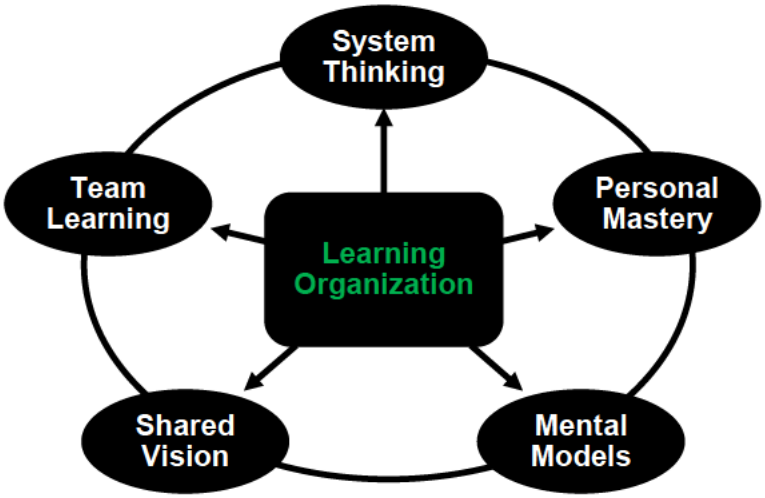

Figure 2.1 – Five disciplines of learning organisations by Senge

Source: Senge (1990) cited in Zeeman (2022)

2.3.2.1. Systems Thinking

The system perspective believes that employees inside an organisation have a common vision for the future of the company (Senge, 1990: 3). The notion of the learning organisation is founded on systems thinking, a conceptual framework that enables employees to view an organisation as a bounded entity (Boydell et al., 2019: 403). When a firm is viewed as a system composed of interconnected subsystems whose performance can be monitored with the use of information technology, systems thinking is applied (Rose, Dee & Leisyte, 2020: 94). Before an organisation can be considered a learning organisation, according to systems thinking, all the traits that enable a shared vision must be present; the lack of some of these characteristics results in the organisation failing to fulfil the learning-organisation standards (Rose et al., 2020: 95).

Nonetheless, several academics claimed that the traits are acquired gradually rather than instantaneously. Systems learning is the linchpin of the learning organisation

strategy, due to its capacity to perceive and solve organisational demands as a whole, as well as to integrate and align diverse business operations with the company's goal (Rose et al., 2020: 96). Therefore, systems thinking helps an organisation to develop a synergy in which personnel are engaged individually and collectively to achieve the organisation's vision. In other words, systems thinking increases collaboration and cooperation across teams and departments, ultimately boosting the collective and individual productivity and performance of workers.

2.3.2.2. Personal Mastery

Personal mastery represents the degree to which human capital is proactive and determined to achieve the strategic objectives of the organisation (Senge, 1990: 4). Own mastery entails continuously refining and refocusing one's personal vision, emotional intelligence, and reality-viewing skills (Marquardt, 2019: 113). Consequently, it encompasses emotional and social intelligence in addition to a worker's abilities and competence. Personal mastery is enhanced by an employee's dedication to continual learning, and this gives an organisation competitive benefits if its team is learning rapidly (DiBella, 2019: 221). Individual learning may be attained by workers' training and growth, in addition to ongoing self-improvement. Individual workers must be receptive to learning for it to occur (Hong & Mak, 2019: 364). Organisational knowledge is built by the individual learning of employees, and individual learning does convert into organisational learning (Flood & Finnestrand, 2019: 206). Therefore, knowledge exchange facilitates organisational learning.

According to Hong and Mak (2019: 366), learning at the workplace is primarily accidental; thus, it is imperative that the organisation builds a culture that prioritises

personal mastery by granting employees the liberty to complete their jobs. Personal mastery coming from individual learning that has been translated to organisational learning constitutes a learning organisation (Kaminska & Borzillo, 2018: 97). Building a corporate culture that promotes personal mastery enables employees to remain in a perpetual state of learning, hence fostering organisational change and ongoing innovation.

2.3.2.3. Mental Models

Mental models relate to established ideas, generalisations, and cognitive pictures that influence how employees comprehend reality (Kyoungshin & Zhenqiu, 2019: 372; DiBella, 2019: 223). Both individual employees and the entire organisation hold mental models, often referred to as *assumptions*. To transform into a learning organisation, these mental models need to be consistently questioned and challenged (Kaminska & Borzillo, 2018: 98). To build a learning organisation, it is essential that organisations replace norms and attitudes that strive to maintain the status quo with a culture that encourages enquiry and accepting change (Hong & Mak, 2019: 365). Therefore, organisations should have processes that enable them to identify and evaluate certain mental modes, so that undesirable values may be eliminated through the “unlearning process”. Individual employees must also be able to express their own thoughts in a way that positively influences others as they acquire new abilities and develop new perspectives (Lam, 2019: 176). In order to facilitate change, institutional reforms and organisational openness must be supported. Changes in the internal and external environment result in strategic alignment that is successful only when mental models are regularly challenged. Also, it may be claimed that questioning these mental models supports innovation

and change management and that an organisation can increase worker productivity and performance by employing the LO approach through good change management.

2.3.2.4. Shared Vision

Effective communication and the sharing of fresh knowledge among various groups of workers foster the development of a shared vision (Senge, 1990: 4). To motivate and elevate the teams to be more inventive, the concept of a shared vision largely depends on leadership ability (Reese, 2020: 12). Creating a shared vision is essential to encouraging employees to keep learning because it creates a shared identity that gives learning direction and motivation (Rose, Dee & Leisyte, 2020: 96). A good vision should be based on the unique views of employees at all organisational levels (Wanyeki, 2019: 71). Imposing the vision from the top down typically makes it more difficult to have a shared vision for a team and, for the concept of a shared vision to be successful, the organisational structure must be flatter and more decentralised for employees to have a feeling of affiliation with the company (Alerasoul, et al., 2021: 2). To put it another way, a sincere vision empowers employees to succeed and grow, which in turn fosters a favourable attitude towards the organisation's strategic goals. Additionally, leaders must be charismatic and possess the necessary abilities to transform their own goals into shared ones that will inspire colleagues to work with sincere devotion (Wanyeki, 2019: 75; Kyoungshin & Zhenqiu, 2019: 376). A shared vision may be seen as the glue that is necessary to forging the commitment necessary to increase worker performance and productivity.

2.3.2.5. Team Learning

Individual learning leads to team learning, which increases an organisation's capacity for problem-solving as a consequence of enhanced skills and knowledge among team members (Ghadermarzi, Ataei, Karimi & Norouzi, 2022: 144). So, a learning organisation encourages debate and sincere discussion in issue-resolution to support team learning. Open communication, shared understanding, and the development, acquisition, and sharing of information, as well as the application of the knowledge to increase worker performance and productivity, are common components of team learning (Kyoungshin & Zhenqiu, 2019: 379). Team learning, according to Ghadermarzi et al. (2022: 145), entails the coordination and expansion of the team's capability to attain the outcome desired by members. According to Caputo et al. (2019: 16), team learning comes from individual mastery and employee learning together, resulting in individual growth for each member in acquiring information and skills. To truly "think together" in order to address difficult organisational issues, team members must be able to suspend their preconceptions. The team's concentration would not be diverted by personality issues and pointless disputes as a result.

2.4. GLOBAL AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY GENERAL OUTLOOK

In terms of its capital-intensive nature and the number of jobs it generates, the automobile industry is a crucial sector that contributes significantly to national growth. Totalling around $4.5 trillion in 2019, the sector is responsible for about 5% of the worldwide economy (Modungwa, Rinke, Agigi & Mocke, 2021: 2) and provides work for about 80 million people (for instance, in the European Union, EU, region, it accounts for 6.1% of the workforce; Redda, & Surujlal, 2021: 212). A study done by

Redda and Surujlal (2021: 212) in the automotive sector indicated that production volumes from countries in the top 20 group account for 90% of all production globally, and the industry is regionalised into automotive hubs across different continents, organised according to production volumes.

EU nations serve as the global market's epicentre and the network's fulcrum. In numerous key export countries within the industry, such as Germany, France, and the USA, the potential export capacity operates at 75%–80%. In Eastern European nations like Turkey, Poland, and the Czech Republic, this percentage drops to 35%–40% (Reese, 2020: 7). By the end of quarter three of 2020, the Asia-Oceania region accounted for 56.3% of worldwide output, or around 29.3 million units (Reese, 2020: 9). The European Union accounts for 17.6%, while the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) regions are at 18.1%. Globally, China, the United States, Russia, South Korea, India, and Japan are the most important markets for automobiles (Redda & Surujlal, 2021: 212), whereas developed nations in Europe are the highly impactful and significant actors in the European market, for instance, France, Germany, Spain, and Italy.

However, the worldwide automobile sector has been under pressure by the beginning of 2021 owing to declining stability in the economic, implementations of commercial ratio, regulatory limits, issues in supply and delivery procedures, and second- and third-wave worries of the Covid-19 epidemic (Modungwa et al., 2021: 3). Due to lowering capacity usage rates and rising fixed costs brought on by the reduction in demand and production, the Covid-19 epidemic continues to represent a danger to the automobile sector (Redda & Surujlal, 2021: 211). The result was a

25% drop in worldwide car output in 2020 and a loss of almost $5.7 billion in global commerce, with a $2.5 billion loss for the EU alone (Reese, 2020: 8). In the EU region, automotive main and sub-industry manufacturers invested a record high of €60.9 billion in research and development activities in 2020 (Reese, 2020: 15). In order to generate economies of scale and control the high expenses associated with the industry's digital transformation process, as well as keep up with growing consumer demand, the industry's major and sub-industry businesses have begun merging and making large-scale acquisitions (Bilginoğlu, 2019: 64). Examples include the merger of French automaker Peugeot-Citroen and Italian automaker Fiat Chrysler Automobiles in 2020, as well as the incorporation of the Swedish Volvo firm under the Chinese-based Geely brand that also took place in 2020. The 2018 signing of a cooperation agreement for next-generation automobiles between the German-based BMW group and the Daimler firms may be seen as an example of a significant collaboration in the automotive industry globally. From 2020, the global automobile industry felt the full force of the Covid-19 pandemic, but it was able to recover quickly and relatively unscathed because of the flexibility and adaptability of the supply-chain models it had created over the years (Modungwa et al., 2021: 5).

2.5. GLOBAL AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY TRENDS

After many years of decline, through which the industry experienced a 0.6% shrinkage from 2017 to 2022, the automotive manufacturing market worldwide was roughly worth $2.9 trillion in the year 2022 (Modungwa et al., 2021: 8). The Covid-19 epidemic had a negative effect on the economy, and this reflected a drop that was more rapid than that of the economy as a whole. Between 2020 and 2030, the

sector is expected to continue expanding at 3.71%, reaching a total of 122.83 million units, a considerable increase from 2020's 85.32 million units (Modungwa et al., 2021: 8). In terms of market size, the automobile manufacturing sector is currently holding the top position relative to other manufacturing sectors worldwide. The market is divided into major segments based on the kinds of cars, including gasoline, diesel, natural gas, electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid vehicles, plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and mild hybrid vehicles (Ogueyungbo, et al., 2020: 18). Diesel and gasoline cars will continue to be significant until the end of the decade at the very least, despite the global transition to cleaner energy (Plumer & Tabuchi, 2021). While the global automotive industry works to mitigate the Covid-19 pandemic's destructive effects and reactivate the sector at maximum capacity, it is seen that a significant amount of time is focused on transformative activities in technological and organisational domains emerging concurrently to satisfy the demand of new segment users in recent generations and aligning with certain tendencies expected for the near future of the industry (Nayak et al., 2021). The primary categories into which the changes in the global automobile sector may be divided are as follows: the advancement of autonomous driving and connected-vehicle technologies, as well as the evolution of in-car entertainment and communication systems, environmentally friendly new generation vehicles and the incorporation of cutting-edge industrial technology (Czerwinski, 2021: 67). Expectations in terms of security and environment change on the supplier side of the sector are one of the most significant factors causing these shifts (Gohoungodji, N'Dri, Latulippe & Matos, 2020: 127).

Automobile manufacturers have been compelled to produce environmentally friendly, innovative and highly dependable services and products to satisfy the expectations resulted from the shift in social increasing need for renewable energy sources, increased environmental awareness, and the conservation of natural resources (Modungwa et al., 2021: 9). Companies are forced to reduce costs due to additional applications made to intensify competition and meet shifting consumer expectations. Companies also intend to become market leaders in the highly competitive global market and to strengthen their brand values by developing products catering to the demands of the emerging generation of consumers (Ogueyungbo et al., 2020: 18). It is envisaged that businesses involved in the software and electronics sectors will be added to the traditional core industrial and supplier networks throughout this transition process (Rizos et al., 2016). On the current value chain, it is anticipated that this circumstance would result in significant changes that may result in mergers and new sources of capital.

2.6. CURRENT STATUS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

According to the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (NAAMSA), the automotive industry in South Africa consists of manufacturers and motor-component exporters and vehicles (NAAMSA, 2022: 2). In 2020, the contribution of the automotive industry in South Africa was about 4.9% of gross domestic product (GDP), that is, 2.8% from manufacturing as well as 2.1% from retail, down from 6.4% in 2019 (Chigbu & Nekhwevha, 2022: 726). In 2022, manufacturing production dropped by 7.8%, after the 0.6% downwardly revised decrease and 2.6% drop in market expectations. The drop reflects the adverse

effect of bad flooding and extreme load-shedding. The main declines occurred in the production of accessories, parts, motor vehicles and other equipment in transport connected with the forced provisional Toyota plant shutdown (-28.6%) (Statistics South Africa, 2022).

There was a -10.3% decline in the production of chemical products, petroleum, plastic, and rubber products, as well as a -3.7% decline in beverages and food (Tradingeconomics, 2022: 2). The basic steel and iron, non-ferrous metal products, machinery and metal products declined by -4.4%, while, on the seasonally familiar monthly setting, manufacturing production declined by 5.4% compared to the 2% fall in market estimations (Martin, 2022: 13). The statistics above reflect the severe effect of the Covid-19 situation, restrictions and country lockdown on automotive retail and manufacturing in South Africa.

The automobile industry holds the position of being the largest manufacturing sector in South Africa's economy, contributing approximately 18.7% of its value addition to the local manufacturing output through automotive and vehicle components (Redda & Surujlal, 2021: 208). Manufacturing continues to establish the automobile industry and its value chain as crucial participants in the national industrialisation landscape (Sharma & Naude, 2021: 438). According to the International Trade Administration (ITA), the automotive industry in South Africa is a leading visible sector that receives foreign direct investments (FDI), with R2.4 billion in component-sector investment and seven (7) OEM investments worth R9.2 billion in 2020 alone (ITA, 2022). The significant investment in promoting domestic value-addition and technological embodiment.

Deloitte South Africa (2022: 1) insists that, regardless of its vast employment potential, the automobile industry in South Africa faces various obstacles, including high costs of manufacturing, costly raw materials yet with low-quality, increasing expensive, and labour costs and unpredictable electricity. The automobile industry suffers from the deprived enforcement of tax rules and standards as well as increased dumping of very sub-standard counterfeits and imports (Tradingeconomics, 2022: 2).

The automobile industry cannot prepare for the intended change-oriented atmosphere unless the vision of the industry embodies openness and flexibility to new methods, styles and ideas (Ikome & Laseinde, 2020: 219). According to Modungwa, Rinke, Agigi and Mocke (2021: 1), there is continued change mismanagement in South Africa's automobile industry, particularly a failure to recognise rising paradoxes as well as diversity in institutional life. The automobile industry is failing to appreciate the paradoxes as well as diversity in institutional life in the marketplace context and tries to focus its strength on meeting the set vision and mission (PwC South Africa, 2022: 2). Therefore, the automobile industry in South Africa lacks an undoubtedly pronounced vision, which helps the personnel and stakeholders to work through any messiness, the disorder that deceptively conflicting data, activities, and concepts can truly engender (Gonyora, Migiro, Mashau & Ngwenya, 2021: 1).

South Africa's automobile industry is short of a client-centred strategy, which is closely backed by all architectural elements of the organisation (Deloitte South

Africa, 2022: 3). Zondo (2020: 1) suggests that capacity building of the industry must essentially involve more than the present introduction of technologies, rightsizing or even re-engineering of commercial processes. Effective management of change requires the industry to identify existing gaps in the architecture elements and business strategy (Smail, 2021: 173). The most critical aspect the industry has to concentrate on is the gaps between its overall strategy and systems of human resources.

The systems of human resources have an important impact on employee performance and behaviour (Schutte, Otto & Van Schalkwyk, 2020: 110). Therefore, it is vital the automobile industry modified the systems accordingly. Chigbu and Nekhwevha (2022: 726) provide that a common misunderstanding is a failure of firms to comprehend that organisational culture has some direct effect on their bottom line. Automobile firms in South Africa have failed to appreciate that their culture is modifiable over time to support closely the overall organisational strategy. International firms like DuPont consciously concentrate on maintaining and creating an organisational culture, which promotes employee innovation. The DuPont company achieves tangible outcomes by creating clear measures and guidelines on channelling creativity, and regularly holding creativity training and meetings to spur process and product development among employees (DuPont, 2022: 1).

Githuku, Kinyua and Muchemi (2022: 39) find that companies in South Africa's automobile industry need to, therefore, embrace client and employee involvement in company management to hear and implement their ideas. Learning organisation strategy requires the inclusion of stakeholders, employees and technical experts in

order to not only attain a completely fresh viewpoint, sponsorship and needed action to the prevailing issues but also progressive measurement of outcomes (Chigbu & Nekhwevha, 2022: 280). Organisational culture is both an output and input because the features of each architectural element determine the cultural characteristics of an organisation. As the learning organisational culture evolves gradually through modification of the suitable architecture elements, the firm's performance metrics will drive needed performance as well as shape worker behaviour (Shvetsova, Tanubamrungsuk & Lee, 2021: 17).

A firm has to put employees through laborious training curricula and establish a workplace environment, which adopts the "up or out" career policy. The philosophy creates zero-sum office situations wherein individuals vie for leadership rank in particular time periods. Tolmay and Antwerpen (2021: 409) find that the absence of competition in the automobile industry halts any teamwork, information sharing, and knowledge attainment among employees. Without competition, the industry cannot create environments where mistakes amount to a learning experience (Agbo, 2020: 585). Employees are not assuming responsibility or process management in the production of automobile services or products, including individual behaviours. Such practices have generated difficulty in service or product change and the realisation of client requirements. South Africa's automobile industry lacks specific, clear, attainable and measurable goals. The current objectives are short of achieving digital business strategies and client needs (Ikome, Laseinde & Katumba, 2021: 263). According to Deloitte South Africa (2022: 1), the translation of organisational metrics and goals to teams and individuals is not only a stumbling barrier to implementation but also one of the most complex management undertakings in the

South African automobile industry. Hence, this study demonstrates the impact of the learning organisation strategy on employee performance and productivity in South Africa's automotive industry.

2.7. CHALLENGES IN WORKER PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY

Keeping the focus on the South African automotive sector, Deloitte South Africa (2022: 1) maintains that, despite its enormous employment potential, this sector confronts a number of challenges, including high production prices, expensive but low-quality raw materials, rising labour costs, and expensive and unreliable power. Due to lax enforcement of tax laws and regulations, as well as increasing imports and counterfeit goods of very low quality, the vehicle sector suffers (Tradingeconomics, 2022: 2). Studies on the local car industry recommend the deliberate application of the learning organisation model in order for the sector to withstand the low levels of competition in global and regional marketplaces (Bam, De Bruyne & Laing, 2021: 410). According to the concept, the car industry must continually reinvent itself as a learning organisation by identifying new markets and methods for acquiring, satisfying, and retaining customers (Zondo, 2020: 2). As a result, the sector must set standards for itself and/or adopt innovative concepts, gather crucial data from vendors, staff, rival businesses, and clients, and conduct economic and market research. Due to a lack of strong vision and leadership, according to Bell and Monaco (2021: 457), there is no purpose, interest, or enthusiasm in South Africa's vehicle sector.

Without a vision that encompasses flexibility and openness to new approaches, styles, and ideas, the car industry cannot prepare for the expected change-oriented

environment (Ikome & Laseinde, 2020: 219). Modungwa, Rinke, Agigi, and Mocke (2021: 1) claim that there is ongoing change mismanagement in the South African automotive sector, specifically a failure to acknowledge the escalating paradoxes as well as institutional life's variety. In the framework of the marketplace, the automotive industry struggles to understand the contradictions and variety in institutional existence and instead strives to concentrate its resources on achieving the established vision and goal (PwC South Africa, 2022). Since apparently contradicting facts, actions, and conceptions may actually produce disorder, the car sector in South Africa lacks a clearly defined vision that aids the staff and stakeholders in working through any messiness (Gonyora, Migiro, Mashau & Ngwenya, 2021: 1).

The South African automotive sector lacks a client-centred approach that is strongly supported by all organisational architecture components (Deloitte South Africa, 2022). Zondo (2020: 1) contends that expanding industrial capacity must entail more than the current adoption of technology, rightsizing, or even re-engineering of business procedures. The industry must determine where there are current gaps in the architectural elements and business strategy for effective change management (Smail, 2021: 173). The gaps between the sector's overall strategy and methods for managing human resources are the most important thing to focus on.

Employee behaviour and performance are significantly influenced by human-resource management systems (Schutte, Otto & Van Schalkwyk, 2020: 110). The vehicle industry must thus modify the systems in accordance. The failure of businesses to recognise that organisational culture has some direct impact on their

bottom line is cited by Chigbu and Nekhwevha (2022: 726) as a prevalent misperception. Automobile businesses in South Africa have failed to recognise how culture may be changed over time to closely align with organisational goals. An organisational culture that encourages employee creativity is something that multinational companies like DuPont intentionally work to preserve and develop. The DuPont Company produces observable results by a) establishing precise benchmarks and standards on how to channel creativity and b) routinely having creativity meetings and training sessions to encourage staff to develop new processes and products (DuPont, 2022: 3).

According to Githuku, Kinyua, and Muchemi (2022: 39), enterprises in the South African automotive sector must embrace client and employee engagement in corporate management in order to hear and act upon their suggestions. In order to get a wholly new perspective, sponsorship, and necessary response to the current challenges, as well as the progressive measurement of outcomes, a learning organisation strategy necessitates the engagement of stakeholders, workers, and technical specialists (Chigbu & Nekhwevha, 2022: 280). The qualities of each architectural component define the cultural traits of an organisation, making organisational culture both a product and an input. The firm’s performance measures will drive necessary performance and shape employee behaviour as the learning organisational culture gradually changes through the alteration of the appropriate architectural features (Shvetsova, Tanubamrungsuk & Lee, 2021: 17).

Employees must go through arduous training programmes required by the company, and the "up or out" career policy must be implemented in the workplace.

The idea produces conditions in the workplace where there is zero-sum competition for leadership positions within specific time periods. The absence of competition in the car sector, according to Tolmay and Antwerpen (2021: 409), prevents people from working together, sharing information, and gaining expertise. Without competition, the sector cannot provide conditions in which errors serve as teaching opportunities (Agbo, 2020: 585). In the creation of vehicle services or goods, employees do not take responsibility for process management or individual behaviours. These actions have made it challenging to alter services or products or to satisfy customer demands. Goals that are precise, clear, realistic, and quantifiable are lacking in South Africa's automotive sector. To meet customer requirements and digital business plans, the present targets fall short (Ikome, Laseinde & Katumba, 2021: 263). Deloitte South Africa (2022) asserts that one of the most challenging management tasks in this sector is the translation of organisational measurements and goals to teams and people. This translation is not simply a barrier to execution. This study shows how a learning organisation strategy can impact worker productivity and performance in South Africa's automotive sector.

2.8. FACTORS INFLUENCING LEARNING ORGANISATION ADOPTION

2.8.1. Leadership

According to Kaminska and Borzillo (2018: 32), leadership is a component in effective learning organisations. Leaders must always encourage a learning atmosphere. Independence is crucial. The leaders must begin paying attention to the changing environment and delegate their directing power to the supervised (Hong & Mak, 2019: 366). According to Czerwinski (2021: 68), leadership in learning organisations differed from that seen in conventional organisations. Transactional

leadership as well as transformational leadership are likely to be found in learning organisations. Leaders in learning organisations, according to Flood and Finnestrand (2019: 207) should be capable of conceptualising, simplifying, and instilling motivation in others. These qualities of a transformative leader are crucial. Hong and Mak (2019: 366) addressed the responsibilities of administrators in establishing learning organisations, emphasising the need for leaders who might inspire organisational innovation. According to Hong and Mak (2019: 365), to create a learning organisation, a person should possess the capacity to become a change agent. Leadership styles, such as transactional and transformational, are crucial for creating and sustaining learning organisations.

Additionally, Marquardt (2019: 115) used 32 university staff members from universities in Australia to conduct a qualitative study of how Australian universities can become learning organisations. She discovered that leadership was a crucial component in helping Australian universities become learning organisations. Tripathi and Sankaran (2021: 311) investigated elements aiding the learning structure of public-health centres at 235 centres, and the outcome of the data analysis utilising multiple regression also supported the importance of leadership. As a result, leaders and management are crucial in the process of creating a learning company because they increase access to resources, give workers more authority, and let them be in charge of keeping track of their performance.

2.8.2. Organisational Culture

According to Czerwinski (2021: 68), organisational culture might develop an effective learning organisation. Arun-Kumar and Paul (2020: 162) hypothesised that

a learning organisation was impacted by a learning culture. An effective learning company must change its organisational culture in order to encourage staff members to share knowledge. As everyone is getting into the same boat, it is important to stress the shared benefits of harmonious collaboration, growth, and shared understanding across all staff members and departments. If an organisation is effective and well-organised, everyone will profit. The absence of or low levels of staff and colleague trust cannot support a learning environment. Individuals' acquired knowledge will not be recognised, shared, or transferred (Van Wyk, 2021: 796).

Moreover, Van Dyk and Balcorta (2020: 57) did research on leadership, organisational culture, learning organisations, and work satisfaction employing 134 employees in the industrial sector. Czerwinski (2021: 69) discovered that organisational culture had a favourable impact on learning organisations. Research on organisational culture and leader behaviour in the context of learning organisation growth was done, comprising a sample of 550 management and staff members from both public and private institutions. The outcome demonstrated a direct impact of organisational culture on the learning organisation. So, by creating an incentive structure that emphasises paying individuals for creativity, learning, and activities connected to knowledge development, organisational learning may be fostered.

2.8.3. Technology Utilisation

Information technology is a crucial tool for learning organisations, which means that they rely heavily on current technology that is precise, accessible, easy to share,

and quick (Van Dyk & Balcorta, 2020: 57). Technology makes it easier to adapt to change and boosts productivity, which in turn enables businesses to better meet the demands of both customers and employees. Information technology implementation, such as creating a web forum for employees to share their working knowledge and post new helpful articles that improve their work, promotes learning organisations. In a particular organisation where technology is used to improve their work, new information is constantly developed and employee self-learning and self-development are also sustainably improved (Van Wyk, 2021: 697). The research by Rose et al. (2020: 86) had a sample that included 70 commercial entities and the outcome demonstrated that team management and knowledge management technologies could forecast if an organisation will become a learning one. Research was done by Waruwu et al. (2020: 390) on a few factors that have an impact on learning organisations. Private-sector training staff members made up the research sample. The data was analysed using a multiple regression analysis. The results suggested that the internet could potentially explain the variance within the learning organisation.

2.8.4. Knowledge Management

Several academics have discussed the goals of knowledge management in the same context, stating that it is a kind of management process or instrument for guiding organisations towards becoming learning organisations (Sidani & Reese, 2018b: 92). Knowledge management aims to transform the working paradigm into an active-working one, which is beneficial for boosting organisational competitiveness. An organisation that has a strong capacity to expand and create knowledge based on its accumulated knowledge and experience may optimise its

competitiveness and, in the end, can transform into a learning organisation. According to a hypothesis of Tripathi and Sankaran (2021: 309), if knowledge management was seriously and consistently encouraged and this resulted in the company becoming a learning organisation, employee performance may be enhanced. In order to do this, internal knowledge management has to be well-organised for real and ongoing learning. Knowledge management is a key instrument for organisations to use to fulfil their three goals: working goal, goal for developing their people resources, and goal for becoming a learning organisation (Sathasivam et al., 2021: 856). Moreover, Sathasivam et al. (2021: 847) studied the possibility for firms to become learning organisations. The research group included 478 employees from 17 hospitals who were involved in a knowledge management initiative. The outcome showed that knowledge management is capable of foreseeing the learning organisation. Augustine's (2020: 99) research on management and organisation indicated that knowledge management is expected to develop into a learning organisation.

2.9. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter elaborated on the literature review that identified crucial concepts pertaining to the guidelines for enhancing the implementation of the learning organisation strategy within South Africa's automotive sector. In the earlier research, the learning organisation strategy was considered to be simple and easy to implement. However, the current literature on learning organisations views it as a heterogeneous phenomenon, a deeper concept, and one that is richer in terms of internal adaptation stemming from external environmental challenges and heightened competition from organisational rivals.

On the question of whether learning organisational techniques can assure and improve worker productivity, there are still competing schools of thought, and the points of view that are presented in the relevant literature are still confined to particular geographic regions or business sectors. The upcoming chapter will provide a comprehensive and detailed explanation of the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of the research process employed in this study. It outlines the research methods used for data collection and analysis, accompanied by the rationale for their selection. The description of the research process encompasses the various stages followed during the study. The methods covered in this chapter include qualitative research, sampling techniques, data-collection procedures, ethical considerations, and data-analysis methods. The role of the researcher within the interpretive paradigm will also be located. The chapter will end by discussing how validity and reliability were ensured in the study.

3.2. RESEARCH APPROACH

3.2.1. Research Method

For this study, the adopted research approach was of a qualitative nature. According to Raqib (2019: 31), this type of research approach is characterised by a proper contextualisation of the research problem and fully comprehending its gravity. Qualitative research, according to Salmona, Lieber and Kaczynski (2019: 93), is a multidimensional research method that involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach to investigating a particular problem. According to Saunders and Lewis (2018: 162), qualitative research is effective in addressing a research problem through a thorough reflection of the gathered data. In-depth data gathering will be crucial for finding holistic and realistic solutions to the research problem (Mohajan, 2018: 60). Thus, the qualitative methodology enabled the researcher to thoroughly investigate the effect that a learning organisation strategy may have on worker performance and productivity.

3.2.2. Research Philosophy

Since the nature of notions such as culture, motivation, leadership, and performance are a product of people's personal perceptions of the world, the study utilised an interpretive research philosophy. The philosophy uses a subjective research approach to incorporate participant experiences and embedding their personal positions in the research process rather than entirely detaching from it (Raqib, 2019: 39). During the data-gathering and analysis procedure, the study allocated personal interpretations of research trends and experiences. The study used a narrative approach to connect and provide guidelines that can facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy in South Africa's automotive sector, stressing differences and similarities as well as the researcher's thoughts on the limitations and usefulness of gathered data.

3.3. RESEARCH STRATEGY

The research strategy serves as a guiding framework for the collection and analysis of data, aligning with the research methodology (Saunders & Lewis, 2018: 151). As a result, the credibility of research outcomes is intricately tied to the chosen research strategy. A visual representation of the research strategy is provided in the following figure.

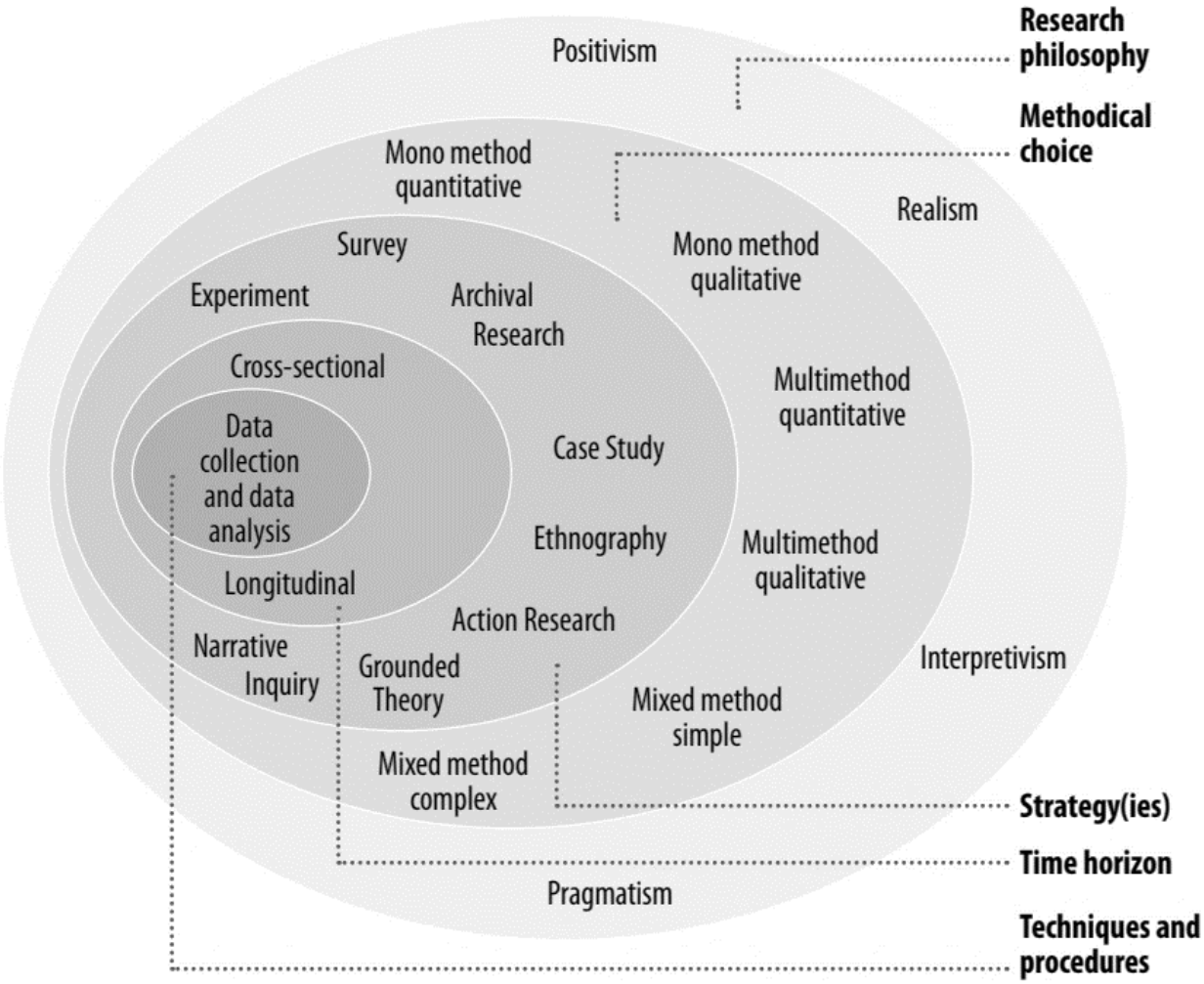

Figure 3.1 – The research onion

Source: Saunders, et al. (2019: 130)

The research strategy components include research design, sampling strategy, data analysis and strategies to guarantee the rigour and quality of the research process. To accomplish the study's main objectives mentioned above, desk research as well as judgemental/purposive sampling were used, as elaborated upon below.

3.3.1. Desk Research

The research adopted desk research by surveying the literature from the gathered secondary data that was necessary to investigate the influence of the learning organization strategy on worker performance and productivity. Hence, data required to fulfil the study's objectives was acquired through desk research. Desk research provided a wider breadth in terms of the scope of data that was gathered which the researcher could not have generated as a result of time and resource constraints, hence justifying the use of the broad strategy. In addition, desk research was chosen due to the vast availability of literature, as well as the fact that desk research provides broader insights relating to the research problem, by analysing trends of data findings (Saunders & Lewis, 2018: 112).

3.3.2. Sampling

When doing research, several methods of sampling are feasible; however, qualitative researchers often focus on very small samples (Emory & Cooper, 2017: 142). In general, credible sources of data should be used to increase the trustworthiness of the results (Kemp, 2018: 37). The study's literature was selected using two non-probability sampling methods: purposive and snowball sampling. The researcher carefully selected literature capable of providing useful secondary data using purposive sampling. The scholarly articles, books and dissertations were selected by considering the extent to which they were capable of providing meaningful and trustworthy data, as they would also contribute towards giving a variety of perspectives (Goodwin, 2019: 98). According to Kemp (2018: 31), heterogeneity sampling gives broader insights into the problem under investigation. The diversity of purposive sampling technique ensured that essential variations of

surveyed literature provided different insights as much as possible (Goodwin, 2019: 53). Thus, infusing the heterogeneity technique with purposive sampling aided in obtaining unique and common data patterns (Malhotra, 2019: 281).

The researcher used snowball sampling after first utilising purposive sampling by looking for possible sources of data from the references and footnotes of identified literature. Thus, the initially identified sources of data were utilised in selecting other subsequent data sources. The data saturation threshold was achieved at 20 sources of data that were consulted and the researcher found new emerging themes. As such, the inference was that no additional data sources were required. Thus, the sampling procedure was applicable for the achievement of the research objectives indicated above.

3.3.3. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis describes methods for closely examining data in order to create knowledge to better comprehend the phenomena under investigation (Malhotra, 2019: 87). Information must be produced and processed in order for the audience to comprehend it (Saunders & Lewis, 2018: 89). Using Clarke and Braun's (2013) thematic analysis, the collected data was coded and analysed in themes (Goodwin, 2019: 313), aimed at providing guidelines that facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy. The collected data was analysed by carefully reviewing the secondary data to identify similar patterns. Based on themes, the researcher generated patterns and analysed these data patterns to determine and assess the impact of a learning organisation strategy on worker performance and productivity. The appropriate approach for this research was thematic analysis because it enhanced the description of the linkages in the gathered data (Malhotra,

2019: 29). The process of data analysis followed these phases: Phase 1. Data Familiarisation, Phase 2. Initial code generation, Phase 3. Searching for themes, Phase 4. Reviewing themes, Phase 5. Defining and naming theme and, finally, Phase 6. Creating the report. These phases can be illustrated in the below figure:

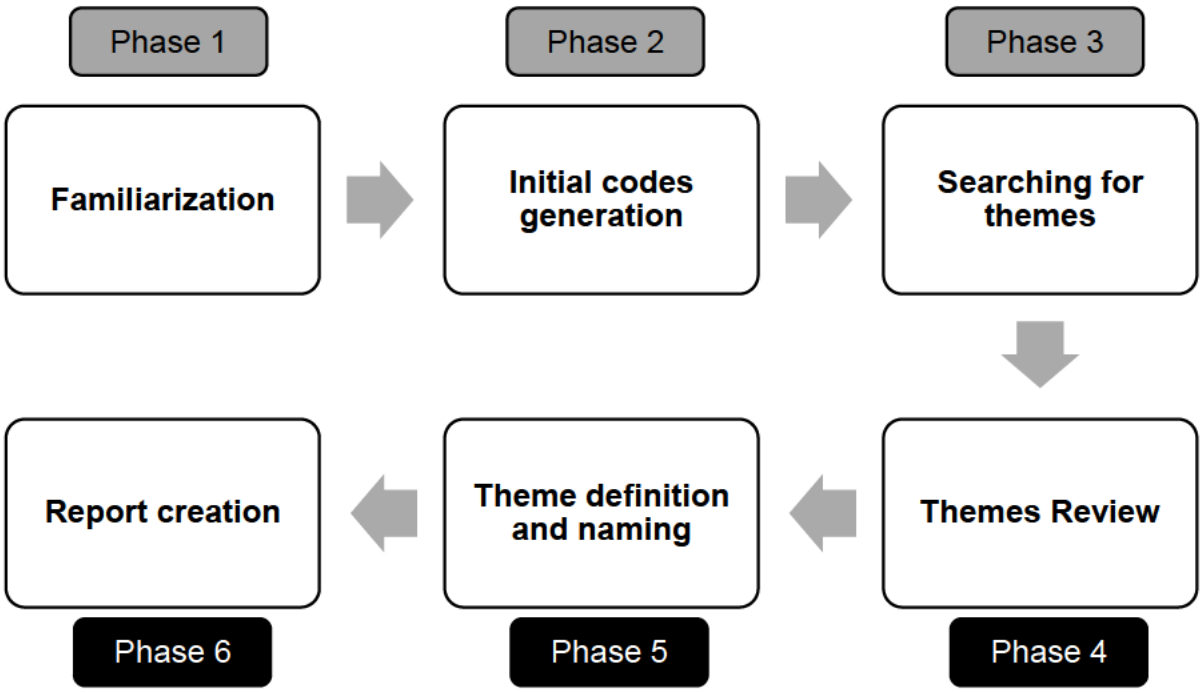

Figure 3.2 – Data analysis phases

3.3.4. Data Quality Assurance Strategy

To ensure the validity of the study findings, specific strategic criteria were maintained; these were, namely, credibility, transferability, reliability and confirmability. This section describes the strategies employed to ensure the quality of the secondary data used in the study.

I. **Credibility:** Applying appropriate research methods and aligning the research design with the research objectives and data-collection methods, considering time and resource limitations (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018: 419). Thus, only the literature with relevant data was selected using purposive sampling. To further ensure credibility, only data from credible sources was gathered. These are sources such as peer-reviewed articles, textbooks and dissertations found on Google Scholar, Wiley, ScienceDirect, Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) library services, and Emerald Publishing.

II. **Transferability:** By utilising data from diverse sources. This included gathering information from related studies conducted in the South African automotive industry and similar studies conducted worldwide inside and outside of the automotive industry.

III. **Dependability:** Transparency in gathering the data as well as selecting the research methods best suited to answer the research questions (Beins & McCarthy, 2018: 79). The findings of the study were matched to secondary data to guarantee that interpretations of data were based on selected secondary data. Data dependability was ensured by explicitly outlining the methods used for selecting and analysing the data in the research.

IV. **Confirmability:** Use of methods that were deemed most suitable based on previous empirical studies and theory. The researcher carefully considered the reasons for using specific research methods and compared them to the study objectives. In addition, the researcher maintained an auditable trail of the research process, providing evidence to support the findings and interpretations.

3.4. VARIANTS

3.4.1. Literature Survey

A literature survey encompasses an examination of books, records, scholarly articles, and other pertinent data sources pertaining to a studied phenomenon. This is done to offer a comprehensive overview of these sources, considering aspects like scope, publication timeline, and utilised research methodologies (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018: 321). In this study, the literature survey helped in determining the availability and accessibility of secondary sources that were used. The selection of articles was based on criteria such as their relevance in addressing the research problem, the geographical context of the previous studies, and the publication timeframe. Initially, the study concepts' keywords were utilised to conduct a literature search across the internet and major academic publishing houses. The aim was to locate sources that contained the most pertinent data.

The literature survey helped the researcher to get more insight into the field of research in terms of availability as well as accessibility of data in the right quantities and quality (Beins & McCarthy, 2018: 217). In addition, the literature survey assisted the researcher in selecting research methods that were used in similar studies to promote the current study's validity (Mohajan, 2018: 30). The literature survey was also done to establish the research typology in terms of exhaustive coverage of concepts being studied, conclusions of the studies and research strategies utilised in the studies. Basically, the researcher used the literature survey to organise the sources for inclusion in the sample.

3.4.2. Secondary Research

Secondary research describes the process of gathering data from previous studies and any other relevant data sources (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018: 200). Usually, secondary research is done to present the context and background of the current research problem (Feldman, 2019: 73). Thus, secondary research involves the collection of data from existing literature. The secondary research method consists of four steps: firstly, selecting the topic domain and where to obtain information; secondly, collecting existing data; thirdly, analysing data from other sources, if applicable and realistic and, finally, assessing the data (Emory & Cooper, 2017: 169).

The advantage of secondary research is that it helps in synthesising findings and uncovering research gaps. Moreover, it helps in locating the current research within the academic discourse to ensure that the study can make a valuable addition to the existing pool of knowledge (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018: 471). Secondary research can be done more cost-effectively and quickly. However, the use of secondary data suffers from the challenge associated with the complexity of incorporating previous literature with an increasing number of academic publications.

3.5. PRECEDENT

Desktop research underpinned this study. The study was conducted in five phases, as illustrated in Figure 3.3. This study was generally conducted using an inductive research procedure through surveying the literature to observe secondary data and identify patterns of data, followed by an analysis of the patterns for theory building (Beins & McCarthy, 2018: 16).

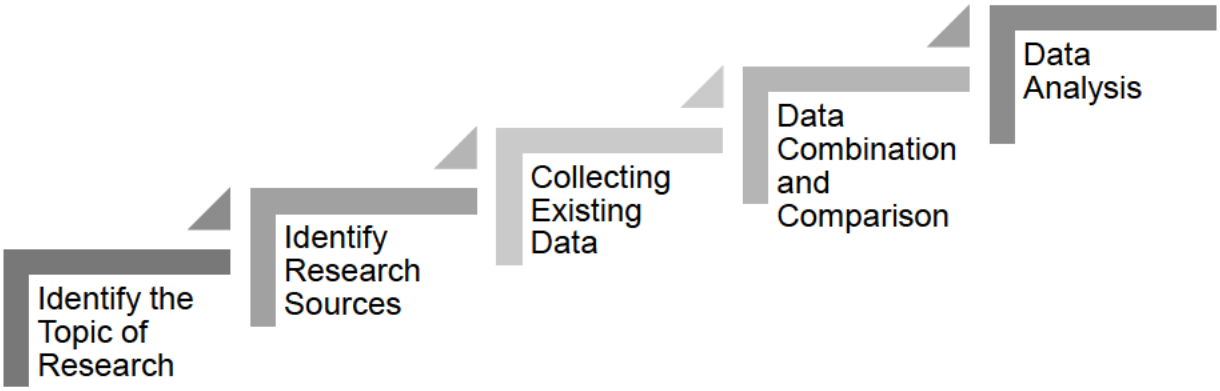

Figure 3.3 – Research procedure

Source: Feldman (2019: 97)

The inductive approach guided the overall methods, which were woven together to answer the research questions. The data was collected using keyword searches in various sources, such as Google Scholar, Wiley, ScienceDirect, TUT library services and Emerald Publishing. For collecting data, purposive and snowball sampling were used to gather the considered sample sources.

3.6. RESEARCH MATERIAL

The sources of information used in the study are from various documents and literature. The motivation for selecting each source, as well as how the sources were accessed, is addressed in this section.

- **Documents:** The researcher employed various documents, including newspapers, government records, and websites, to collect data primarily related to the research problem context and the challenges in worker performance and productivity faced by the automotive sector. The use of documents was key to enhancing the research dependability, since an external audit can verify the

genuine existence of the research problem and the background information (Emory & Cooper, 2017: 163). For instance, the information that newspapers provide is suitable for scanning the macro-environment, thereby helping in setting the context of the study. Also, government websites provide authentic information, as there are official communication policies governing communicating with the external audience (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018: 301). The documents from company websites provided useful information on challenges within the South African automotive industry.

- **Literature:** As secondary data, peer-reviewed journals were used for gathering data for the literature review. The journals were used since they are regularly updated with new publications and therefore provided up-to-date information (Beins & McCarthy, 2018: 51). Academic journals also function as platforms for researchers to launch and present novel research endeavours, while also assessing and evaluating existing research contributions (Emory & Cooper, 2017: 161). Academic books were also used as renowned scholars mostly provide published high-impact theories in books specific to a particular field (Baker, 2018: 82).

3.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter is about describing the various techniques that were employed in the investigation as well as justifying why the methods were selected. Key aspects that were discussed are research strategy, secondary data, qualitative methodology, desk research, research material and strategies on the accessibility of the information sources. It also highlighted the procedure and the data-collection

methods used. The applied method of content and thematic analysis for examining secondary data has also been explained. The subsequent chapter delves into the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of this secondary data.

CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the data analysis as well as discussions of the study. These were attained using the procedures outlined in earlier chapters of the report. A desktop study was conducted using secondary data gathered by a literature review. This chapter explores a comprehensive examination and interpretation of the gathered data, aiming to provide insights and draw meaningful conclusions. This section meticulously examines the collected information, identifies patterns, explores relationships, and presents a data interpretation. The various arguments critically evaluate the contextual results in terms of the existing literature and theoretical frameworks, shedding light on their implications and adding to the broader comprehension of the research subject: guidelines to facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy.

As such, following the study's goals and the enquiries developed, the study questions derived from the research objectives substantially guided the developments in this chapter:

- What are the current global success cases and key factors that contributed to their achievements?
- What are the local (South African) success cases and key factors that contributed to their achievements?
- What is the impact of a learning organisation strategy on worker performance and productivity?

- Which recommendations and guidelines can be derived from the case studies and be utilised in the South African automotive industry to facilitate the adoption of a learning organisation strategy?

4.2. SUCCESS CASES ANALYSIS

To enhance a more structured approach, a review was conducted on specific success cases that were subsequently categorised thematically. As shown in Table 4.1, each of the three themes is followed by its sub-themes.

Table 4.1 – Thematic Categories of Case Studies

Theme	Sub-themes
Learning Organisation Strategy	• Learning culture • Knowledge sharing • Collaboration
Employee Performance and Productivity	• Improvement of individual • Team performance
LOS in the South African Context	• Change and transformation • Paradigm • Change sustainability in a learning organisation

These themes encompass Theme 1: Learning Organisation Strategy, Theme 2: Employee Performance and Productivity and Theme 3: LOS in the South African Context. Further down, a concise list of the key contributing factors to the success will be presented as guidelines to facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy (LOS).

4.2.1. Theme 1: Learning Organisation Strategy

An organisation categorised under this theme has shown more focus on developing a strategy to promote a learning culture within the organisation by facilitating

avenues for employees to gain fresh knowledge and skills, promoting a culture of ongoing learning and enhancement, and fostering an environment that supports knowledge sharing and collaboration.

4.2.1.1. Case Study: Toyota Motor Thailand

As described by Chitseree (2014), Toyota Motor Thailand's strategy consists of two main pillars from its system referred to as the Toyota Way. These pillars consist of continuous improvement and respect for people, which are supported by five values: challenge, Kaizen, Genchi Genbutsu, respect and teamwork (Chitseree, 2014). The Toyota way principle can be illustrated in the below figure:

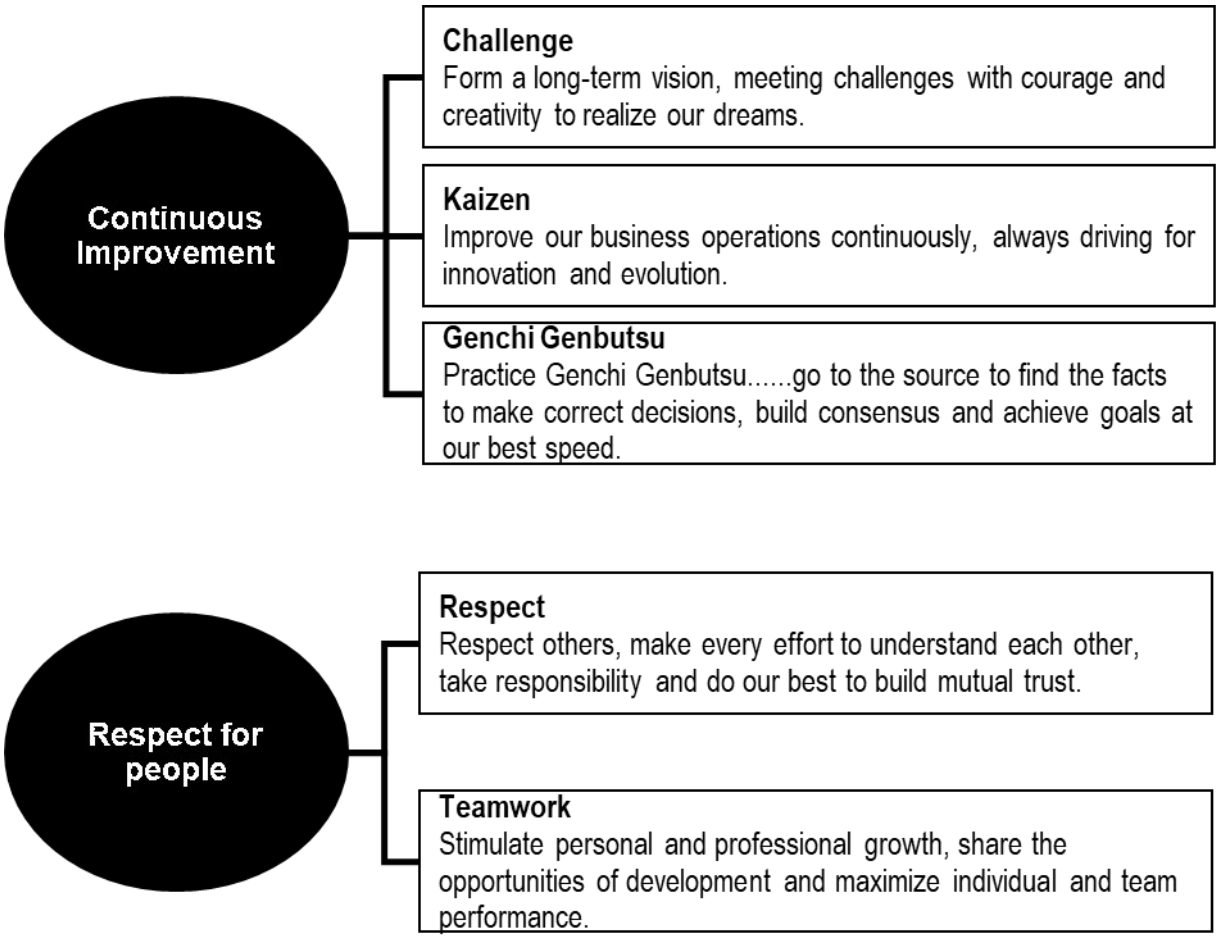

Figure 4.1 – Toyota way principle

Source: Chitseree (2014: 12)

In addition, Toyota highly promotes the concept of Yokoten, which entails sharing knowledge throughout the organisation to ensure that all employees possess a comprehensive understanding of specific issues. This practice holds great significance within a learning organisation, as it facilitates the continuous learning cycle by fostering a uniform level of knowledge among employees. Furthermore, this knowledge sharing allows employees to disseminate acquired knowledge to others, thereby instilling a culture of "personal mastery" among all staff members (Chitseree, 2014).

Furthermore, additional systems used by Toyota that amplify the attribute of a learning organisation are, among others:

- Job rotation system – as personal mastery adheres to the policy of transferring individuals who have been working in the same department for more than five years to other departments. This practice aims to foster knowledge and skill sharing throughout the entire company.
- Flexible mentality – Thought and perception regarding one’s actions and their outcomes and the capacity to respond and adapt to global changes. Senge (1990) refers to this system as a mental model.
- Shared vision – Crucial for learning organisations as it supplies the concentration and motivation for learning endeavours. Toyota has implemented the Hoshin system, which serves as a policy-management framework. The Hoshin system consists of five hierarchical levels that provide strategic guidance and direction for each respective level (administration, corporate strategic planning, marketing, quality assurance and manufacturing support and manufacturing). The aim of this system is to facilitate divisions in expressing and efficiently exchanging

information on their strategies, thereby driving their contribution towards the overall success of the company.

- Team learning – The "Toyota Way" exemplifies the concept of team learning, where teamwork is emphasised as a fundamental value, which is regarded as an essential component. As Chitseree (2014) elaborated, Toyota company holds the belief that a collective of individuals can outperform a solitary person in tasks. Furthermore, the Toyota Way underscores that teamwork fosters both personal and team advancement by promoting the exchange of knowledge and nurturing individual and collective growth.
- System thinking – this attribute reinforces Toyota's identity as a learning organisation, which is further strengthened by the effective utilisation of Toyota Business Practices tools (TBP).

(Senge, 1990 cited in Chitseree, 2014: 19)

In summary, the below figure effectively showcases the Toyota Business Practices, depicted through the TBP framework. This framework encompasses the Toyota Way principles, with concrete actions as well as processes serving as the foundation, supported by a positive drive and dedication.

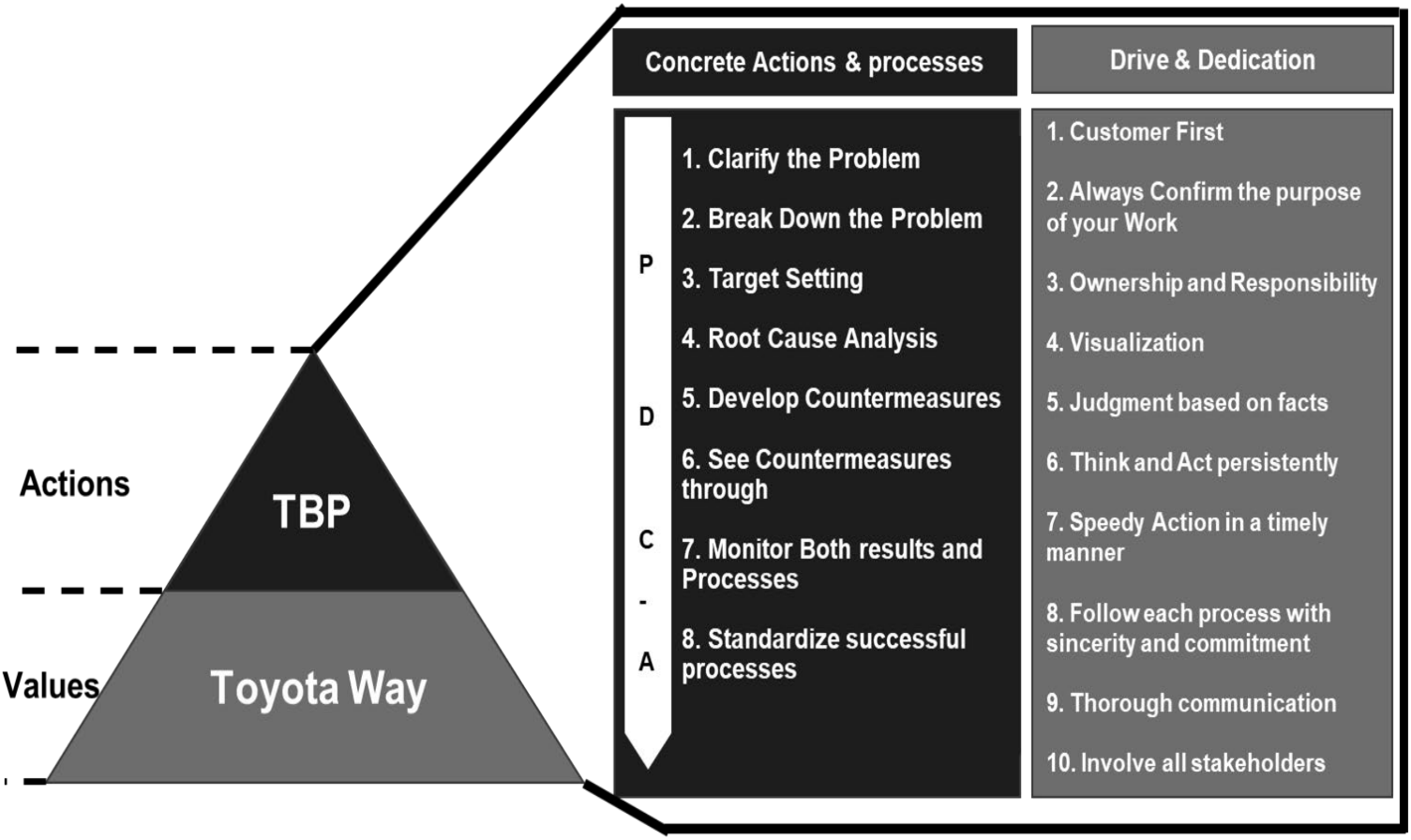

Figure 4.2 – Toyota business practices framework

Source: Chitseree (2014: 19)

4.2.2. Theme 2: Employee Performance and Productivity

Employee performance can be described as focusing on the improvement of individual and team performance within the organisation. This involves establishing clear performance expectations, offering frequent feedback and coaching, acknowledging and rewarding accomplishments, and implementing performance-management systems to monitor and assess employee performance (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

4.2.2.1. Case Study: Bulgarian Business Organisations – Gallup HCM Advisory Group, Deloitte, and Aon Hewitt

Despite employee performance and productivity being a persistent global challenge and, to some extent, enigmatic in the workplace, these three companies exemplify the profound impact of a learning organisation strategy (LOS) in enhancing employee performance and productivity. These organisations leverage shared attributes of engaged employees to diligently strive towards achieving optimal performance and productivity. The figure below depicts these nine characteristics.

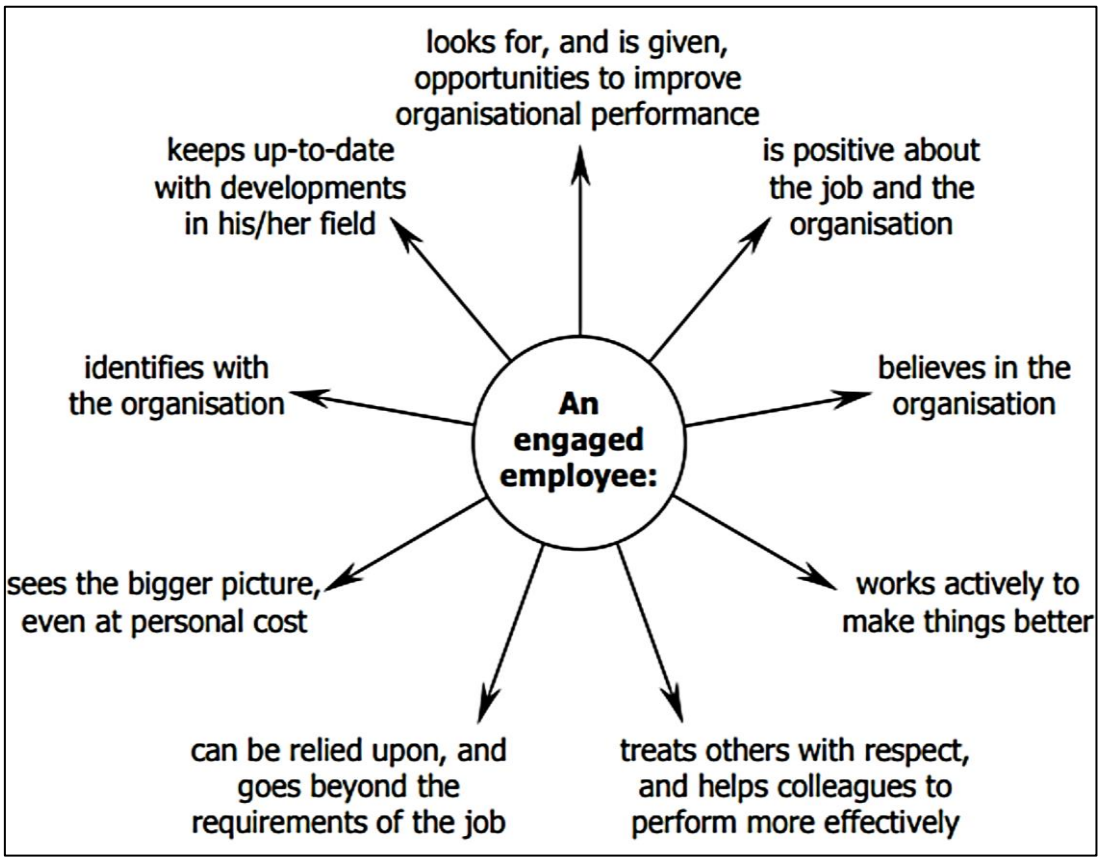

Figure 4.3 – Characteristics of an engaged employee

Source: Stoyanova and Iliev (2017)

Job satisfaction is strongly correlated with employee engagement. According to Stoyanova and Iliev's (2017) findings, workers who exhibit high levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their workplace also demonstrate greater engagement. Their study revealed a global association between workplace satisfaction and increased levels of employee engagement (Stoyanova & Iliev, 2017).

Furthermore, interestingly enough, Song et al. (2014) in their research, deduced that social and cultural elements of learning organisations (LO) within South Korean for-profit companies directly and favourably influence employee engagement. Moreover, they found that cultural characteristics of the LO positively influence team performance, but only indirectly through the mediation of employee engagement. Therefore, employee engagement is a pivotal part in fully understanding the correlation between learning organization, team performance, and productivity (Song et al., 2014). It can therefore be concluded that an engaged team is a performing team, and a performing team is a productive team.

4.2.3. Theme 3: LOS in the South African Context

Theme 3 is a compelling array of studies showcasing the potential implementation and use of learning organisation principles within the unique context of South Africa. These studies have been carefully selected to examine how organisations in the South African landscape have consciously or unconsciously utilised and harnessed the strategy of a learning organisation. By exploring these cases, the aim is to shed light on how the learning organisation concept was effectively applied to address challenges, drive innovation, and enhance overall organisational performance in the South African context. These examples could then serve as valuable sources of inspiration and guidance for leaders, managers, and practitioners seeking to foster

a culture of learning and growth within their own organisations, particularly in the South African automotive industry.

4.2.3.1. Case Study 1 (SA): South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL)

In an endeavour to comprehend the management of change and organisational transformation towards learning organisations in South Africa, Makaula (2009) conducted an evaluation of the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL). The objective for SANRAL, consisted of identifying areas of performance enhancement and progressing towards becoming a learning organisation (Makaula, 2009).

- **Embracing Change and Transformation**

Makaula's (2009) study was centred around valuable insights and comprehensive information concerning the management of change and transformation within the SANRAL organisations by leveraging the process of transforming an organisation into a learning-oriented one which can significantly improve its ability to handle change effectively, ultimately leading to enhanced organisational performance. As a result, it was found that the data could be categorised into three groups, of which 60% (Group 1) expressed agreement with the notion of implementing and embracing change and transformation within the organisation, 30% (Group 2) acknowledged the need for change and transformation but emphasised the importance of managing it properly, and, on the other hand, 10% (Group 3) held the belief that these changes and transformations have resulted in negative effects on

the organisation (Makaula, 2009: 86). Figure 4.4 displays a graphical representation of feedback from the groups.

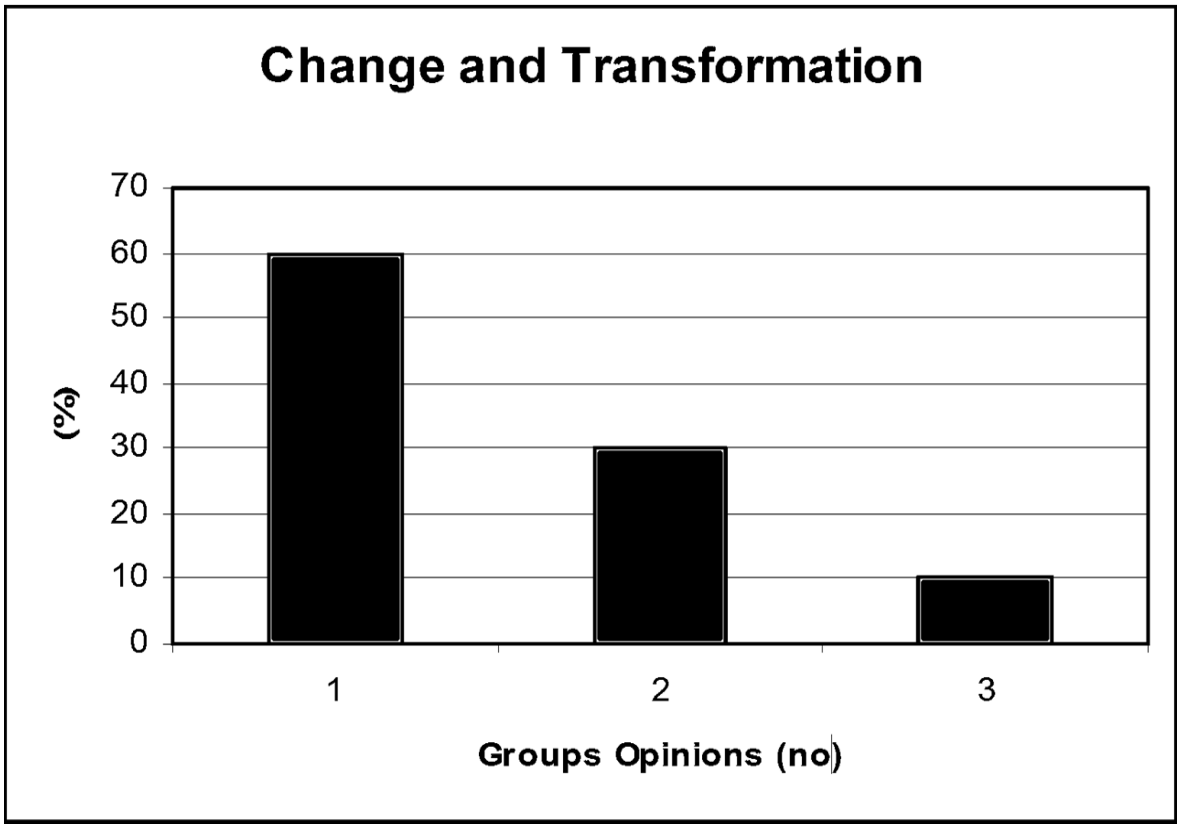

Figure 4.4 – Change and transformation groups' feedback

Source: Makaula (2009: 86)

Makaula (2009) explained various reasons, leading to the majority of individuals at SANRAL expressing agreement with the idea of change and transformation in support of implementing a learning organisation strategy, given its positive impact.

For an organisation to strive towards achieving the adoption of LOS and position itself for sustained success and expansion in the long run, it can be recommended to integrate the following 12 characteristics of embracing change and transformation:

I. **Recognise the Need for Change**: As a first step, the organisation should acknowledge the necessity for change and understand the challenges and opportunities it presents. This can be achieved by assessing the organisation's current state and identifying areas that require improvement (Abbas & Asghar, 2010).

II. **Create a Compelling Vision**: Once the need for change is identified, the company can then proceed to develop a clear and inspiring vision for the desired state of the future for the organisation. The effective communication of this vision across the entire organisation will pave the way for garnering support and commitment from the team (Gill, 2010).

III. **Secure Leadership Commitment:** One of the paramount steps would involve ensuring that top leadership is fully committed to the change and transformation process. Leaders should actively demonstrate their dedication, communicate the vision, and lead by example (Ahmad & Cheng, 2018).

IV. **Involve Employees:** As important as leadership commitment, employees' engagement at all levels in the change process is also required, by soliciting their input, listening to their concerns, and involving them in decision-making. This not only creates an ownership mindset within the employees but also enhances their commitment and dedication to the transformation (Ahmad & Cheng, 2018).

V. **Build a Change Team:** To establish a dedicated team responsible for leading and managing the change initiative. This team should possess diverse skills and represent various parts of the organisation (Fapohunda, 2013).

VI. **Develop a Change Plan:** The organisation, under the guidance of the change team, should then create a comprehensive change management plan that outlines the objectives, strategies, and timelines for the transformation. This plan should be flexible enough to adapt to unforeseen challenges (Gill, 2010).

VII. **Communicate Effectively:** The reasons for change, the vision, and the plan will be communicated regularly and consistently. Effective communication will allow the team to address any misconceptions or fears and keep employees informed throughout the process (Barrett, 2002).

VIII. **Offer Support and Resources:** Ensure the availability of essential resources, tools, and support to empower employees for the efficient implementation of the change. Offer training and development programmes as needed (Umble et al., 2003).

IX. **Encourage Innovation:** It is highly recommended to foster a culture of innovation and experimentation. Such an environment encourages employees to propose and test new ideas and approaches that align with the transformation goals (Christiansen, 2000).

X. **Celebrate Successes:** Sadri and Lees (2001) discovered that a successfully effective culture should not only harmonise with staff values but also be aligned with the organisational atmosphere. It is important to recognise and celebrate achievements and milestones reached during the change process. Positive reinforcement will boost morale and motivate employees to continue embracing the transformation (Sadri & Lees, 2001).

XI. **Learn from Setbacks:** Beghetto and McBain (2022) acknowledged that setbacks and challenges are a natural part of any change process. Hence, it is

recommended to encourage a learning mindset and use setbacks as opportunities for improvement (Beghetto & McBain, 2022).

XII. **Monitor Progress and Adapt:** When organisations initiate a transformational journey, it is essential to track workforce readiness and progress. This is to help identify areas that require additional attention, allowing for adjustments and adaptations to the new methodologies as needed. Therefore, it is absolutely vital to continuously monitor the progress of the change initiative and gather feedback, evaluate outcomes, and be willing to adjust the approach as needed to ensure the transformation's success (Kusek & Rist, 2004).

- **Need for a Paradigm**

Makaula (2009) examined the use of a paradigm within an organisation. The term "paradigm" can be defined as one that serves as a pattern or model. In the context of an organisation, a paradigm can refer to the dominant set of beliefs and values, as well as the assumptions, that shape the organisation's culture, decision-making processes, and overall approach to conducting business (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019).

There is definitely a need to increase the focus on the sustainability of organisational development. This in itself is a paradigm shift because, in the past, organisations were very internally focused and did not really care about what was happening around them (Jackson, 2003, cited in Makaula, 2009). For South African organisations to attain global competitiveness, a paradigm shift is imperative. Emphasising the maintenance of high standards, quality, and integrity becomes crucial, with the aim of creating equal opportunities for all. Consequently, as presented in Figure 4.5, after analysing schools of management thought, it was

found that 90% believed that a shift in the paradigm was necessary according to the operational approach within SANRAL organisations, and in contrast, the remaining 10% expressed no need for such a shift, as they were satisfied with the proven systems they had used in the past (Makaula, 2009: 87).

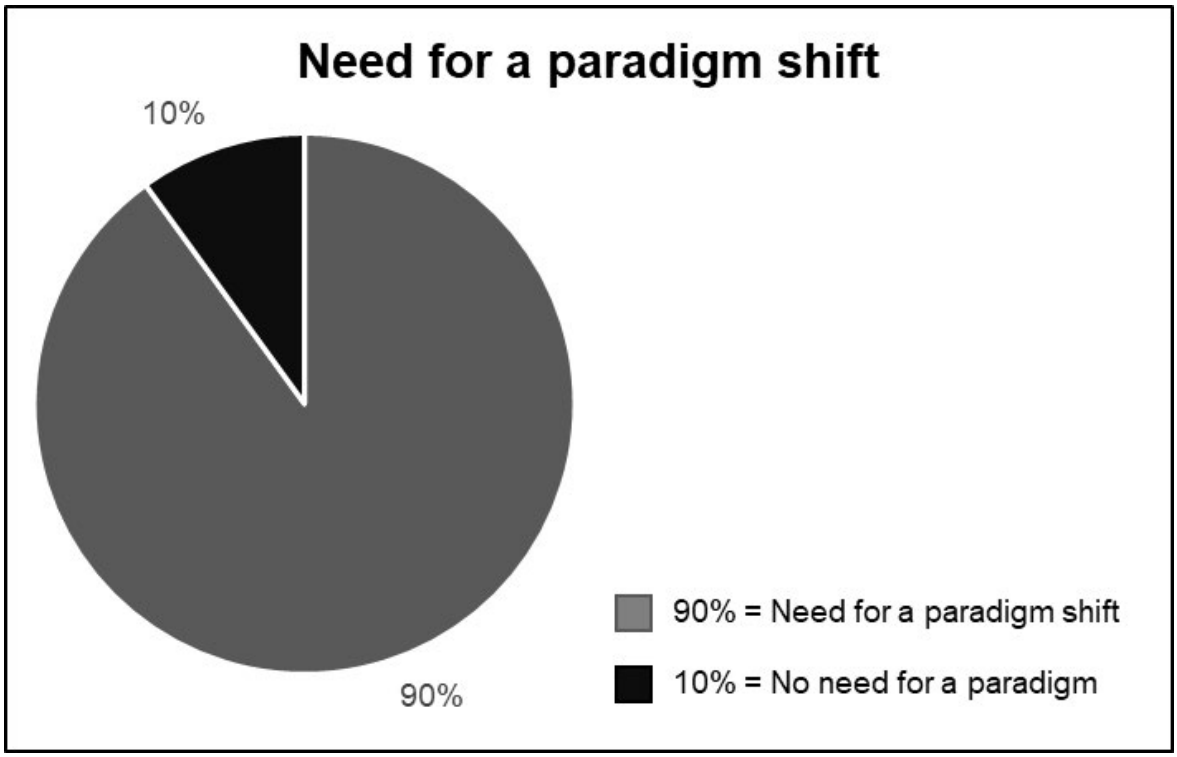

Figure 4.5 – Need for a paradigm shift

Source: Makaula (2009: 87)

An organisation can achieve a paradigm shift by being flexible. A flexible organisation embraces a dynamic and adaptable culture, where continuous improvement and learning are paramount. Such an organisation encourages innovation, inviting employees to contribute new ideas and experiment with novel approaches. Agile practices become a cornerstone, enabling quick responses to changing market conditions. Cross-functional collaboration breaks down silos, fostering knowledge sharing and resource utilisation. Technology plays a pivotal

role, enabling efficient communication, data analysis, and informed decision-making. Empowered employees are granted autonomy and accountability, driving ownership and proactivity. Customer-centricity remains a driving force, ensuring products and services align with evolving customer needs (Ionescu et al., 2012). The company maintains agility in hiring, seeking diverse skill sets and adaptability. Regular reviews and assessments drive continuous enhancement, while forward-looking anticipation of trends keeps the organisation prepared for future challenges and opportunities. In sum, through these strategic initiatives, a flexible organisation remains agile and ready to thrive in an ever-evolving business landscape (Bahrami, 1996).

4.2.3.2. Case Study 2 (SA): Training Department as a strategy for change sustainability in a learning organisation

Steenekamp, Botha, and Moloi (2012) carried out an exploratory investigation into the implementation of the ‘learning organisation’ concept within specific South African organisations. The study encompassed the examination of various philosophies and definitions concerning organisational learning, organisational knowledge, learning organisation, and knowledge utilisation within the study area. Alongside the presented backdrop, the study analysed the viewpoints of South African employees within an organisation to understand any potential influence resulting from implementing the learning organisation concept on work performance. Steenekamp et al. (2012) demonstrated that a training department could play a role in steering an organisation towards becoming a learning organisation by adapting to changes within the organisation. It could play a pivotal role in helping management facilitate the transition towards a learning organisation

establishment process. In particular, the training department could valuably contribute by staying informed about and staying abreast of factors that impact organisational change (Steenekamp et al., 2012).

The Training Department strategy can be visualised as a framework that contributes to knowledge management by advocating a knowledge management plan with specific aspects that can be applicable not only in the South African context but also globally. Table 4.2 below depicts the Training Department's strategy.

Table 4.2 – Training Department Strategy Framework

Aspect	Application
Knowledge Leader	Utilise a knowledgeable leader who can advocate and establish a framework for knowledge management.
Knowledge Teams	Build knowledge teams to help the development of techniques and competencies for effective knowledge management.
Knowledge Bases	Build knowledge foundations to explore optimal methods, pertinent market insights, and establish a base of expert information.
Knowledge Centres	Create knowledge hubs to streamline the exchange of knowledge and expertise.
Knowledge Sharing Mechanisms	Introduce knowledge-sharing approaches, like organised events, designed to foster a higher level of knowledge exchange than would typically occur.
Knowledge Asset Management Methods	Utilise knowledge asset management techniques to recognise and document intellectual capital (Dixon, 1999: 217–220 cited in Steenekamp et al., 2012).

Source: Steenekamp et al. (2012: 391)

The Training Department holds the potential to make valuable contributions towards the establishment of a learning organisation and driving change. One way it can do so is by fostering partnerships and providing support to management in their efforts to cultivate a favourable learning culture.

4.3. IMPACT OF LOS ON WORKER PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY

Organisations achieving the highest alignment between organisational and individual objectives are those that display sensitivity towards individuals, offering them resources and opportunities for growth and accomplishment (Gohoungodji et al., 2020: 127). Organisations that have given precedence to learning, education, and advancement have witnessed the benefits in terms of enhanced profitability and heightened job satisfaction among employees (Modungwa et al., 2021: 9). Ogueyungbo et al. (2020: 14) scrutinised the influence of workplace learning on job satisfaction and concluded that there exists a notable correlation between workplace learning and workers' job satisfaction. Research indicates that employees who achieve job satisfaction are inclined to exhibit higher productivity and are more likely to remain in their positions (Modungwa et al., 2021: 10).

Organisational commitment has been a subject of comprehensive study over the past three decades, in addition to job satisfaction (Agbo, 2020: 587). According to Bilginoğlu (2019: 67), a significant portion of the fascination with organisational commitment arises from observations of favourable effects on employee behaviour and favourable work results linked to such commitment. Presently, the concept of organisational commitment holds even greater significance, as it is regarded as a propelling strength influencing the performance of an organisation (Phrapratanporn et al., 2019: 182).

Eğriboyun (2023) investigated the correlation between organisational learning and job-related attitudes, such as organisational commitment or engagement, and job

satisfaction among employees. However, these studies did not establish a connection between these factors and employees' performance (Eğriboyun, 2023). The previous studies' neglect of exploring the potential impact of this aspect has underscored a noteworthy concern that demands further examination. Thus, this paper endeavours to bridge the identified gaps within the existing literature, building upon previous research by providing additional insights into strategies for enhancing the implementation of the learning organisation strategy.

Studies still differ on whether the learning organisation strategy has a strong association with employee productivity and whether it increases organisational operational effectiveness, increases the ability of employees to perform assigned duties, and whether it also increases organisational management performance by contributing to overall organisational effectiveness. A number of these studies remain constrained, with their findings applicable only to specific regions or industries, as the empirical literature on this investigation remains notably restricted.

However, empirical evidence has demonstrated that organisations that actively strive to enhance learning witness an improvement in employee performance. This is due to a trade-off between the knowledge present within each learning unit of the organisation, contributing to a perpetually evolving learning environment within the organisation (DiBella, 2019: 221). Another empirical research study reported that the establishment of a learning organisation offers an environment for ongoing learning that exerts a more significant influence on individual employees' performance within the organisation compared to organisational performance (Flood & Finnestrand, 2019: 206; DiBella, 2019: 222). Furthermore, the scope of a

learning organisation strategy extends far beyond the limitations of this paper. As highlighted by D'Amato et al. (2016) in their article, LOS can have a profound impact on various areas, including the elements of the managerial model.

Table 4.3 – Elements of the Managerial Model

MANAGERIAL MODEL	
Elements	**LOS Impact**
Motivation	– By defining vision, mission, and values – Futuristic projection
Working Environment	– Conducive environment for best performance – Creating a "winning" working condition
Information	– Information sharing / Disclosure – Clear goals, plans and results declaration
Objectives	– Idea of Managing the present and creating the future – The Toyota Way: Having a long-term perspective
Decisions	– Strategy creation – Bottom-up approach as a teamwork activity
Coordination / Control	– Cultivating entrepreneurship – Promoting ownership and accountability
Learning / Growth	– Investing in continuous learning, improvement, and development in the core competencies at all levels – Progress evaluation as part of growth assessment

Source: D'Amato et al. (2016)

From a more human resources and psychological point of view, D'Amato et al. (2016) concluded that LOS empowers individuals to unleash their emotions, harness their energy, and ignite the passion that resides within them, with the aim of cultivating more humane and sustainable organisations. Additionally, within learning organisations, as in a living organism, the management model assumes a crucial role in fostering a shared identity and facilitating knowledge exchange, thereby supporting learning, since it shares the effectiveness of knowledge inside the organisation (D'Amato et al., 2016).

4.4. FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

4.4.1. Key Contributing Factors of Successful LOS Adoption

The fourth sub-question of this study pertains to the identification of recommendations and guidelines that can be applicable to the South African automotive industry to enable the adoption of a learning organisation strategy (LOS). To address this question, the researcher has formulated a comprehensive framework serving as guidelines to facilitate the adoption of LOS within the industry.

The successful implementation of LOS hinges upon several key contributing factors that play a vital role in fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement within an organisation. These factors encompass aspects such as the core disciplines of LOS, employee engagement, and a supportive business framework. By understanding and leveraging these contributing factors, firms in the South African automotive industry can enhance their capacity for adaptability, innovation, and sustainable growth.

The analysed factors can be represented in Table 4.4 below as a summary of contributors to the success of the above-studied cases. The selected cases cover both the global context and South African context in particular. The global cases are the Toyota Motor Thailand and the three Bulgarian business organisations (Gallup HCM Advisory Group, Deloitte and Aon Hewitt), whereas the local cases are SANRAL and a study on sustaining change in a learning organisation conducted on general South African organisations.

Table 4.4 – The Six Key Contributing Factors of success

Key Factors	Foundation (WHAT?)	Principles & characteristics (HOW?)

1. The core disciplines of building a learning organisation (Senge, 1990)	Built on continuous improvement and respect for people	• As the Toyota Way
		  ○ Personal mastery (idea suggestion activity, safety Yokoten - sharing knowledge)
		  ○ Mental model (challenge value)
		  ○ Shared vision (Hoshin system, collective contribution)
		  ○ Team learning
		  ○ Systems thinking (TBP)

2. The business practices framework (Chitseree, 2014)	Toyota business practices (TBP) Toyota Way	• Concrete actions and process • Drive and dedication

3. Employee engagement (Stoyanova & Iliev, 2017 and Song et al., 2014)	Job satisfaction (performance and productivity)	• Characteristics of an engaged employee:
		  ○ Opportunity to improve.
		  ○ Positive attitude.
		  ○ Believe in the organisation.
		  ○ Active work to be better.
		  ○ Respect for others and provide help effectively.
		  ○ Trustworthy beyond requirement.
		  ○ Innovative and engaged.
		  ○ Representative of the organisation.
		  ○ Well-informed of developments.

4. Embracing change and transformation (Makaula, 2009)	Characteristics of embracing change and transformation	• Recognise the need for change • Create a compelling vision • Secure leadership commitment • Involve employees • Build a change team • Develop a change plan • Communicate effectively • Provide resources and Support • Encourage innovation • Celebrate successes • Learn from setbacks • Monitor progress and adapt
5. Need for paradigm (Makaula, 2009)	Flexible organisation	• Dynamic and adaptable culture • Continuous improvement and learning • Innovation and experiment • Agile practices • Cross-functional collaboration • Technology • Empowered employees (autonomy and accountability) • Customer-centricity • Hiring, seeking diverse skill sets • Regular reviews and assessments
6. Training for change sustainability in a learning organisation (Steenekamp et al., 2012)	Training Department	• Knowledge leader - promoting and developing the framework. • Knowledge teams - developing methods and skills. • Knowledge bases - best practices, relevant market intelligence and an expertise information bank. • Knowledge centres - flow of knowledge and skills. • Knowledge sharing mechanisms - encourage greater sharing of knowledge. • Knowledge asset management methods - identify and account for intellectual capital.

These factors can be considered crucial elements that drive the successful implementation of LOS, ultimately leading to improved organisational performance and competitiveness in today's dynamic business landscape of the South African automotive sector.

Various research findings on South Africa's automobile industry have suggested the intentional adoption of the learning organisation strategy to address the challenges arising from low competition in both international and regional markets (Bam, De Bruyne & Laing, 2021: 410). The argument emphasises the industry's need to constantly evolve as a learning entity by exploring new markets and embracing innovation (Zondo, 2020: 2). To accomplish this, the industry should seek to benchmark and incorporate innovative ideas, gather vital information from suppliers, employees, competitors, and customers, and conduct comprehensive economic and market analyses.

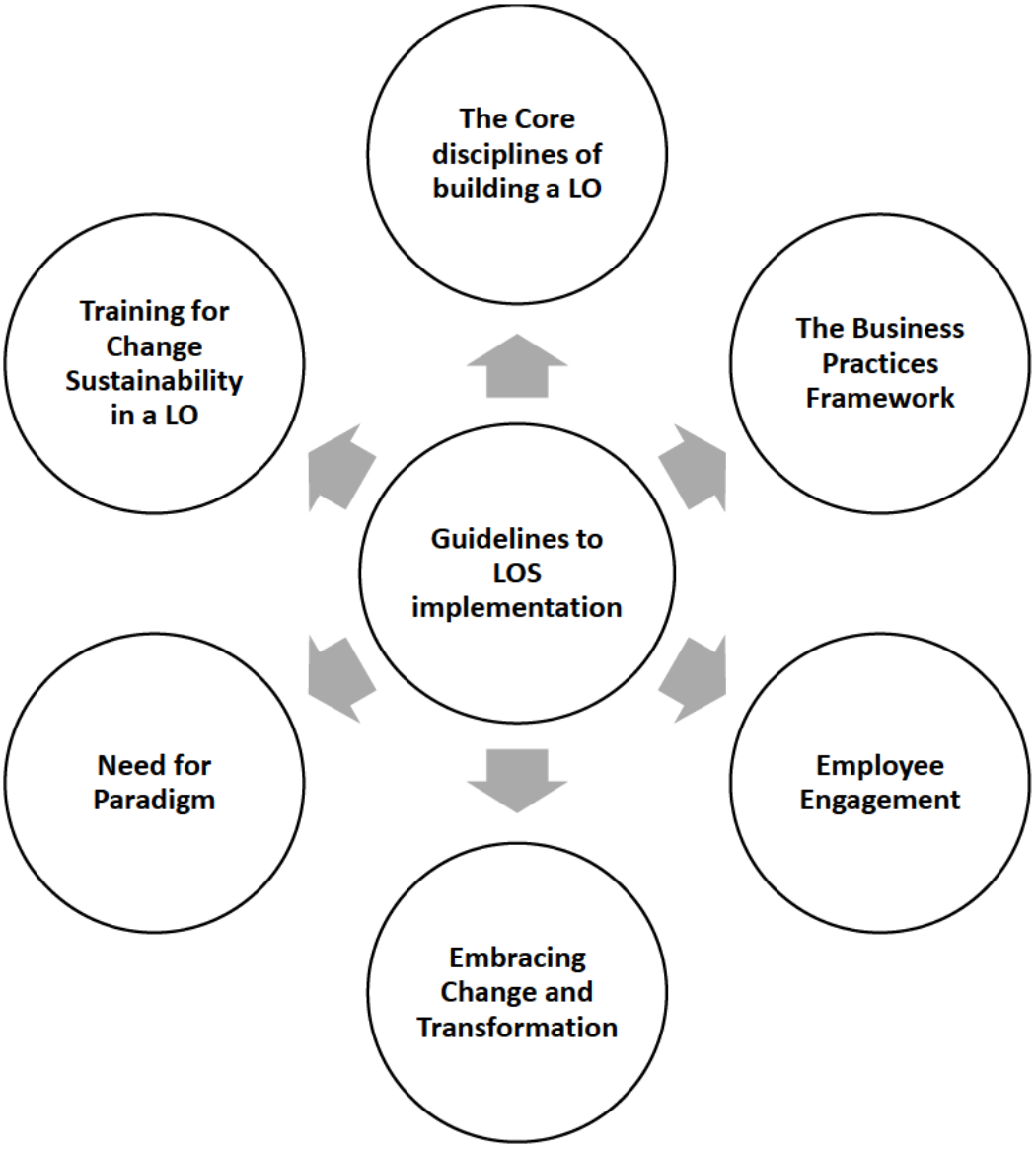

Figure 4.6 – Factors of LOS adoption framework

As illustrated in Figure 4.6, the developed framework consists of six key factors to facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy. While implementing all of them simultaneously might present challenges for a particular organisation, initiating the process with at least one factor can serve as a significant stepping stone. Starting with a focused and gradual approach towards improvement is preferable to not taking any action at all.

4.5. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter has presented significant findings and guidelines as a framework of principal factors that can facilitate the successful implementation of a learning organisation strategy (LOS). Through the systematic analysis of strategic case studies, key factors that contributed to their success were deduced and showcased, providing valuable insights for organisations seeking to embark on their own LOS journey. These case studies served as valuable sources of practical examples, highlighting the importance of factors such as the core disciplines of building a learning organisation, the business practices framework and employee engagement, change and transformation, and the need for paradigm and change sustainability in learning organisations. By drawing upon the lessons learned from these case studies, companies in the local automotive industry and even other organisations can effectively navigate the complexities of LOS implementation and increase their chances of achieving positive outcomes. The guidelines and recommendations presented in this chapter provide a suggested foundation and roadmap for organisations to follow, guiding them towards creating a culture of continuous learning, improvement and sustainable growth. By leveraging these findings and incorporating the identified key contributing factors, organisations can position themselves for success in their implementation of LOS.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will consist of addressing the various recommendations and conclusion points. It includes two pivotal components. First, the concluding remarks are offered, highlighting the significance of embracing a learning culture in the industry and the potential impact it can have on its growth and sustainability. Second, recommendations for future studies are outlined, identifying potential avenues for further exploration and advancement in this field. Through a holistic synthesis of these aspects, this chapter endeavours to shed light on the transformative power of LOS and its potential to shape the future landscape of organisational development.

5.2. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As we draw towards the culmination of this paper on the implementation of a learning organisation strategy (LOS) in organisations, it is vital to summarise the key insights gained throughout the research journey. The main objective of this research was to provide guidelines that facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy by addressing the following sub-objectives: firstly, analysing international and South African success cases and the key factors contributing to their achievements; secondly, establishing the impact of a learning organisation strategy on worker performance and productivity and, finally, providing recommendations and guidelines that facilitate the adoption of a learning organisation strategy in the South African automotive industry.

Desktop research was conducted using secondary data gathered as a literature review to attain the results and address the research questions. This was achieved

by exploring a comprehensive examination and interpretation of the gathered data, aiming at providing insights and drawing meaningful responses. To achieve a systematic and structured approach, a review was carried out on distinct success cases, which were then categorised thematically, where Theme 1 was a learning organisation strategy; Theme 2 consisted of employee performance and productivity and Theme 3 covered LOS in the South African context.

From the data analysis, it was found that local and international organisations that have adopted LOS to some extent have utilised specific key features, by which LOS implementation can be facilitated and that contributed to their achievement. Therefore, from this study, an LOS adoption framework was developed consisting of six key factors, namely, the core disciplines of building a learning organisation, the business practices framework, employee engagement, change and transformation, and the need for paradigm and change sustainability in learning organisations. As previously mentioned, implementing all of these factors simultaneously may pose challenges for an organisation; however, starting the process with at least one factor can serve as a significant stepping stone because focused and gradual action towards improvement is preferable to inaction.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The main objective of this research was to provide guidelines that facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation strategy (LOS). However, acknowledging the imperative need to explore the extent and potential impact of a learning organisation strategy, this study would like to recommend certain aspects related to LOS for future investigation. Each recommendation includes a brief concept

definition, potential study aspects, and the anticipated benefits or contributions to the research field. By exploring these suggested areas, researchers could not only make substantial contributions to the advancement of knowledge and practice in a learning organisation strategy but also enhance the understanding and unlocking of the full potential of LOS in South African manufacturing companies at large.

5.3.1. The Role of Learning Organisation Strategy in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) usually denotes the current era characterised by the convergence of physical, digital, and biological technologies, marked by the rapid advancement and integration of technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, the internet of things, big data, blockchain, biotechnology, and nanotechnology. It visualises a scenario where individuals effortlessly shift between digital realms and offline reality, guided by connected technology that empowers and coordinates their everyday activities (Miller, 2015: 3, cited in Min et al., 2018).

In the 4IR, the emerging technologies are reshaping industries and changing the way businesses operate. It would be quite interesting and potentially beneficial to understand and possibly to leverage the role of a learning organisation strategy in the Fourth Industrial Revolution by exploring the following aspects: First, studying how a learning organisation strategy can enable organisations to thrive and remain competitive in an era characterised by rapid technological advancements and digital disruption. Second, by examining how a learning organisation strategy can facilitate adaptability, innovation, and resilience in the face of emerging technologies and

disruptive changes and seeking to provide valuable insights for organisations navigating the complexities of the digital era.

This study would be so beneficial because its findings could contribute to a deeper understanding of how a learning organisation strategy can shape successful responses to the challenges and opportunities presented by the 4IR. It would, therefore, empower organisations to thrive in the dynamic and ever-evolving landscape of the modern world.

5.3.2. Sustainability of Change in Learning Organisations

It could be interesting to conduct a study on the sustainability of change in learning organisations. This could be a critical endeavour to explore as long-term effectiveness and endurance of change initiatives within manufacturing organisations that prioritise continuous learning and adaptability. The researcher would, for instance, aim to investigate how learning organisations sustain and embed change, examining the factors that contribute to successful change implementation and long-lasting impact. This study would be extended to understanding the various drivers for change and also the challenges that manufacturing companies face as resistance to change.

The outcomes of this research will add to a deeper consideration of change sustainability in learning organisations, offering practical implications for managers, leaders, and change agents in optimising their change strategies and ensuring sustained organisational success.

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