Crafting organisational strategy: The voice of shop-floor employees in South African manufacturing sector

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ABSTRACT: Throughout the history of development economics, organisational strategies have been tipped as a critical factor in businesses' competitive advantage. The formulation of an innovative and distinguished strategy is critical for the competitive advantage, and therefore the survival, of any organisation. Since a well-orchestrated strategy formulation is a precursor to its successful implementation, executives need to pay careful attention to strategy formulation to avert its implementation failure. This study sought to establish the shop-floor employees' perspectives on the determining factors for crafting a successful organisational strategy for a South African manufacturing sector. The study followed a quantitative research method and pilot testing was conducted before the questionnaire survey phase. The questionnaire for this study consisted of closed or pre-coded questions and was distributed to shop floor employees employed in the manufacturing companies participating in this study. A total of 320 participants took part during the questionnaire survey with 92% response rate and the results were analysed using SPSS (version 25). The hypotheses were tested using the Chi square goodness of fit test. The main finding from the study was that the shop floor employees perceive employee engagement, leadership style, transparency and inclusivity as having a positive influence on the successful formulation of business strategy in the manufacturing companies. A recommendation was therefore made that management of the manufacturing sector need to engage the shop floor employees in the process of strategy formulation, as these lower level employees can come with valuable ideas that would enhance successful strategy formulation and thus improve organisational performance and productivity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of development economics, strategies have always been regarded as key factors in organisational development. A strategy can be perceived as the direction and scope an organisation pursues over the long term, which accords it a competitive edge through its alignment of resources and competences with the aim of fulfilling stakeholder expectations (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington, 2008). It is sometimes viewed as management's action plan to develop the business, attract and satisfy the customers, vie successfully with competitors, conduct processes and achieve target levels of organisational performance (Thompson, Strickland and Gamble, 2012). According to Grant (2011), strategy has two levels, namely corporate strategy and business strategy. While the corporate strategy on the one hand "defines the scope of firms in terms of the industries and markets in which it competes", the business strategy on the other hand is "concerned with how the firm competes within a particular industry or market" (Grant, 2011:19). Business strategy is therefore designed for improvising the overall performance of the organisation, whereas the corporate strategy is legislative and deterministic by nature (Thompson, Peteraf., Gamble, & Strickland, 2012).

Strategic management therefore entails the environmental scanning process, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and monitoring, evaluation and review of the implementation process to ensure effective and efficient accomplishment of organisational long term objectives (Tapera, 2016). Traditionally, the crafting of organisational strategy was associated with top management. However, in recent times there has been an emphasis on the importance of involving middle managers and key lower level employees in decision-making about the

crafting of strategy (Mal, Bakhuraybah, and Khayyat (2019). According to Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2015), it is a mistake to perceive strategy making as a top management function. They maintain that top management needs to delegate considerable strategy-crafting authority to down-the-line managers and shop floor employees involved in particular subsidiaries, divisions, product lines, geographic sales offices, distribution centres, and plants. This view is echoed by Reitzig and Maciejovsky (2015) who state that the creation of a strategy is not only a task for the executives; on the contrary, the definition of the business approaches and new measures to initiate and involve all the hierarchy levels of the organisation.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

South Africa has developed a diversified and established manufacturing base which showed huge potential to compete in the global economy (Vosloo, 2014). Vosloo (2014) states that the manufacturing sector in South Africa is dominated by the metals component sector and automobile which are followed by food and beverages. He further maintains that the manufacturing sector in KwaZulu-Natal is the second largest in South Africa after Gauteng's and it contributes 30% of South Africa's manufactured exports The nature of export diversification is vital in the economic growth rate of this province as it generates 20% of provincial employment (Vosloo, 2014). According to Bezuidenhout (2015), the producers of metals components and other non-metallic ones for supplying the automotive manufacturing industry in the province of KwaZulu-Natal are largely concentrated in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Steel and aluminium are the main metals manufactured and exported while a few is supplied to the automotive manufactures for use in the auto assembly (Vosloo, 2014). For the manufacturing companies to remain productive, competitive and sustainable in the long-term, they need to craft winning strategies. Hence this study sought to investigate what the shop floor employees consider the key variables in crafting a winning strategy for the manufacturing sector. The study concentrated on those metal manufacturing companies that are based in Pietermaritzburg.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Traditionally, the top-down approach to strategy formulation has been widely accepted and dominated empirical studies (Ward & Duray, 2000). The challenge with this approach is that it has a potential of abuse of authority by top managers, which manifests itself through arrogance, rudeness and insults, directed towards their subordinates (Boutchard & Mitsis, 2021). Another challenge with the top-down approach to strategy formulation is the fact that the strategy might not get a buy-in from the line managers and shop floor employees down the organisational hierarchy (Boutchard & Mitsis, 2021). Recently, however, some studies have emerged, putting emphasis on the importance of a bottom up approach to strategy formulation (Kim, Sting, Loch, 2014). It is the problem associated with top-down approach to strategy formulation that this paper seeks to investigate from the perspective of the shop floor employees, to establish their opinions with regard to the ideal approach to organisational strategy formulation.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to establish the variables that are essential for crafting a winning strategy for the South African manufacturing as perceived by the shop floor employee.

5. HYPOTHESES FOR THE STUDY

H_1 Engagement of employees has a positive impact on the successful crafting of organisational strategy

H_2 Leadership style determines the successful crafting of organisational strategy

H_3 Transparency has a positive impact on the successful strategy crafting

H_4 Inclusivity determines the successful crafting of organisational strategy

6. LITERATURE REVIEW

6.1. Conceptualisation of strategy

Strategy is the main concept of the modern era that has come to replace previous management activities such as administration or planning (Carter, 2013). The concept of strategy over time has been perceived, addressed and defined in a variety of ways by both scholars and practitioners. Strategy is a much used and abused word, and it has come to mean different things to different people and organisations. According to Tzu (2012), the word strategy originated from the Greek word "strategos", which denotes a general in the military field.

Over the ages, the meaning of strategy has evolved as it got applied to a variety of human activities and particularly to organisational activities. As early as the 1980s, Mintzberg (1987) defined strategy as a plan, a ploy, a pattern, a position and a perspective. For him, strategy as a plan entails some form of consciously intended course of action which is created ahead of events. Furthermore, Mintzberg (1987) maintains that strategy as a ploy is a way in which an organisation manoeuvres its resources so as to outsmart its rivalries. He further states that strategy as a pattern has to do with a pattern that develops in a number of actions that an organisation embarks on. When

referring to the strategy as a position, he is denoting the position in which an organisation puts itself in order to achieve or maintain a sustainable competitive advantage. He concludes by viewing strategy as a perspective, as it is a somewhat abstract concept that exists primarily in people's minds.

According to Thompson *et al.* (2017), strategy is a multidimensional concept that embraces all the critical activities of an organisation, providing it with a form of unity, direction, and purpose as well as enabling the necessary changes prompted by its environment. In a nutshell therefore, strategy defines organisational purpose in terms of its objectives, goals, and priorities; deals with organisational competitive advantage; defines the responsibility of the organisation to its stakeholders and defines the business of the organisation in terms of its product or market scope.

Literature on strategy crafting and implementation has alluded to four types of organisational strategy, namely, corporative strategy, business strategy, functional strategy and operational strategy.

➢ Corporative strategy – the objective of this strategy is to add value to the business portfolio of the organisation reaching to overcome its competitors
➢ Business strategy – the strategy at business level generally focuses on approaches and measurements created by the organisation with the aim of producing a successful performance in a specific business line.
➢ Functional strategy – the strategy at functional level responds to how things must be done or how resources need to be distributed and utilised.
➢ Operational strategy – the operation strategy focuses on the analysis of the environment, the market and the rivalries, as well as on a study of the available internal resources, to achieve organisational objectives and plans. (Mazzei & Noble, 2017).

Bingham, Eisenhardt, and Furrpportunities (2011) have identified three types of strategies that need to exist in an organisation in order to build the organisation's strategies based on its resources, capabilities, and circumstances. According to them, the first strategy is position strategy which is used to build mutually strengthening resource systems in an attractive strategic position with many resources. The second type of strategy they identify is the leverage strategy, where an organisation develops strategically important resources to current markets and using them to draw new products and new markets. The third and last type is the opportunity strategy, which is about choosing a few tactical mechanisms with deep and quick resources streams and learning simple rules for opportunities to take advantage of.

6.2. Strategy formulation

It is imperative for any organisational strategy to define where the firm wants to be in the future and reflect objectively on its current position to decide how to get there; taking into cognisance the alternatives, options, available resources, and the needed changes (Peppard & Ward, 2016). According to Reitzig and Maciejovsky (2015: 1986), "the creation of a strategy is not only a task for the executives; on the contrary, the definition of the business approaches and new measures to initiate, [should]involve all the hierarchy levels of the organisation, [including the shop floor employees]." Rumelt (2012) echoes the same view as this one when he maintains that many managers in organisations are gradually accepting that the top-down model of strategy formulation by the few imposed on the many must be replaced by the bottom-up one which involves the shop floor employees as well. Thompson, Strickland, and Gamble (2015) also share the same view as this one, when they maintain that the crafting of organisational strategy is not supposed to be the sole preserve of top management, but that it should also involve the general organisational personnel. They further state that the whole process of strategy formulation and implementation should follow the following process:

➢ Developing a strategic vision
➢ Setting objectives
➢ Crafting a strategy to achieve objectives and vision
➢ Implementing and executing strategy
➢ Monitoring developments, evaluating performance, and making the corrective adjustments

The following figure represents views by Thompson, Strickland, and Gamble (2015) on strategy formulation, implementation and execution:
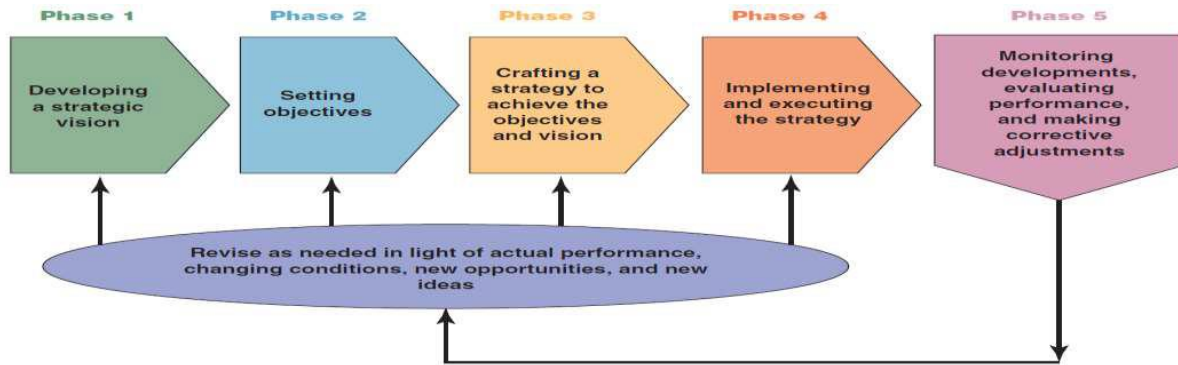
Source: Thompson, Strickland, and Gamble (2015: 24)

Kral and Kralova (2016) propose that the whole notion of strategy formulation commences with the analysis of the environment surrounding the company, coming up with the proposition of action plans, aimed at improving competitiveness. According to Gracia and Quezada (2016), in order to analyse the environment surrounding an organisation, the most commonly used procedure is the SWOT analysis, which allows for the determination of strengths and opportunities of the organisation as well as the weaknesses and threats that the market offers in the sector of its business. On their part Hill, Jones, and Schilling (2014) argue that in order for a strategy to be successful, it must be formulated in
the following manner:
➢ Simple, coherent, and have long-term goals;
➢ Take into account the competitive environment;
➢ Objective evaluation of the resources; and
➢ Effective implementation.

Hussein, Omar, Noordin, and Ishak (2016) are of the opinion that another concept to take cognisance of when formulating strategies is what they refer to as organisational learning capacity. According to them, the application of this concept allows the organisation to analyse the relation between the degree of its structure, performance and the learning capacity. Van der Kolk and Schokker (2016) maintain that strategies must not necessarily be formulated by the senior managers alone, but that there needs to be an involvement of the lower levels of the organisation, in what is called emergent strategy. Thus, according to Arslan and Roudaki (2019:119), "workforce is considered as a strategic asset in any organisation for the formulation and implementation of strategies." Employees therefore have to be considered part of strategy formulation in general. Strategy formulation requires the confidence, cooperation, and competencies of the organisation's workforce.

6.3. Employee engagement
Employee engagement (EE) has emerged as a key concept of the vocabulary of human resource management (HRM), yet there is very little empirical research into how HR managers understand EE; how they develop and implement EE strategies; and what implications all of these might have for the crafting of an organisational strategy (Gupta & Shama, 2016). Furthermore, it has emerged as an important management-focused activity in order to compete and perform in a dynamic and competitive environment, having linkage with the organisation's goals and objectives (Mishra, Boynton & Mishra, 2014) Human resources represents a valuable intangible asset, and recent research indicates that it is progressively becoming the key success factor within strategy formulation projects. In the past, one of the major reasons why strategy crafting efforts failed was that people were conspicuously absent from strategic planning (Yoerger, Crowe & Allen, 2015).

Gupta and Shama (2016) outline the following three principle factors as key for engagement of employees:
➢ Career development or personal development opportunities: which entail the development of career with the view to influencing employee engagement together with retaining of talented. It also provides the opportunity for personal development.
➢ Empowerment: which entails employees being made part of the decisions which affect their jobs. Therefore, leaders of high engagement workplaces do create a challenging and trustful environment within which employees are encouraged to oppose or dissent from the existing orthodoxy. They are also encouraged to innovate in order to move the company forward.
➢ Leadership with respect to clarity of company values: Employees in an organisation need to feel that core values of their organisation are clear and unambiguous. Most of the successful organisations show respect for each employee's contribution and qualities irrespective of their level of job.

According to Gupta and Shama (2016:45), there are five strategies or tools are crucial for improving the engagement of employees in the activities of an organisation and these are:
"
➢ Employees' involvement must be encouraged in the initiatives of the organisation. Involving the employees in the bigger picture will provide interesting challenges for them which will keep their jobs interesting.
➢ Encouragement of innovation and creativity, which provides new insights and a sense of individual accomplishment.
➢ Encouragement of communication that is open. Being open minded and encouraging employees to express their perspectives and ideas without criticism.
➢ Providing opportunities for education and learning. Employees should not be allowed to feel as if there is no more scope for them to learn in their existing positions. This action enhances employee retention.
➢ Sharing of information should be kept truthful and hopeful. Bad news should not be held back but shared as well."

Deducing from the literature here-above, it is evident that employee involvement in organisational decision-making processes in general, and in strategy formulation in particular, is critical to ensure that the oraganisation achieves its goals and is able to compete successfully with its industry rivals.

6.4. Leadership styles
6.4.1. Definitions of leadership

Leadership has been defined by various scholars in a variety of ways and in relation to diverse contexts. These definitions are as follows:

Definition	Author/s
1. The behaviour of an individual directing the group activities towards a shared goal	Hemphill and Coons, 1957
2. The process of influencing activities of an organised group towards the achievement of a goal	Rauch and Behling, 1984
3. The process of articulating a vision, embodying values and creating the environment in which things could be accomplished	Richards and Engle, 1986
4. The process of making sense of what the people do together so that they will understand and be committed	Drath and Palus, 1994
5. The process of influencing other people to understand, agree about what needs to be done and also how to do so, and the process of facilitating individual together with collective efforts for accomplishing shared objectives	Yukl, 2013

Source: Authors' own compilation

From the above definitions, it is evident that the definition of leadership has evolved over time as it continued to be perceived in relation to different circumstances. Of the above definitions of leadership, the definition by Yukl (2013) is deemed the appropriate one for this study, as it focuses on the three concepts, namely, influence, people and goal or shared objectives, which are key concepts for the desired leadership qualities.

5.4.2 Leadership styles
According to Maseko and Proches (2013:5664), "leadership styles determine the success of the objectives to be delivered, which is indicative of the importance of leadership aspect towards the organizational success." Srivastava (2016:63) has identified seven different types of leadership styles as follows:

Leadership Style	Description/Strengths	Weaknesses
Autocratic	Autocratic leaders make choices or decisions based on their own beliefs and do not involve others for their suggestion or advice.	Autocratic leaders are typically not experienced with the leadership thrust upon them with regards to assignment or new position which involves management of people. They cause irreparable damage to the

		organization as they force their followers or subordinates to execute strategies in a narrow way based upon an idea which is subjective regarding what success looks like. They also do not have shared vision
Bureaucratic	Bureaucratic leaders are committed strongly to processes and procedures instead of people they lead, and consequently, they appear highly aloof.	Bureaucratic leaders perceive policies as coming before people and complaints are therefore met with disinterest or resistance
Democratic	A democratic leader allows a group to lead itself	With the group being free and uncensored, these leaders become frustrated by the huge effort needed to build the consensus for sometimes the ordinary decisions together with unsuitable pace needed for leading a group. There is a huge potential for poor decision making through this leadership style and execution is significantly weak here
Charismatic	Charismatic leaders have a vision and a personality which motivates subordinates to execute this vision	Charismatic leaders can leave the organisation and once gone, the organisation appears rudderless and directionless
Situational	Situational leaders adapt to different styles for different outcomes or situations	A common drawback with this style is that the wrong style could be applied inelegantly
Transactional	Transactional leaders are known for always willing to give something in return when following them	It eliminates individuality and therefore limits innovation and creativity
Transformational	Transformational leaders seek to change those that they are leading and while doing that they can represent self-replicating and sustainable style of leadership	It has an unidirectional influence and can result in wrong decisions

Source: Srivastava (2016:63), compiled by authors.

Srivastava (2016) is of the view that leadership styles are more varied in the Western world than in the Eastern world. According to Germano (2010), the common characteristics of leadership styles are directive, charismatic, empowering and participative, whereas Eastern world leaders are more self-acknowledgeable, more authoritative and good in general management. In a study conducted by Ndubueze and Akanni (2015), to examine the relationship between leadership style and the Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB), the results demonstrated that democratic and transformational leadership styles have a significantly positive relationship with the subordinates' OCB, whereas autocratic and transactional leadership are negatively related to the OCB. These results indicate that the individuals working under a democratic leader are likely to express themselves by contributing in the day-to-day activities and decision-making processes of their organisations, owing to the flexibility of their leadership (Olasupo, 2011).

According to Wang, Ma and Zhang (2014), transformational leadership style within the context of an organisation creates a good organisational culture which also signals the positive relationship between this leadership style and organisational personnel, including shop floor employees. Chebet (2017) conducted a study whose aim was to analyse leadership styles influencing successful strategy crafting, it was found that leadership styles do play a critical role. The study recommended that management should ensure that employees are involved right in the beginning of strategy crafting. Kihara, Bwisa and Kihoro (2016:216) maintain, "manufacturing firms interested in enhancing their performance and staying ahead of competition should

endeavour to practice superior leadership style starting with transactional leadership style and progressively changing to transformational style in the entire process of strategy crafting and implementation in their firms".

The literature study here above has indicated that leadership styles are positively related to organisational strategy crafting. This implies therefore that leadership styles may lead to shop floor employees being either involved or disengaged when it comes to the crafting of organisational strategy. It is up to management within organisations to ensure that employees are on board in the crafting of strategy, so that they could own it and be committed to its successful execution.

6.5. Organisational transparency
Transparency is treasured in areas such as management, public relations, policy, and finance, and is seen as a profoundly positive feature of interpersonal relations because the disclosure of information expedites trust (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2014). According to Berglund (2014), transparency refers to frequency of disclosure of all relevant information in a timely manner. In relation to strategy formulation, transparency refers to the extent to which an organisation's strategy is visible during its formulation (Whittington, Caillet, & Yakis-Douglas (2011). An organisation that has a transparent process "allows both internal and external stakeholders to take part in the strategy formulation or at least enables them to decipher what the strategy is as it evolves" (Adobor, 2019:384). Based on the literature here above, it is evident that it is essential for organisations to be transparent in their strategy formulation exercise, thus ensuring that all relevant stakeholders are well informed and involved in strategy crafting.

6.6. Organizational inclusivity
Organisational inclusivity refers to the extent to which an organisation accepts the input of various stakeholders during strategy formulation. Organisations that pursue an inclusive approach to strategy formulation normally engage all the relevant stakeholders in strategic conversations, wherein views are exchanged to shape how strategy evolves (Mantere & Vaara, 2008). Although the contemporary literature tends to use the terms inclusion and participation interchangeably, some researchers differentiate between the two terms. Mack and Szulanski (2017, p. 387), for example, describe inclusion as "a process of creating a community of actors that engage in multiple ways via learning and sharing diverse perspectives, [whereas] participation is narrower because individuals may participate in the process without being part of any community, implying that inclusion is more useful than participation." Organisations that are inclusive in their approach to strategy formulation are poised to involve all the stakeholders in the process of strategy crafting.

7. METHODOLOGY
In any study, research provides a rigorous and determined knowledge and understanding of the subject being investigated, while methodology provides and assists in outlining the structure of the research project and highlights the course of conducting research (Howell, 2013). Research methodology allows for the attainment of rounded, significant and relevant features from the actual occurrence, within a fundamentally restricted system. The significance and functions of research methodology is, therefore, to find answers to research questions (Kumar 2014). As a means of achieving the objectives of the study and getting answers to research questions, research approaches and techniques need to be established and be aligned with the study objectives (Kumar, 2019).

7.1. Population of interest
According to Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel and Page (2016), population refers to the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. The focus of this study was on shop floor employees in the two manufacturing companies based in Pietermaritzburg. According to these companies' websites, there is a total of 1050 shop floor employees employed by these companies at the time of the study.

7.2. Research approach
To achieve the objectives of this study, a quantitative research approach was adopted. Muijs (2010:1) notes that a quantitative approach to research is "explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)." Thus, a quantitative method is based in the scientific method and relies on statistical processes for analysing data. The results generated from the study can then be generalised to the entire population (Sufian, 2015).

7.3. Sampling method
For the purposes of this study, a simple random sampling method was employed. In this form of sampling, sample members are randomly chosen for being included in the sample and each element of population has equal probability of being selected (Leedy and Ormrod, 2021). The list of shop floor employees from the two companies was used as a sampling framework from which a sample size was established. From each sample framework, a

number was assigned to each employee and after the entire population was numbered, participants were then randomly selected until a required sample size was attained.

7.4. Sample size

Leedy and Ormrod (2014) explain a sample size as the number of elements to be included in the study. The researcher used a Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table to determine a reasonable sample size for the study. The formula for determining the sample size according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) is presented below:

$$s = X^2 NP(1 - P) \div d^2(N - 1) + X^2 P(1 - P)\ldots\ldots(1)$$

s = required sample size
X^2 = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841)
N= the population size
P= the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).
d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

The study population (N) was 1050 shop floor employees. Using a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the required sample size is 320 participants when substituting into (1).

7.5. Data collection method

Data can be defined as information accumulated in the process of research, whereas data collection instruments designate the devices used to gather data (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The study used both primary and secondary data collection methods in addressing the research objectives. For secondary data, the researcher used textbooks, peer-reviewed and published journal articles, company websites, and the internet. The primary data was specifically collected to address the problem at hand and was executed by the researcher. Questionnaire survey was the primary data collection tool utilised for the study. The questionnaire for this study was made up of closed or pre-coded questions and was also distributed to shop floor employees employed in the manufacturing companies participating in this study. A total of 320 participants took part during the questionnaire survey, with all 320 responses being correctly filled, thus yielding a 100% response rate The designed questionnaire was divided into three sections in line with the research objectives.

The questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), the key advantage of this technique is that the researcher can collect all the completed questionnaires in a short period of time. This approach was used because it is cost effective and is an easy way of administering questionnaires (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

8. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

According to Coakes and Steed (2010), there are a number of different reliability coefficients. One of the most commonly used is the Cronbach's alpha, which is based on the average correlation of items within a test if the items are standardized. If the items are not standardized, it is based on the average covariance among the items. The Cronbach's alpha can range from 0 to 1 (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Cronbach's alpha was therefore calculated as part of the reliability test to assess how consistent the results were and if the similar results will be achieved to generalize should the sample size be increased. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), a value of 0.7 or higher is a very good value that can lead a researcher to conclude that the same results will be achieved if the survey could be carried out with a larger sample of respondents. The Cronbach's alpha was calculated for all the statements which have the same scales in each section and the results are outlined on Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 – Cronbach's alpha results

QUESTION	CRONBACH'S ALPHA
Section B	0.846
Section C	0.887
Section D	0.871
Section E	0.856
Section F	0.775
Overall	0.955

For establishing the validity of the questionnaire, factor analysis using a principal component analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation was carried out. The reliability of each of the factors were carried out for each section and the results which are the rotated factor matrices are summarized in Appendix E. The results for the overall factor analysis with Cronbach alpha for each factor are summarized under Table 6.2.

Table 6.2– Overall factor analysis results

Factor	Cronbach's alpha
1	0.711
2	0.761
3	0.711
4	0-756
5	0.771
6	0.898
7	0.698
8	0.731
9	0.771
10	0.712

All the Cronbach's alpha results were above 0.7 and the overall one being 0.96. This indicates that the similar results will be achieved even at the bigger sample size and also means that the results could be generalized to the entire pollution of the manufacturing sector. The results also indicated good internal consistency in the responses.

9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To ensure compliance with the research code of ethics, ethical clearance approval to conduct the study was sought from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's ethical committee. Since the issue of ethical requirements is important in any research, the researcher notified the research participants about the purpose of the study and that their participation in the survey was solely on a voluntary basis. The participants were required to complete an informed consent form before completing the questionnaire, as evidence that they were willing to take part in this research project. The participants were also assured that their anonymity and confidentiality was going to be maintained throughout the study. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that the contents (questions) were not going to emotionally harm the participants. The participants were given an opportunity to peruse the questionnaire and raise any queries they might have had. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured. There were no conceivable risks involved when participating in this study as the information obtained was only used for this study and the participants remained anonymous because their responses were analysed as aggregated data.

10. DATA ANALYSIS

The results from the study were presented and analysed using bar graphs and frequency tables were calculated using SPSS (version 25), to gain an overview of the perceptions of the respondents with respect to leadership engagement influence and leadership style influence on the formulation of business strategy. The descriptive statistics included the mean, mode, median and standard deviation. These statistics serve to confirm the results of the graphical statistics and frequency tables.

The Kolmogorov Smirnov test was used to test the data to ascertain if it comes from a normal distribution or not. Once confirmed, appropriate statistical tests (parametric and non-parametric) were used. Parametric tests such as sample t-tests, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used and non-parametric tests such as the Mann-Whitney test and Kruska-Wallis were also used.

10.1. Demographics
The information analysed in this section included the age, gender, race and the level of education of the respondents.

10.1.1. Gender
Bar graph for gender as well as the corresponding frequency table are shown on Table 9.1.1.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	185	57.8	59.3	59.3
	Female	127	39.7	40.7	100.0
	Total	312	97.5	100.0	
Missing	System	8	2.5		
Total		320	100.0		

Table 9.1.1: Frequency table for gender

The results in Table 9.1.1 indicate that there more males (59.3%) participated in the study than females (40.7%).

10.1.2. Age
Table 9.2 shows the age frequency table

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	≤ 20 years	19	5.9	6.0	6.0
	21-30 years	110	34.4	34.5	40.4
	31-40 years	112	35.0	35.1	75.5
	41-50 years	49	15.3	15.4	90.9
	> 50 years	29	9.1	9.1	100.0
	Total	319	99.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.3		
Total		320	100.0		

Table 9.1.2: Age frequency table

The distribution of age was 31-40 years (35.1%), 21-30 years (34.5%) followed by 41-50 years (15.4%), > 50 years (9.1%) and ≤ 20 years (6%). This shows that the majority of respondents were between 21 and 40 years.

10.1.3. Race
The frequency table is shown under Table 9.1.3.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Black	181	56.6	56.9	56.9
	White	13	4.1	4.1	61.0
	Indian	86	26.9	27.0	88.1
	Coloured	38	11.9	11.9	100.0
	Total	318	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		320	100.0		

Table 9.1.3: Frequency table for race

The modal race group was Black (56.9%) followed by Indians (27%) and Coloureds (11.9%). Whites only constituted 4.1% of the sample.

10.1.4. Education Level

Education level frequency table is shown under Table 9.1.4

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No education	3	.9	.9	.9
	Primary school	10	3.1	3.1	4.1
	High school	181	56.6	56.9	61.0
	Diploma	81	25.3	25.5	86.5
	Degree	35	10.9	11.0	97.5
	Postgraduate	8	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	318	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		320	100.0		

Table 9.1.4: Level of education frequency table

The modal education level was high school (56.9%) followed by diploma (25.5%). 11 % of the sample had university degree whilst 3.1% had primary education level. There was also a notable 0.9% of the respondents with no education at all and 2.5% with post graduate qualification.

10.1.5. Work experience

The employee work experience is shown by the frequency table under Table 9.1.5.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	≤ 5 years	88	27.5	28.4	28.4
	6-10 years	72	22.5	23.2	51.6
	11-20 years	89	27.8	28.7	80.3
	21-25 years	28	8.8	9.0	89.4
	> 26 years	33	10.3	10.6	100.0
	Total	310	96.9	100.0	
Missing	System	10	3.1		
Total		320	100.0		

Table 9.1.5: Employee work experience frequency table

The distribution of work experience for the majority of the sample was 11-20 years (28.7%), ≤ 5 years (28.4%) and 6-10 years (23.2%), ≤ 5 years (23.2%). 10.6% of the sample had more than 26 years' experience.

10.2. Perceptions on leadership's employee engagement

Shop floor employees' perceptions on the importance of employee engagement in the process of strategy crafting are shown by the frequency table on Table 9.2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	7	2.2	2.2	2.2
	Disagree	29	9.1	9.2	11.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	31	9.7	9.8	21.3
	Agree	161	50.3	51.1	72.4
	Strongly agree	87	27.2	27.6	100.0
	Total	315	98.4	100.0	
Missing	System	5	1.6		
Total		320	100.0		

Table 9.2: Employee perceptions of leadership employee engagement

Almost 58% of the respondents agreed that for organisations to craft a winning strategy, the engagement of shop floor employees is critical This is followed by 21.5% that strongly agreed. A total of 10.4% disagreed and strongly disagreed with this statement but 10.4% of the sample could not agree nor disagree with the statement.

10.3. Perceptions on leadership styles

Shop floor employees' perceptions on the role of leadership style in determining the crafting of a winning strategy are shown in Table 9.3

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	10	3.1	3.1	3.1
	Disagree	36	11.3	11.3	14.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	34	10.6	10.7	25.2
	Agree	169	52.8	53.1	78.3
	Strongly agree	69	21.6	21.7	100.0
	Total	318	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.6		
Total		320	100.0		

Table 9.3: Employee perceptions on leadership styles

74.8% collectively agreed and strongly agreed that the leadership styles in their organisations are crucial in the process of strategy formulation. However, 11.3% disagreed with that whist 3.1% strongly disagreed with 10.7% not agreeing nor disagreeing.

10.4. Perceptions on organisational transparency

Perceptions of shop floor employees on the significance of organisational transparency on strategy crafting are shown in Table 9.4

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	.6	.6	.6
	Disagree	9	2.8	2.8	3.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	10	3.1	3.2	6.6
	Agree	172	53.8	54.3	60.9
	Strongly agree	124	38.8	39.1	100.0
	Total	317	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	3	.9		
Total		320	100.0		

Table 9.4: Employee perceptions on organisational transparency

The majority of respondents agreed that organisational transparency is very important for the crafting of business strategy. This is illustrated by the modal class of 54.3% followed by strongly agree at 39.1%. The collective response of agree and strongly disagree is 93.4%. Just below 3% of the respondents disagreed with 0.6% strongly disagreeing. However, 3.2% did not agree nor disagree

10.5. Perceptions on organisational inclusivity

Perceptions of shop floor employees on the significance of organisational inclusivity on strategy crafting are captured in Table 9.5

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	3	.9	.9
	Disagree	6	1.9	1.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	10	3.1	3.2
	Agree	198	61.9	62.7
	Strongly agree	99	30.9	31.3
	Total	316	98.8	100.0
Missing	System	4	1.3	
Total		320	100.0	

Table 9.5: Employee perceptions on organisational inclusivity

62.7% of the sample agreed that organisational inclusivity is significant in organisational strategy formulation, followed by 31.3% that strongly agreed. The total in general equates to 94% which is high in comparison with a total of 2.8% which disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. There was 3.2% that could neither agree nor disagree.

11. HYPOTHESES TESTING

Bryman and Bell (2011) state that there are two main types of chi-square test for hypothesis testing. These are the Chi-square test for the goodness of fit applies to the analysis of a single categorical variable, and the Chi-square test for independence or relatedness applies to the analysis of the relationship between two categorical variables. The Chi-square test for the goodness of fit will be used in this regard. This for instance means that when testing whether business culture does influence the successful execution of business strategy, it would be expected that the responses for questions on employee engagement of the questionnaire would tend towards the "agree" and "strongly agree" category more than they would to the other categories.

11.1. Employee engagement
H_1 Engagement of employees has a positive impact on the successful crafting of organisational strategy

The Chi-square results are outlined under Table 10.1
Table 10.1 – Chi-square results for first hypothesis (Employee engagement)

Test Statistics									
	a1	a2	a3	a5	a6	a7	a8	a9	a10
Chi-Square	4856.830	4899.799	4606.317	3960.111	3718.898	2951.293	3946.179	3621.875	3340.546
df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Decision:
At the 5% significance level, H_0 is rejected since all the p-values are less than 0.05 and it is concluded that employee engagement is significant for the proper formulation of organisational strategy.

11.2. Leadership styles
The Chi-square results are outlined under Table 10.2

Table 10.2 – Chi-square results for second hypothesis (Leadership styles)

Test Statistics									
	b1	b2	b3	b4	b5	b6	b7	b8	b9	b10
Chi-Square	304.871	425.563	408.696	374.750	288.750	317.281[b]	266.057	355.994	297.252	428.918
df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Decision:
At the 5% level of significance, H_0 is rejected since all the p-values are less than 0.05 and it is concluded that leadership styles influence the successful crafting of organisational strategy.

11.3. Organisational transparency
The Chi-square results are outlined under Table 10.3 below

Table 4.11 – Chi-square results for the third hypothesis (Organisational transparency)

Test Statistics									
	c1	c2	c3	c4	c5	c6	c7	c8	c9	c10
Chi-Square	396.801	238.006	308.132	364.688	294.404	249.699	253.447	245.968	312.763	246.057
df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Decision:
At the 5% significance level, H_0 is rejected since all the p-values are less than 0.05 and the conclusion is that the transparency within an organisation determines the successful crafting of organisational strategy.

11.4.   Organisational inclusivity
The Chi-square results for third hypothesis above are outlined under Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 – Chi-square results for the fourth hypothesis (Organisational inclusivity)

Test Statistics

	d1	d2	d3	d4	d5	d6	d7	d8	d9	d10
Chi-Square	400.965	297.129	295.843	283.962	346.781	321.110	252.063	411.893	279.767	192.469
df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Decision:
At the 5% significance level, H_0 is rejected since all the p-values are less than 0.05 and it is concluded that organisational inclusivity is significant to the successful crafting of organisational strategy.

12. CORRELATION ANALYSIS

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), correlation analysis measures the relationship between two variables at a time. This is done using the population correlation coefficient - ρ which in turn is measured by the sample correlation coefficient r. The correlation coefficient ranges as $-1 \leq r \leq 1$. Positive correlation means that as one variable increases so does the other and vice versa. Negative correlation is interpreted to mean that as one variable increases the other decreases and vice versa (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

When the data is parametric, such as the marks of students in a test or exam, Pearson correlation is used, whilst if the data is non-parametric, the Spearman correlation is used (Kreinovich, Nguyen and Wu, 2013). Pearson correlation was therefore used on the average of each section. Correlation analysis results are outlined on Table 11.1. This outlines the Pearson's *r* results on all the four sections of the questionnaire. These are employee engagement, leadership styles, organisational transparency and organisational inclusivity.

Table 11.1 – Correlation analysis results

		avga	avgb	avgc	avgd
avga	Pearson Correlation	1	.654**	.710**	.671**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	320	320	320	320
avgb	Pearson Correlation	.654**	1	.604**	.668**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	320	320	320	320
avgc	Pearson Correlation	.710**	.604**	1	.798**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	320	320	320	320
avgd	Pearson Correlation	.671**	.668**	.798**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	320	320	320	320

Interpretation
There are significant positive linear relationships that range from medium to strong between employee engagement influence, leadership styles influence, organisational transparency influence and organisational inclusivity influence on organisational strategy formulation. The interpretation of these relationships is that if one variable increases, so does the other and vice versa. For example, as employee engagement level influence increases so does leadership styles influence, organisational transparency influence and organisational inclusivity influence. A summary which includes the strength of the relationship between these four variables is given in Table 11.2 below.

Table 11.2 – Summary of the relationships between the five variables

	Employee engagement	Leadership styles	Organisational transparency	Organisational inclusivity
Employee engagement		Medium positive linear	Strong positive linear	Medium positive linear
Leadership styles	Medium positive linear		Medium positive linear	Medium positive linear
Organisational transparency	Strong positive linear	Medium positive linear		Strong positive linear
Organisational inclusivity	Medium positive linear	Medium positive linear	Strong positive linear	

It is clear from Table 11.2 that all variables exhibited medium to strong positive linear relationship. It is worth noting that there is a strong positive linear relationship between employee engagement and leadership styles, organisational transparency and organisational inclusivity.

13. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the determining factors for successful crafting of organisational strategy at selected manufacturing companies in Pietermaritzburg from the perspective of shop floor employees. The findings of the study indicate that shop floor employees view the crafting of organisational strategy as the responsibility of all the stakeholders within organisations, and not just the top management. This employee view is in line with the argument by Adobor (2019) who observes that there has been some recognition in the literature that the dissection of strategy formulation and implementation may have fostered the inaccurate belief that strategy formulation and execution are separate things that require a clear demarcation of decision rights between top management and the rank-and-file members of the organisation He further maintains, "despite the dominance of this sort of managerial thinking about strategy formulation, there has been a recent recognition that broadening the strategy process beyond top management may drive organisational success" (Adobor, 2019:383).

As far as the shop floor employees are concerned, organisations and/or managers need to take into account certain critical factors, if they aim at crafting winning organisational strategies. These critical factors, according to them, are: employee engagement, leadership styles, organisational transparency and organisational inclusivity.

Insofar as employee engagement is concerned, shop floor employees are of the opinion that if management could engage them in the inception stage of strategy crafting, they could have inputs as to how the strategy needs be formulated, as they are involved in the day-to-day activities of organisations. This view is echoed by Yoerger, Crowe and Allen (2015) when they state that human resources represents a valuable intangible asset, and recent research indicates that it is progressively becoming the key success factor within strategy formulation projects. They further argue that in the past, one of the major reasons why strategy crafting efforts failed was that people were conspicuously absent from strategic planning (Yoerger, Crowe & Allen, 2015).

With regard to the leadership styles, shop floor employees feel strongly that the leadership style of their organisations need to transformational and accommodative in nature. This style would ensure that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the crafting of strategy. These sentiments are shared by Kihara, Bwisa and Kihoro (2016:216) who maintain, "manufacturing firms interested in enhancing their performance and staying ahead of competition should endeavour to practice superior leadership style starting with transactional leadership style and progressively changing to transformational style in the entire process of strategy crafting and implementation in their firms".

The study findings also indicated that shop floor employees regard organisational transparency as key to strategy formulation. As far as they are concerned, organisations need to pursue an "open" strategy, where there is transparency and clear lines of communication. This view is shared by Adobor (2019:384) who maintains, "an organisation that has a transparent process allows both internal and external stakeholders to take part in the strategy formulation or at least enables them to decipher what the strategy is as it evolves".

The study findings further demonstrated that shop floor employees are of the view that organisational inclusivity has a critical role to play in the formulation of strategy. As far as they are concerned, it is only when various organisational stakeholders are included in strategy formulation that this process can be assured of success, as the said stakeholders would have all the buy-in to the strategy itself. These sentiments are also expressed by Mantere and Vaara, (2008) who state that organisations that pursue an inclusive approach to strategy formulation normally

engage all the relevant stakeholders in strategic conversations, wherein views are exchanged to shape how strategy evolves.

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