



INVESTIGATING THE INFLUENCE OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AS AN APPROACH FOR
AN EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
[A JAMAICA PERSPECTIVE]

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INVESTIGATING THE INFLUENCE OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AS AN APPROACH FOR AN EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE [A JAMAICA PERSPECTIVE]

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Abstract

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It is becoming paramount that successful change management is crucial for an organization's development and growth. However, it is becoming even more evident, that many organizations have yet to succeed in the planning and execution of change processes. This can be attributed to one of the major hindrances of change cited by many scholars and practitioners – employee resistance. This challenge was one of the main features of the traditional approach of change management, where decisions to effect change were made by managers at the onset of the change process and then communicated to employees in a convincing and vertical flow. However, increasing research is denoting the effect of positive psychology, an emerging phenomenon, as a model of successful change due to its premise of making people an integral component of the change process. This is particularly necessary in the public sector and in particular, the Transport Authority, which is the organization this qualitative exploratory case study is based. This method, a qualitative exploratory case study, was employed so as garner a more profound understanding of how organizational change is effected at this organization.

To this extent, this study, which was completed by me from October 2018 to May 2022, is based on the exploration, understanding, and application of positive psychology, the main theory being explored to enact successful organizational change. The theories of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry will serve as useful and complementary constructs for the successful implementation of organizational change, particularly from a behavioural perspective. Therefore, data were collected from employees via semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. A questionnaire was also administered to triangulate the research findings.

The study found that while employees perceived organizational change to be critical to the continuous growth of the organization, successful change will be dependent on pertinent factors such as employee involvement, readiness, and perception of change as well as organizational leaders' understanding of the forces that could influence resistance, such as installed political parties as revealed

by the findings. As such, one of the main contributions of this study is that it will help to provide a kind of blueprint for the successful implementation of change from an empirical perspective, particularly using positive psychology methodologies as the main vehicle. The implication of the findings and possible directions for future research are discussed further in the research.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgement, the work presented is entirely my own.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my late mother, Louise Grey. I know if you were still here, you would be sharing in this moment, with a big ‘ole’ smile on your face. Rest well! I also dedicate it to my family and friends, who have supported me throughout this process, even if it was just a word of encouragement.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION OF STUDY

1.1 Background

Jamaica, with a population of approximately 2.5 million people, is the largest English-speaking Island in the Caribbean and the third largest by way of size after Cuba and Hispaniola (Black et al., 2022). The country is located just Ninety (90) miles south of Cuba and approximately Six Hundred (600) miles south of Florida in the United States (Black et al., 2022). The country gained its independence from the United Kingdom on August 6, 1962, and is currently defined as an upper middle-income economy by the World Bank (World Bank, 2020; Black et al., 2022). Jamaica, while small, boost over fourteen (14) parishes, with its capital being Kingston, the parish in which the headquarter of the Transport Authority, a public sector agency, and the based organization of this study is located. Organizational change has always been a prominent feature of this organization which has been in existence since 1987. However, organizational change in general, particularly successful ones, is never an easy feat as denoted by research (Higgins & Bourne, 2018; Ravanfar, 2015), and this organization, is no exception.

Organizational change is defined by Collette et al. (1997, p.20) as a ‘relatively durable transformation’ in a subsystem of an organization, provided that the change is observable by its members to whom the change is connected. This definition was advanced by Soparnot (2013) based on the work of March in 1981 as a set of concordant responses by the varying internal parts of an organization as they interact with their external environments. To this extent, organizational change can be viewed as an undertaking by management to improve an organization’s performance by addressing key inputs such as its structure, its people and technology to meet the constantly changing needs of external and internal consumers (Moran & Brightman, 2001; Edmondson, 2018). For these reasons, change management is no easy task due to the dynamic nature of the business environment as well as the large volume of people that managers may have to engage with to communicate the change to gain buy-in (Oreg et al., 2018; Hijal-Moghrabi et al., 2020).

These challenges were some of the main features of the traditional approach of change management where decisions to effect change were made by managers at the onset of the change process and then communicated to employees in a convincing and vertical flow (Ryan et al., 2008). Since the decisions were made without the input of staff, the “people factor”, who, most likely would have been affected by the change, several hindrances arose, such as resistance to change which led mostly to failures or unexpected change outcomes (Kotter, 1996; Rock and Schwartz, 2006). Further, according to Kotter (1996), only thirty (30) percent of change programmes succeeded using these conventional means. Mr. Kotter’s theory was concurred in 2008 in a McKinsey Consultation firm survey, in which it was stated that only 1 transformation in 3 succeeded. This survey was conducted with over Three Thousand One Hundred and Ninety-Nine (3,199) business executives, worldwide (Ravanfar, 2015). One of the main reasons cited for these failures was the use of the traditional change management approaches which normally occur along strictly hierarchical lines, for example, Top-down management and sometimes even excluded the leadership team itself from the change process (Wimmer, 2011). Kotter (1996) went on further to describe these types of approaches as being built on animal training rather than on behavioural science, which is the foundation of positive psychology.

According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, behavioural science is “a scientific discipline, such as sociology, anthropology, or psychology, in which the actions and reactions of humans and animals are studied through observational and experimental methods.” One aspect of behavioural science that is gaining momentum in this regard is that of ‘positive psychology’ (Linley & Joseph, 2004; Lopez & Snyder, 2003; Seligman et al. 2014). As with behavioural science, positive psychology seeks to understand the psychological, emotional, and mental processes that drive and influence human behaviours to solve social phenomena (Seligman, 2014). As such, Seligman, the pioneer of this approach defined “Positive psychology as the study of happiness, flourishing, and what makes life worth living.”

According to Ed Diener, aka, “Dr. Happiness” - “happiness is not just a place, it is an ongoing process with new challenges which will require the right attitude and activities to remain happy.” (Diener, 1984). Additionally, it is not just about a good feeling but rather transcends far beyond that, as happy people are empowered to excel in almost every aspect of life, from work to health (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). As such, happiness yields positive emotions, and positive emotions coupled with collaborative values can assist an organization in the pursuit of its transformational goals of sustainability and growth. However, this type of human emotions cannot be achieved with the traditional approach of change management which is usually based on animal training than on human psychology, in particular positive psychology (Seligman et al., 2014). To this end, positive psychology theory will allow leaders to consider ‘people’ as core inputs to the transformational process and not just mere actors or non-existing agents (Seligman, 2002). This insight can help organizational leaders to create an environment that is more conducive to happier work, even in the context of transformation (Daniel, 2009).

To this extent, a positive psychology approach to change management takes into consideration the science of human behaviour, which embodies, an employee's emotion, engagement, relationships, sense of belonging and achievement, personal or otherwise (Seligman, 2014). Seligman’s argument was concurred by Daniels (2009), who argued that when organizational change initiatives are designed without an understanding of human behaviour, the results can be destructive, especially in the long term. This contrasts with the implementation of reforms, as in the case of Jamaica’s public sector, to effect organizational change, most of which reportedly failed (Tindigarukay, 2004). As such, it can be safely assumed that the understanding and application of positive psychology in organizational change initiatives can help organizations yield positive results. To this extent, positive psychology is akin to one’s positive state of being which is pertinent to high team performance, and by extension, the organization (Daniels, 2009). Further, positive psychology could offer management an understanding of human growth and change that may help to further challenge the prevailing perspective of viewing

people as ‘resistors to change’ which was a major tenet of the traditional approach to organizational change (Losado & Heaphy, 2004; Seligman et al. 2014).

Notably, this qualitative study will employ the use of semi-structured interviews as the main means of data collection as well as a questionnaire which will serve as a supplemental tool in the data collection phase of the study. According to research, employing the use of two (2) or more data collection methods can provide a more wholesome view of the social phenomenon being investigated (Altrichter and Somekh, 1996; Heale et al. 2013). This type of data collection strategy, when applied to qualitative research, is defined as triangulation or ‘an attempt’ to further explain the richness and complexity of human behaviours by studying it from varying perspectives (Cohen and Manion, 1986; Heale et al., 2013). Therefore, research contends that triangulation can serve to further validate the research findings (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Heale et al., 2013). As such, Creswell (1994) defined qualitative research as an inquiry that seeks to understand a social phenomenon that is of concern to humans. This was further expounded by Aspers and Corte (2019) who described it as an iterative process employed to improve one’s understanding of a stated phenomenon. This contrasts with quantitative research which encompasses systematic methods of data collection which involve the collection of more numerical data from respondents (Cohen, 1980; Allen, 2017). These research methodologies are explained and discussed further in the research.

Additionally, the theory of both cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry are cited and explored as complementary theories that can aid in the successful implementation of organizational change, particularly from the context of seeing people as ‘resistors to change or mere agents to implement the change’ but rather as critical elements of the change process. This is because both theories are based on the study of positive psychology as they seek to understand organizational change through the principles of human behaviour (Cooperrider, 1998; Cooperrider and Whitney, 1999; Festinger, 1957; Seligman, 2002; 2014).

As such, these theories seek to implore organizational leaders to focus on the positive characteristics of the organization, and its strengths instead of the negative aspects. In so doing, the positive attributes will serve as a focal feature of change (Cooperrider and Whitney (1999; Seligman et al., 2014). Many proponents have viewed this perspective as a major means of overcoming organizational inertia to bring about the level of innovation and cohesiveness needed for organizational change (Goldberg, 2001). Additionally, the theories are also viewed as a means to garner stakeholder engagement at the organizational level (Cooperrider, 1998, 2020; Seligman et al., 2014).

1.1.1 History and Background of Jamaica's Public Sector and Change Endeavours

The public sector typically comprises government entities (Public Administration) at all levels including regulatory agencies and entities that provide services such as Education, Health, and Security. It also constitutes public-owned corporation (System of National Accounts (GNA), 2008, Chapter, 22). The Transport Authority, which is the based organization of this study, falls in the category of a regulatory agency, as the organization is given the mandate to regulate all public passenger transportation. For this research, the term 'public sector' will be used to represent general government organizations, to exclude publicly owned corporations. This is because both public sector and publicly owned corporations are regarded as separate discipline in the areas of management and economics as well as in management literature (Arundel et al., 2019).

The public sector plays a critical role in the economy of any country. Research contends that it contributes between 20% and 30% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in high-income nations (Arundel et al., 2019). Jamaica, being a middle-income country, has a small and thriving Public Sector which have made significant contributions to gross domestic product (GDP), particularly through sectors such as tourism and agriculture. The latest Statistical Institute (STATIN) report purported that these industries contributed a total of over Fifty (50) percent of the Gross Domestic Product (STATIN Report: 2009 – 2019, reported in April 2021). Giving this economic weight, many governments seek to implement

policies to not only encourage innovation but to encourage the efficient use of resources as well as the overall quality of public sector offerings to address the many societal challenges from climate change to economic inequality (Torfing & Ansell, 2017).

Jamaica is said to have two (2) ideal models of public service systems. At one end of the spectrum is what is characterized as the traditional model, which is defined as being highly centralized, uniformed, hierarchical, and centrally controlled. Then at the other end of the spectrum is what is denoted as the ‘perceived new public service management model which resembles some of the elements that described the private sector management such as having a stated mission, corporate planning which defines its existence, transparency, having systems of accountability that are based on performance, having incentives for rewarding ‘good’ performance as well as being judged by how responsive they are to customers (Tindigarukay, 2004). As such, Jamaica in the past years has been noted as trying to make attempts to move away from the traditional model which was purportedly inherited from the Colonial state, and thus thrust itself into a new public sector management, one that is more in line with some of the elements that defined private sector management, hence the many reforms that have been implemented over the years from as far back as the 1970s and around the time of after its independence in 1962 (Tindigarukay, 2004).

However, several challenges were cited in the efforts to reform or established extensive organizational change. These challenges were outlined by Tindigarukay in his 2004 study of the assessment of the public service reforms in Jamaica, these include – a lack of efficient emolument to attract high-caliber staff, allowing donors to be ‘too involved’ in the devising of the reform strategies, the disparity and lack of integration between policy formulations and those who have the mandate to implement the policy and most importantly, the informal system of operation that is seemingly inherent in the Jamaican culture (Tindigarukay, 2004).

To this extent, most of the public sector reforms were initiated to effect changes that would allow for more effective and efficient execution of public policies (Ryan and Brown, 1992). This is the broad

term under which public service reforms can be classified. In fact, Furlong (2012) defined public sector reform as deliberate changes to the structure and processes of public sector organizations with the main aim of allowing them to operate better. Structural changes comprise the merging or the disjoint of public sector organizations while process change may involve those changes that have to do with redesigning systems, establishing quality standards as well as a focus on building organizational capacity (Furlong, 2012).

Seven (7) major change efforts were attempted in Jamaica's public sector over the years starting from as far back as the 1970s. The reforms started with the creation of the Ministry of the Public Service (MPS) which was given the mandate of establishing programmes that would allow for the self-reformation of the public sector as well as the modernization of its practices and management (Mills, 1997, p.50). This was followed by another attempt at reforming government in 1984 with the introduction of the Administrative Reform Programme (ARP) which focused on improving both the human and financial resources of the public sector. This led to the third phase of public sector reform with the establishment of the Financial and Programme Management Improvement Project (FPMIP) in 1991. The aim of this reform was on programming budgeting as well as corporate planning throughout the public sector. As such, the programme led the charge of introducing both the Financial Management Information System (FMIS) and the Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS), which is still in today in many public sector organizations and agencies, including the Transport Authority, the based organization for this research.

The Financial and Programme Management Improvement Project (FPMIP), failed to materialize the expected outcomes as outlined by the Jamaican Government at the time. Some of the reasons for its failure were outlined in an evaluation done a few years after, in 1994 by Jenkins. In this evaluation, several factors were cited as contributing to the project's failures. This includes the ardent rule of the traditional system coupled with the intricate controls and centralization of the authority. As such, the controls that were inherent to the traditional systems stymied the initiatives that were to be implemented

under the FPMIP reform (Jenkins, 1994). The failures of the FPMIP reform in 1991 were followed by the Tax Administration Reform Programme (TARP) in July 1994. This change initiative focused on the efficiency and effectiveness of revenue administration. One of the main focuses of the reform was the implementation of initiatives to increase government revenue without increasing tax (World Bank, 1994). However, this reform resulted in several deficiencies in the areas of assessment and collection of the tax, such as the duplication of efforts and resources, especially at a time when human resources were a scarce commodity. Additionally, no proper system was in place to truly detect tax evasion which led to the government losing money instead of gaining, which was one of the main objectives of the reform (Davies, 1998:2). Nonetheless, despite its many failures, the reform can boast two (2) main achievements – the development of the Tax Registration Number (TRN), which is still in use today as well as several Taxpayer registrations centers with online access to the national TRN databases Davies, 1998:4).

In that same year, a few months after the creation of the Tax Administration Reform (TARP) was the establishment of the Citizens Charter in Jamaica in December 1994. This reform project was charged with the responsibility of ensuring ‘quality service to the public, a service, which the Prime Minister then denoted was an obligation of all public sector entities.

1996 through 2002, saw the establishment of the Public Sector Modernization Programme Reform (PSMP), which was mandated to create a small, yet effective and efficient public sector to provide quality service to the public with its foundation built on the premise of accountability while strengthening both its internal and external controls (World Bank, 1996). Under this reform, several institutions gained executive agency status which included the Jamaica Information System (JIS), the National Environment and Planning Agency, and the National Land Agency. Executive agencies are government ministries that are tasked with the formulation, monitoring, and coordination of government policies (World Bank, 1996). Additionally, under this reform, to become more efficient and effective, the government also privatized or contracted out services where it had no competitive edge while

implementing systems to improve financial management as well as computerized information systems (World Bank, 1996).

Importantly, the Public Sector Modernization Programme (PSMP) helped to launch the decade-old Public Sector Modernization Vision and Strategy, which covers the years 2002 – 2012. From this stem what is denoted today as Vision 2030, where Jamaica is expected to become the place to live, do business, and raise families.

While a few of the reforms bore fruits that are still being enjoyed today, many of them failed to realize the stated outcomes. Some of the major criticism cited in the study by Tindigarukay (2004), relying too much on long-term results at the expense of short-term results as well as the hiring of a large pool of consultants, who worked in isolation, instead of together as a team with oftentimes no representation of government counterparts, particularly at the agency levels. As such, once the consultancy period expires, the reform efforts waned (World Bank, 1995). Additionally, a lack of long-term commitment by the Government and the World Bank brought to the ultimate death, some reform efforts that would be considered ‘reasonably’ successful. Budgetary constraints also added to some of the issues in executing change initiatives. According to Jenkins (1994, p.8), another root cause of the reform efforts and a hindrance was the clash with government policies and traditional processes of the Civil Service, this, coupled with the fear of civil servants’ perception that the changes were political and short-term, rather than long-term, rendered many of the efforts ‘dead before arrival.’

As such, Jenkins (1994) purports that successful change in the public sector will only be materialized when the government starts delegating decision-making at the agency level versus allowing change to be policed by the Prime Minister and his cabinet including the Permanent Secretary and then trickle down to the agencies for implementation (Jenkins, 1994, p.19). Jenkins’s argument was concurred by Mills, 1997, pp. 25-26) who stated that, despite so many efforts of reform over the years, decision-making, policy development, budgeting and other matters related to personnel were still centralized as core ministries and senior management ‘refused’ to delegate. Nonetheless, the issues of

change in the public sector and failures will seemingly continue even after so many assessments of the reforms and recommendations for future success. In fact, in 2002, the president of the Civil Service Association, Eddie Bailey argued that when change is trickle down, many managers who were tasked with the responsibility to initiate the change were resistant, especially as it relates to administrative restructuring, as they believed their authority and their position of influence was dependent upon ‘no change.’ (Government of Jamaica, 2000, p.2). Nonetheless, the consensus holds true that public sector reform is complex, particularly as it also takes into consideration attitudinal and cultural change as it is about changing organizational structure and procedures. Therefore, achieving change in one without attention to the other may have the effect of sabotaging the whole process of reform (Caribbean Policy Research Institute, 2011).

Therefore, a study about using different empirical approaches to change instead of an overarching reform with a ‘trickledown effect’ is critical to Jamaica’s public sector, particularly the Transport Authority which is tasked to regulate and monitor the country’s transportation systems as it relates to public passenger vehicles and taxis. To this extent, I find the saying by Schacter (2000) a fitting conclusion to this episode:

“A powerful lesson to emerge from 20 years of donor support for public service reforms is that significant reform will not flourish without local leadership and ownership, at the agency level. The donors’ tendency to arrive in a developing country with a prefabricated blueprint for public sector reforms meant, not surprisingly, that there was little genuine support from the local bureaucratic and political leadership of the proposed reforms.”

(Schacter, 2000, p.7)

1.1.2 An Overview of the Transport Authority

The Transport Authority, the based organization for this study, was established in 1987 as a statutory body by the Jamaican Government. The organization is tasked with the responsibility of regulating and monitoring all public sector transportation across the island. The parent body of the

organization is the Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing. In addition to its corporate headquarter, the organization has three (3) regional offices which assist in the perpetuation of its mandate of the monitoring of public transportation vehicles (not including the Jamaica Urban Transit Company – JUTC). The Jamaica Urban Transit Company is a government-owned public transport service operating within the Kingston Metropolitan Transport Region, Spanish Town, and Portmore. The regional offices of the Transport Authority are located in the parishes of Mandeville (SRO - South Regional Office), Ocho Rios (NERO – Northern Regional Office), and Montego Bay (WRO –Western Regional Office).

The organization is divided into two (2) main branches, an administrative arm, and an Inspectorate. The Administrative body manages public sector vehicle licensing (Taxes and Private ownership buses), human resource management, research, Information Technology, Accounting, and Maintenance while the Inspectorate body strictly focuses on the day-to-day activities as it relates to the regulating and monitoring of public transportation (Taxes and Private ownership buses) to ensure that operators are operating within the established legal parameters.

The organization has a staff complement of about 175-200 employees at the time of the initial staging of this research due to its high turnover rate. That number was reduced subsequently. The staff complement includes both permanent and temporary workers, with most being temporary, especially in the administrative arm of the organization. The Inspectorate constitutes the largest employment with most times having more than One Hundred (100) employees. The organization's employee quota is often complimented with temporary workers, especially during the Licensing periods (January to April of each year), Summer, and Christmas Holidays. This research, which is a qualitative exploratory case study of the Transport Authority, was completed by me from October 2018 to May 2022, with the data collection phase being conducted over a four (4) month period (June – September 2022), the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic with over One hundred and one (101) respondents.

1.2 Problem Statement

Organizations increasingly operate in both a complex and dynamic business environment and as such, must continue to strive and adapt to changes as it evolves (Burnes, 2011; Al-Haddad and Kotnour, 2015). However, managing organizational change endeavours is a challenging and risky undertaking (Jacobs, 2013; Wagner & Antonucci, 2009). Hence the reasons many organizations struggle to realize stated outcomes (Rick, 2012). To this extent, research has denoted that most organizational change initiatives failed, highlighting an estimated failure rate of 60-70% (Ashkenas, 2013; Kotter, 1996) a statistic that has remained mostly constant since the 1970s (Ashkenas, 2013). Jamaica is no exception.

This is due to the fact that most attempts at the implementation of organizational change in any public sector agency were usually initiated through public sector reforms. These reforms were implemented via major public sector bodies and then trickle down to smaller agencies, like the Transport Authority, through policy changes (Tindigarukay, 2004; Caribbean Policy Research Institute, 2011). Nonetheless, employing organizational change through public sector reforms is not new to Jamaica. In fact, research contends that these types of change interventions have been in existence since the 1970s (Tindigarukay, 2004). Since then, the country has undergone seven (7) main phases of reforms, from efforts to initiate and sustain self-reformation of public services to Vision 2030 (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009). However, most of the change initiatives under these reforms did not achieve stated outcomes. These were due to issues of not being result-oriented and client-centered and thus not being able to meet the dynamics of globalization (Tindigarukay, 2004).

Despite the many models of change that exist, there remain concerns and interest in understanding the factors that can increase success and decrease failures (Jones et al. 2019). Understanding these factors from poignant and emerging models can help to bridge the gaps in understanding how organizations can succeed with their change initiatives (Jones et al. 2019; Rafferty et al., 2013).

As such, there is a current trend of management that is quickly emerging as a model of leadership for organizational change which could yield more satisfactory results. This new leadership paradigm is found in the remit of – “Positive Psychology” (Seligman, 2002). According to Seligman, positive psychology entails the study of happiness, flourishing, and what makes life worth living and takes into consideration client-centered approaches such as employee emotions, engagement, and sense of belonging and achievement (Seligman et al., 2014). Seligman further theorized that these positive tenets are central to employees’ capacity to grow, prosper and add value to an organization which becomes especially critical during organizational transformation.

This research is conducted within this framework of investigating the effects of positive psychology as an approach for an effective management of organizational change, from a Jamaica perspective. This will be pursued by studying the Transport Authority, a public sector agency with both a large organizational and societal reach in Jamaica.

1.3 Purpose of the Study, Research Aims, and Objectives.

The global sphere is consumed with so many studies on organizational change management, especially with the application of the traditional approach (Fayol, 1949; Hicks and Gullet, 1975; Weber, 1947; Hamel & Zanini, 2014). However, most research is conducted on organizations from countries such as the United States and other developed countries. One such research includes a study conducted by Avey et. al. in 2008 titled “*Can positive employees help positive organizational change? Impact of Psychological capital and emotions on relevant attitudes and behaviour*” (Avey et al., 2008). The study by Avey et al. (2008) surveyed over 132 employees from a cross-section of organizations and jobs and found that hope, optimism, and resilience, factors of positive psychology were related to employees’ positive emotions which were relevant to the success of organizational change initiatives.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of this phenomenon, positive psychology, as an approach for an effective management of organizational change, especially from the perspective of the Transport Authority, a public sector agency and the base organization for this study.

To this extent, the research aims to advance a model/s of change that will incorporate the critical elements of organizational change through the application of the theory of positive psychology, the main theory of the study, with specific reference to the concepts of Appreciative Inquiry and Cognitive Dissonance which are akin to the theories of positive organizational change, and resistance to change respectively. Resistance to change over the years has been cited as a major barrier to organizational change (Trice & Beyer, 2001). Therefore, the objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To investigate the principles which guide the change management processes at the Transport Authority, the based organization of this study.
2. To investigate the role that the political party in power play in the processes of organizational change at the Transport Authority.
3. To identify the role(s) employee play in the change management process.
4. To evaluate employees' perception of change management processes.
5. To explore how the theory of 'Cognitive Dissonance' can aid in the anomaly of 'resistance to change' and change outcomes.
6. To explore how the theory of 'Appreciative Inquiry' can aid in positive organizational change.

1.4 Nature and Significance of Study

1.4.1 Nature of Study

The design for this research study is a qualitative exploratory case study of the Transport Authority. This approach was chosen based on the research topical construct as well as due to the holistic possibilities of the method. Therefore, unlike quantitative research which is characteristic of imposing a

particular viewpoint as per the research agenda, qualitative research views the social construct from the standpoint of the participants (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996). This perspective is categorized as the 'emic perspective' which is definitive of how an individual thinks about their 'world' instead of the 'etic perspective' which is characteristic of the quantitative research approach and is primarily concerned about what the research considers significant as it relates to the research construct (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996). Further, the study will employ the use of an exploratory case study approach. According to Mills et al. (2010), a case study of this nature will allow for an in-depth investigation of the research problem and thus be useful in extrapolating key factors to garner results that can help to predict future trends while at the same time bringing to the forefront hidden issues that can be readily applied in practice. Additionally, according to Tellis (1997), case study methodology enables the researcher to go beyond the quantitative statistical results and understand the behavioural conditions through the actor's perspective. As such, Yin (1984, p.23) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.

The research, being one that is qualitative, will employ a non-probability sampling method. As such, the technique that will be adopted is purposive sampling. This technique was chosen based on the nature and goal of the research and will thus aid in the pursuit of gathering an in-depth and idiographic understanding of the stated phenomenon. Although non-probability sampling has its limitations, especially due to the subjective nature of participant selection, it is very valuable in situations where randomization is impossible due to the size of the population as well as where resources such as time, funds and workforce are limited (Patton, 2002; 2017; Creswell and Plano, 2011). This is particularly true as the nature of the research will target mostly public organizations, in particular the Transport Authority, which is already void of critical resources in some instances, as well as comprising a relatively large employment threshold. The Transport Authority, the based organization for the study comprises about Two Hundred and Fifty (250) employees as of this study.

The study comprises One hundred and one (101) respondents with Fifty-three (53) participating in the Interview sessions and forty-eight (48) in the questionnaire survey. However, the main sampling population was Sixty (60) employees with Fifty (50) being garnered for the questionnaire survey in an effort to triangulate the data. Therefore, the main sampling population of Sixty (60) employees is a thirty (30%) percent representation of the target population of permanent employees. This sample size is believed to be sufficient due to the type of research, epistemology, and methodology as well as the potential to be able to meet the characteristic of generalization. This sampling size can further aid in reducing sampling biases which can only serve to contribute positively to the reliability and content validity of the research outcome (Gliner & Morgan, 2000; Martínez-Mesa et al. 2014). Further, according to the principle of data saturation, having too large a sample will not only lead to overly repeated or research data but can also affect content validity and reliability of the research while too few may not glean the varied opinions that could strengthen the research findings and address the research questions (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Fusch and Ness, 2015).

In this regard, saturation is used in qualitative research as a criterion for discontinuing data collection and/or analysis (Garrett et al., 2012; Lipworth et al., 2013). While there is certainly no ‘one-size-fits-all’ mantra for choosing an appropriate population sample to reach data saturation, this sample size is well within the ambit of research recommendations by several pioneered researchers; these include Morse (1994; Vasileiou et al., 2018) who suggested approximately 30 – 50 participants for a grounded theory study while Creswell (1998) suggested only 20 – 30. For phenomenological studies, Creswell (1998) recommends 5 – 25 to create a state of epoché, particularly when probing questions are involved while Morse (1994), Guest et al. (2006) suggest at least 6. Further, the parameters for this research, being of a case study design are more explicit in terms of the phenomenon being explored (Amerson, 2011; Bucic et al., 2010; Vasileiou et al., 2018).

On the other hand, the semi-structured interview, which will be employed for this research, is an interview approach that comprises several key questions (structured interview) which will serve to define

the areas of the research that must be explored while offering the flexibility to probe responses to garner more in-depth feedback. In addition, documented materials that constitute written records such as company policies, mission statements, or other organizational documents will be utilized, if available as a means of secondary data collection. However, materials of this persuasion will only be employed on an ‘as-needed basis.’

Based on the data collection tools identified, the two main types of analysis that will be adopted for this study are thematic analysis and document analysis. Both analytical approaches are used in qualitative research. Thematic analysis, according to Braun and Clarke (2006) is used for identifying, analyzing as well as reporting patterns or themes within a given data set. Further, thematic analysis differs from other analytic methods that seek to describe patterns across qualitative data – such as thematic discourse analysis and grounded theory. However, while some may argue that thematic analysis is poorly demarcated, it is largely recognized as an accessible and flexible approach to analyzing qualitative data. On the other hand, Bowen (2009) describes document analysis as a method used to interpret and assess written documents and as such, gives the data a compelling voice. Notwithstanding, while document analysis is considered very accessible and reliable, it can be costly and may require a certain number of investigative skills as the documents were not necessarily developed with the research agenda in mind. Nonetheless, both types of analysis are valuable components of a qualitative research approach.

1.4.2 Significance of the Study

The study is both relevant and significant in that it has the potential to establish a framework for organizational change at the Transport Authority – the base organization of the study as well as the wider public sector. Currently, there are no established methods of change at this organization, thus the employment of a strategy of change can help to remove a lot of the guesswork when it comes to organizational change, which can increase transparency and credibility, which is crucial for any organization’s long-term growth and success (Seligman, 2014; Teece et al., 2016).

In this global, dynamic, and competitive economy, organizational change becomes an essential business phenomenon that must bear the flagship of success (Teece et al., 2016). However, the concept of change in the recent past most often takes on conventional or macro-level approaches such as ‘how’ and ‘what’ as well as explores change from an introductory perspective instead of a micro perspective which focused on the employees and more importantly, how they respond to change (Pasmore and Fagans, 1992). Further, in the context of Jamaica and in particular the public sector, organizational change has always been a controversial and tenuous task to achieve. One such factor seems to surround the way organizational change is usually initiated and executed which is often described as vertically in a top-down hierarchical process, a place of ‘do or die’ on the part of employees, hence the resistance and frequent failures. Further, the Public Sector is currently going through a major change under the Public Sector Transformation and Modernization Programme. This programme seeks to address the bureaucratic processes that offer no value to business processes and increase public sector productivity and efficiency as well as workforce efficiency. The programme is stewarded by a special committee established by the Prime Minister, The Most Honourable Andrew Michael Holness. Therefore, a study of this nature at this time can offer a fresh perspective to the execution of organizational change initiatives for leaders of the public sector and could serve as an essential tool in aiding one’s understanding of how to make change work, not only for the organization but also for employees.

The scientific research, some of whose findings are cited in this study, has shown that positive psychology can help in the promoting and developing of levels of positivity which can help employees to develop themselves both within and outside of the organization and positive change outcomes (Coo & Salanova, 2016). Therefore, there is a clear need to invest efforts in promoting strong psychological means for the overall well-being of employees and encourage positive experiences and relationships which can ultimately lead to positive organizational performance and change outcomes (Salanova et al., 2016).

On this wise, research of this nature in a developing country like Jamaica will not only serve to add value and insight as it relates to the successful management of organizational change but can contribute to the existing empirical studies in the advancement of change management in both the public and private sector for long term success. As such, one of the main contributions of this study is that it will help to provide a kind of blueprint for the successful implementation of change from an empirical perspective, particularly using positive psychology methodologies as the main vehicle.

1.5 Research Questions

Research questions are critical to the research study and form part of the research design, which in all understanding, should reflect the direction and epistemological underpinnings of the research phenomenon. As such, the research questions are the fundamental core of the research study as it determines the methodology to be employed as well as guide the research throughout the stages of analysis and reporting. Therefore, at the foundation of this approach are methods that represent what Geertz (1973, p.10) called the ‘microscopic’ details of the social and cultural aspects of individuals’ lives. To this extent, the overarching research questions for this study will be as follows: -

1.5.1 Primary/Foundational Questions:

1. What are the principles which guide the change management process in the Transport Authority?
2. What is the role of the political party in power in the change management process of the Transport Authority?
3. How do employees perceive organizational change management processes in the Transport Authority?

1.5.2 Secondary or Complimentary Questions:

The secondary questions that will assist in emboldening the research are as follows:

1. What role do the employees of the Transport Authority play in the change management process?

2. How can the theories of Cognitive Dissonance and Appreciative Inquiry help to serve as an effective mechanism for organizational change, especially as it relates to ‘resistance to change’ and ‘positive change outcomes’ respectively?

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research is a qualitative exploratory case study of the Transport Authority, an agency of the Public Sector in Jamaica. The study commenced in October 2018 and officially concluded in May 2022. However, the data collection phase of the study spans a duration of over four (4) months (June – September 2020). The study aimed to investigate the effects of positive psychology as a means for successful organizational change. As such, the research is grounded in the theory of positive psychology.

The sample population of the study constitutes One Hundred and Ten (110) permanent employees of the organization, with Sixty (60) being the primary sample and Fifty (50), being the secondary sample in order to attempt to triangulate the data. Permanent employees, according to the organization are those who are provided with a contract of such delineation as well as those confirmed or contracted to the organization for six (6) months or longer. Using this method would garner the possibility of those employees with more years and rich experiences, especially as it relates to organizational change rather than those who are there or may only be employed for a short period. Additionally, using the criteria of permanent employees over temporary statuses may also help to minimize the possibility of coercion or undue influence as it relates to the responses.

At the time of this research, the organization had a staff complement of about Two Hundred and Fifty (250) employees with about 150 - 200 being of permanent status. Additional details as it relates to the population and sample size are detailed in the section above ‘Nature of Study’ as well as in Chapters 3 and 4 below.

1.7 Summary

This chapter provides an overall background of the study and its objectives which will help to set the foundation of the research, particularly as it relates to organizational change endeavours from a Jamaica perspective. Additionally, it provides an overview of positive psychology and its closely aligned tenets of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry. These constructs are necessary to not only understand the research from a holistic perspective but to also identify a model/s that will effectively administer change at the Transport Authority. One that can help organizational leaders to make decisions about organizational change on the premise of evidence-based practices as well as set the foundation for both short and long-term positive organizational change outcomes.

Important to note, organizational change cannot take place without people, as people are the organization. Therefore, why implement change without them being at the core of the change process? This is just simple logic. To this extent, positive psychology allows for the delineation of distinct factors in managing organizational change, especially in a government-oriented organization like the Transport Authority, on which this research is based.

These distinct factors were identified as the key themes and findings of this study, namely, change readiness and perception, identifying barriers and influence of change and addressing them as well as management and organizational leaders fostering an environment of trust, where employees believe in management and what they say and are integral in the process. Other emerged themes as per the findings of the research were that of employee involvement in the change process as well as having effective means of communicating change. This will not only help in ‘selling the change’ but also impact the degree of ‘buy-in’ of the change thus mitigating resistance and contributing to the possibility of more positive change outcomes. These themes and findings are thoroughly elaborated in the other sections of the study, mainly chapters 3 and 4.

The conclusion of the matter is that change, which is a complex phenomenon, does not come in a one-size-fits-all approach for successful outcomes. However, the findings suggest that having a more comprehensive and written approach with people at the core can effect a more positive outcome, even if it requires more time and effort. Further analysis and interpretation of the findings, along with the implications and recommendations are discussed in chapter 5.

1.8 Dissertation Structure

The study continues with chapter 2, which will speak to the review of literature as it pertains to the overall research objectives. As such, it will delineate the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research as well as provide a critical review of the literature on possible research methods including the stated research construct and the various determinants that constitutes the research objectives and questions. Chapter 3 will provide an overview of the research methods and methodology. As such, it delineates the research paradigm, population and sample as well as the ethical considerations of the study.

Additionally, chapter 3 will speak to the methods of data collection and analysis as well as the study's procedures. Chapter 4 discusses the findings of the study as well as the analysis employed. The chapter also provides details about the reliability and validity of the study as well as an evaluation of the findings and the research questions salient to the research construct. Finally, chapter 5, which culminates the study, will discuss the implications of the research as well as outline the recommendations for both application and future studies. It will also present the overall findings and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview and Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review the literature on positive psychology and organizational change which is the grounded theory of this study. As such, the chapter will explore the relevant research topic of the influence of positive psychology as an approach to organizational change in the public sector and particularly, the Transport Authority, a public sector agency in Jamaica, which is the based organization for this study. To better understand the ‘influence’ that positive psychology could have on organizational change, several models of change will be explored along with the critical theories that have been cited in the literature to support the concept of organizational change, particularly from a positive psychological viewpoint.

As such, the chapter will commence with the theoretical and conceptual framework employed to support the key determinants of the study. It will then be followed by an exploration of the critical theories of the conceptual model - positive psychology (Seligman, 1998; 2014), appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider, 1986), and cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) with the latter two (2) being complimentary to the topical construct of the study.

The discussion of these key determinants will surround both the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin their application to the workplace, chiefly in the onset of organizational transformation. In addition, the discussions will be connected to a wider literature on positive psychology and change management and the approaches of appreciative inquiry and cognitive dissonance to account for people or employees as the central focus of change as well as the factor of resistance to change, which research has denoted as a major hindrance in the successful implementation of change management within organizations.

Several library databases, peer-reviewed journals and search engines were used to conduct this literature review. The research reviewed focused on the last five (5) years, as of 2019, to ensure the

evaluation of the most recent articles. However, a few critical and relevant pieces of literature outside of this timeframe were also employed. Search terms used included variations of the following keywords: positive psychology, organizational change, and positive psychology, cognitive dissonance and organizational change, appreciative inquiry and organizational change, resistance to change and cognitive dissonance, cognitive dissonance theory, appreciative inquiry theory, organizational behaviour and change, human resource management and change and traditional change models. Over Three Hundred (300) Journal articles were reviewed, and those that were fitting for the study were utilized which helped to shape the framework of the research. Other documents that were not aligned with the research construct were not used.

The search keywords and journals also included various classical theories about positive psychology and organizational change in general. These studies will help to provide a deeper understanding of positive psychology and organizational change. The theories include Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954) and Carl Rogers Client-Centered Theory (1951). However, the literature review is largely consumed with the examination of the overarching theory of this study, positive psychology, and its potential impact on organizational change outcomes.

2.2 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study highlights the major concept of the study - positive psychology along with the complimentary theories of cognitive dissonance, and appreciative inquiry, which are akin to successful organizational change in their varied outcomes. These concepts will be explored from the backdrop of the conceptual framework and rationale of the study.

2.2.1 Positive Psychology – The Grounded Theory of the Study

The American Psychologist, Martin Seligman has been attributed as one of the founding fathers and pioneers of the theory of positive psychology when he made his profound presidential address in 1998 to the American Psychology Association - APA (Seligman, 1999). The theory is considered a

science and a sub-field of psychology and not necessarily a ‘soft science’ or pseudoscience as characterized by some scholars (Peterson, 2008). According to Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2014), positive psychology is defined as a collection of studies that seeks to find out what makes life worth living.

The definition of Peterson (2008) is similar to that of Seligman in that he defined positive psychology as the “scientific study of what makes life most worth living.” As such, Sheldon and King (2001) posit that positive psychology takes into consideration, the ‘average man’ and seeks to theorize what works for them, what is right at that moment, and ways in which to improve themselves. On the other hand, Gable and Haidt (2005, p. 104) opined that it is the study of what makes people flourish or causes them to perform at their optimal aptitude. Therefore, according to Seligman (2018), the main tenet of positive psychology is the building of one’s well-being, and not traditional ill-being as asserted by traditional psychology.

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2014), in their definition further opined that positive psychology focuses on one’s overall well-being from varying perspectives - the subjective, individual, and organizational. At the subjective level, the focus is on one’s contentment, past satisfaction, future hope, and optimism as well as what is called the ‘flow of happiness’ in one’s present environment. While the individual level focuses on one’s positive traits, their capacity to love and have it reciprocated, it also focuses on the level of one’s interpersonal development skills, mindfulness, and the ability to forgive. The organizational perspective view focuses on work ethics in general from both the individual and organizational standpoint. It also focuses on organizational virtues, responsibility, and tolerance (Mulder, 2012; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). One of its simplest definitions though is that of Compton and Hoffman (2012), who described it as simply the study of subjective well-being.

To this extent, the definition of Seligman will be used for this study as it speaks to both the whole man as well as the organization which is a core tenet of the objectives and research questions of this study. The definition also speaks to the study’s topical construct – how positive psychology can impact

positive organizational change in Jamaica's public sector, particularly, the Transport Authority, which is the based organization of the study.

2.2.1.1 Pillars of the Theory of Positive Psychology

The theory of positive psychology is said to be built on the foundation of *positive emotions* (happiness, joy, inspiration, and love), *positive institutions* which involve applying the principles of positivity within organizations and institutions alike, and the study of *positive human traits* which speaks to one's virtues, resilience, gratitude, and strengths (Kristjansson, 2010). Positive emotions or what is called the 'pleasant life' encapsulate the message of happiness and the satisfaction of life. Its component forms the foundation of this theory, the framework which speaks to one's greater state, or well-being (Seligman, 2012; Fulmer, 2015). These pillars and constructs can inevitably help organizations to understand human behaviours in periods of transformation. As such, they are integral to this study's objectives, especially as it relates to making people the central focus 'the human factor' of the change management process.

2.2.1.2 Major Limitations of Positive Psychology

One of the major limitations noted in the literature is the emphasis that positive psychology places on survey data and small sample sizes (Weis & Speridakos, 2011). This can be viewed as a solid point as most research on positive psychology is built on data collected from surveys. However, it must be noted that this type of data collection method is not limited to research on positive psychology but to other research fields as well. Nonetheless, it is a factor that has been duly considered in the data collection and analysis of this research. This study will further seek to use data from other sources such as organizational policies as it relates to the implementation of change initiatives to corroborate or increase the validity or confidence of the data being collected.

Another limitation cited is the presumable ethnocentric bias or cultural boundaries of most research on positive psychology (Wong, 2013). Literature shows that most of the research that has been published are those conducted by Western scholars, reviewers as well as journals (Henrich et. al., 2010).

Therefore, most studies, while making broad claims, only focused on a certain sect of society, for example, people of the white race or organizations of European descent, the middle class, rich and industrialized nations, and thus disregard societies considered to be poverty-stricken or of other descriptive cultural persuasion be it ethnicity or socio-economic. However, research shows that recent studies have evolved and have taken into consideration non-western countries as well as persons or organizations from varying socio-economic backgrounds. This study is one such, as it focuses on Jamaica, which is considered a developing country and part of the Western Caribbean.

Further, the base organization for this study, the Transport Authority, represents persons from varying backgrounds and educational ranks. As such, research of this phenomenon could catalyst studies of this nature not only in Jamaica but the wider Diaspora. The foundation of this study is also emboldened by the theory of appreciative inquiry, which is based on the historical tracing of strength-based management and serves as a central root of the emergence of positive psychology (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987; Cooperrider, 2008).

2.2.2 Appreciative Inquiry

The theory of appreciative inquiry was birth in the 1980s through the collaborative effort of Dr. David Cooperrider and his Doctoral advisor at the time, Dr. Suresh. His qualitative study was initially focused on what was wrong with the Cleveland Clinic, which was the organization being studied. However, during the data-gathering process, the results were positive instead of negative in that, he found a great deal of cooperation, innovation, and democratic governance within the organization. To this extent, the study sought to conduct an inquiry that focused on the life-giving factors of an organization. Nonetheless, the term ‘appreciative inquiry’ was written as a footnote in the final report which was then used by Cooperrider and Suresh throughout their discourse and journal as an appreciative paradigm for the field of organization management (Cooperrider, 1986; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987).

The theory was originally articulated as a behaviour-generated theory and thus attention was placed on its effects on the human ecological system (Cooperrider, 2013). Its application has quickly proliferated in several fields including strength-based management, applied positive psychology, change management, corporate strategy, and sustainable development as well as social constructivism, organizational behaviour, and learning theory (Buckingham, 2006; Seligman, 1999).

Appreciative inquiry is defined in two stages, 'appreciative' and 'inquiry'. 'Appreciative' is defined as recognizing and being in accord without judgment or opinion from a critical perspective as well as to perceive and reflect on the things that establish health, vitality, and excellence in life. On the other hand, 'inquiry' is defined as to explore and discover the possibilities and potential that exist in something (Cooperrider et al, 2008, p.1). Together, the theory is defined as a cooperative effort to search for the best in people, the organization as well as the world in which we live (Cooperrider, 2013). As such, Preskill & Catsambas, (2006, p.2) defined appreciative inquiry as a group process that is used to identify and develop what is best in organizations to create a better future. Cooperrider in 2019 further defined it as a methodology and initiative which portray specific techniques and operational steps to generate positive changes in a system (Cooperrider, 2019).

As a result, it focuses on one's imagination and innovation instead of the negative and spiraling diagnosis which is usually the core of organizations (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p.3). It is also stated that it encourages a culture of learning through the bond of collective inquiry and thus provides people with the skills necessary to discover themselves (Conklin and Hartman, 2014). For this reason, Cooperrider (2013) sums it up as a study that focuses on what gives life to humans. Therefore, its prevailing sense of purpose for this study is profoundly expounded in the definition of Revans (1998) who denoted it as a methodology that has change management at its core as it seeks to connect with the organization through direct intervention. According to the research by Revans (1998), this positive approach in dealing with humans can lead to changes in an organization based on the imagery of the best future outcome as expressed and vocalized by employees and stakeholders alike.

The definition of Cooperrider et al. (2008) will be used in this study as it encompasses the main objectives of this study, especially as it relates to the overarching framework of organizational change – the organization and employee interest as a whole.

2.2.2.1 Principles of the Theory of Appreciative Inquiry

The theory of appreciative inquiry is built upon five (5) classical principles which were originally articulated by Cooperrider in 1986 and served as the rationale for his dissertation in 1998. These principles are - constructionist, simultaneity, poetic, anticipatory, and positive. The constructionist principle denotes that what one knows about an organization and the future of that organization are intertwined and not separate entities. Therefore, what we know about an organization will impact how we approach change in the organization. On the other hand, the simultaneity principle uses inquiry as a means of intervention. As such, it theorized that what an individual focuses on will appreciate and grow in value. The poetic principle suggests that the organization is a never-ending book. Therefore, the narrative is constantly changing and then rewritten by both the organization while the anticipatory principle theorized that human actions are triggered by ‘anticipation’ of events that will occur in the future. Finally, the positive principle is built on the premise that if one thinks positively and affirms his/her ideal future image, then that individual is more likely to move in the direction of this imagery (Stavros et al., 2016).

According to Stavros and Torres (2005), these principles can guide organizational change objectives and thus allow leaders to develop strength-based relationships within the organization and its environs which are particularly critical during periods of transformation. These five (5) principles were later extended by Cooperrider to include another five (5) principles he denoted as having the effect to broaden the theoretical core of appreciative inquiry as it relates to organizational change.

2.2.2.2 The Five (5) Emergent Principles of Appreciative Inquiry – Simply an Extension of the Old

The five (5) original principles were amplified by what is denoted as another five (5) emergent principles as postulated by several researchers. These emergent principles include – the principles of wholeness, enactment, free choice, awareness, and narrative. The principle of wholeness focuses on using all parts of the organization to create an organization of the future while the principle of enactment speaks to recognizing that all parts of the organization are interrelated and not isolated entities. On the other hand, the principle of free choice suggests that employees will become committed to the change process if they are engaged and allowed to contribute (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom, 2010) while the principle of awareness mainly focuses on ‘self’ and allows for self-reflection and self-awareness throughout the change process (Stavros & Torres, 2005). Finally, the principle of narrative denotes that the organization must learn to create its own story along with the help of employees who will automatically help to shape its content (Barrett & Fry, 2005). According to Stavro et al. (2018), these emergent principles are simply an extension of the original principles as denoted by Cooperrider in his original thesis work but have the propensity to help organizational practitioners to use appreciative inquiry as a theoretical core in organizational change initiatives. Nonetheless, both frameworks have helped to position appreciative inquiry as more of a strength-based approach to change rather than the previous problem-solving paradigm, which according to Cooperider, only produces deficit-centered thinking (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Bushe, 2013). Please see (Figure 2.1) below of comparison of both paradigms – Problem-solving as linked to conventional change models and the purported ‘new paradigm, as linked to appreciative inquiry and related strength-based approach.

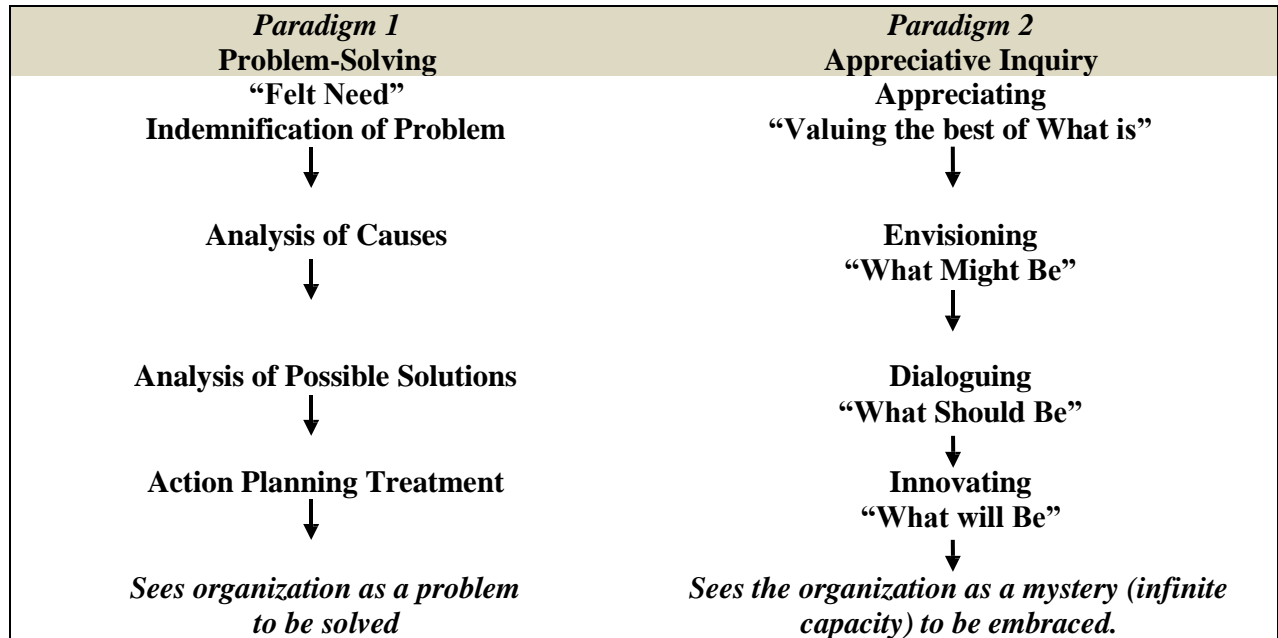


Figure 2.1: Comparison of the Problem-Solving and Appreciative Inquiry Approach to Change. (Source: Cooperrider, 2011; 2019).

Both paradigms depict different approaches to the management of organizational change. The problem-solving approach has been cited as attempting to fix what is thought to be presumably broken as it relates to organizational change. As such, a problem is identified, and a series of other actions follows which involves analyzing the cause/s as well as the solutions before putting a plan of action in place to reach that solution (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). However, according to Bushe (2013), trying to change organizations in this sense may lead to what he denotes as ‘deficit experiences’ as the organization will constantly be trying to fix things that they deemed, not working, which will only lead to other organizational deficiencies.

On the other hand, the appreciative inquiry approach starts from a place of strength, valuing what is best in a particular situation then envisioning the ideal solutions, and encouraging dialogue before trying to find novel solutions. As such, this approach has emerged as an alternative approach to the more conventional methodology of organizational change and development as depicted by the problem-solving approach (Cooperrider, 2019; Bushe, 2013). To this extent, employing principles of appreciative

inquiry when managing organizational change can provide organizations with the tools to achieve positive change and innovation (Cooperrider, 2019).

2.2.2.3 Major Limitations of Appreciative Inquiry

One of the major concerns posited of appreciative inquiry is its positive orientation (Rogers & Fraser, 2003). These researchers state that the focus on ‘positivity’ could run the risk of distorting an organization. This concern was also conveyed by Gergen and Gergen (2003) who denoted that researchers must honour both the good and the bad in life and that none is superior to the other. Surprisingly though, Rogers and Fraser (2003, p.75) did conclude that appreciation is not just looking at the good side of life and further sought to encourage wholeness in understanding appreciative inquiry through varying perspectives. However, this research will seek to investigate how the principles of positive psychology can successfully impact positive change outcomes from varying perspectives, hence, the inclusion of both the principles of appreciative inquiry and cognitive dissonance as major determinants of the study.

2.2.3 Cognitive Dissonance

The pioneer of the theory of Cognitive Dissonance has been attributed to the American Social Psychologist Leon Festinger in 1957. The theory lies in the field of social psychology and studies attitude as well as attitude-behaviour consistency (UI- Hassan Khan, 2018). According to Jones (1998), Festinger’s theory of cognitive dissonance is one of the most influential theories in social psychology. According to the author, the theory has generated hundreds of studies, which have taught about several psychological processes such as the determinants of attitudes and beliefs, the internalization of one’s values, the repercussions of decisions as well as the effects of disagreements among individuals. The theory has gained a substantial amount of popularity and attention from scholars over the last fifty (50) years in so much that it has yielded four (4) theoretical paradigms which attempted to test and explained varying cases of dissonance such as *belief disconfirmation* (Festinger et al. 1956), *induced compliance*

which was explored by (Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959), *free-choice* by (Brehm, 1956) and effort justification (Aranson & Mills, 1959).

As per its definition, Festinger uses the term “consonance” in terms of consistency and uses the term “dissonance” in terms of inconsistency (Festinger, 1957). Cognitive Dissonance is defined by Festinger (1957) as “the existence of inconsistent relations among one’s cognitions” and cognition as any “facts, view, or belief about one’s environment and behaviour” (p. 3). Conversely, cognitive consonance exists when cognitions support each other (Festinger 1957, p. 7). As such, cognition can be someone’s thoughts, ideas, beliefs, values, or attitudes while dissonance speaks to having two cognitions (thoughts) that are inconsistent or disagree with each other which brings about an unpleasant motivating state.

The principal notion of the theory is that when an individual has two or more inconsistent beliefs, he or she will automatically experience conflicts of the mind which Festinger refers to as ‘dissonance.’ As such, the individual will seek to shift or alter one or all the dissonant cognitions as they promote a feeling of discomfort, and no one wants to feel uncomfortable. For example, when someone makes a difficult decision, their attitude will change to justify that decision.

As such, in making this decision, the individual will face a conflict because not all of their beliefs are consistent with this decision (Kitayana and Tompson, 2015), hence, the feeling to justify it in the first place. This is where the individual is motivated to reduce the conflict by the very justification of the decision that was made. Therefore, their belief is now consistent with the justifiable decision and thus the removal or reduction of cognitive dissonance (Sharot et al., 2012). As such, the research denoted that humans by nature are seen as ‘rationalizing being’ having the potential to justify what was done after it was done in an ‘after the fact’ type of way. This type of behaviour is paramount in the process of change, as it usually surrounds the activity of decision-making at all levels of the organization. In light of this, having an understanding of cognitive dissonance could prove beneficial to organizational leaders at the onset of organizational change (Fox and Amichai-Hamburger, 2001; Kiefer, 2005).

2.2.3.1 Cognitive Dissonance in Motion – Testing of the Theory

The theory of cognitive dissonance was tested by Festinger when a religious group called the Seekers, led by Mrs. Marion Keech believed that the world would come to an end on December 21, 1955. Mrs. Keech had advised the group that she had gotten the message about the world's doomed through some unknown writing. Festinger then went on to theorize that if a spaceship did not arrive to take the 'Seekers' to safety then that very action would create an environment of cognitive dissonance as the members would experience unpleasant feelings which would give rise to tension (dissonance) as such, they would try to find a way to reduce or eliminate this discomfort. He was right, the spaceship did not come, and the world did not end, as such, the prophesy failed. The dissonance was reduced in that, Mrs. Keech advised the group that she had received another message which stated that the previous warning was merely a test of the group's commitment and goodness which averted the prophecy from being manifested. Mrs. Keech further announced to the group that she received another message which encourages them to spread the message; And this they did. This was aptly laid out in Festinger's Book – "When Prophecy Fails" (Festinger et al., 1956).

Another example of the test of the theory was cited by Glatz et al. (2012) in a peer-reviewed longitudinal study with over 494 youths ranging from ages 13-14 and their parents. The study tests the theory of cognitive dissonance to explain parents' reactions to teenagers' alcohol intoxication. It was found that parents who encountered their teenager intoxicated became less opposed to underage drinking over time while those who remained strongly opposed to the act experienced more worries than those who were less opposed. As such, the findings suggest that to eliminate dissonance between one's strict attitude against teenage drinking and the knowledge of their own child's drinking, parents changed their attitudes and became more lenient with the behaviour.

A very interesting observation of the theory was its application in both the education and organizational arena. Its application in this realm was that of a qualitative case study by Çalışkan and Gökalp (2020) on the educational change in Turkish for Novice teachers. The study was particularly

designed to explore how individuals make sense of planned organizational change after they have experienced a state of cognitive dissonance, particularly a negative one. The study was conducted after the Ministry of Education in the spring of 2016 announced a large-scale nationwide change plan for the training of novice teachers. The participants were motivated by the change on the premise of (1) reducing early burnout issues associated with new teachers and (2) supporting the teachers as they transition to become more familiar with the cities they would have been assigned to teach.

It must be noted that the large-scale change was adopted as a planned educational change to explore how the prospective teachers make sense of the respective change after they have experienced cognitive dissonance. The state of cognitive dissonance was created based on procedures in literature (Elliot & Devine, 1994; Sastre, 2014) via a pre-test/post-test quasi-experimental design with a complimentary group to explore the participants' readiness for the change. One Hundred and Sixty-three (163) participants were used for this setting. Principally, three (3) groups of participants were identified at the pre-test state as displaying one of three kinds of attitudes – positive, negative, or no attitude at all (the controlled group). These groups were identified by their initial 'state of readiness' scores. Four (4) weeks later, for the post-test, each of the groups was exposed to three (3) sets of instruction types – positive, negative, and no instructions at all (the controlled group). This was a one-page information sheet that was created by the researchers based on all information that was publicly said about the rollout (social media/newspapers/ radio etc.).

The participants were then instructed to write an essay about the proposed change. However, the control group was asked to read a counter-attitudinal information sheet and then write a counter-attitudinal essay about the change. The methods in the positive and negative groupings served as a means to create cognitive dissonance among the participants. As such, the groups were in a sense, manipulated to change their initial cognitions, especially if it was negative, and to accept an 'induced condition' as per the instruments that were provided, which was to either advocate or discredit the change or offer counter-attitudinal sentiments.

The results showed that both attitude groups significantly changed their initial attitudes (level of readiness). However, the controlled group (counter-attitudinal) readiness scores did not change much as per the pre and post-sessions. Nonetheless, the negative attitude group, which was the focus of the study, changed to become more positive after the post-test exercises. What was interesting is that this group's attitude changes at the post-change stage after the creation of the dissonance which allowed them to re-construct their cognitions as per their reflection essays. This degree of reconstruction allowed them to uncover their framework of understanding the change. As such, this information could provide organizational leaders about the cognitive orientation of individuals, which would allow them to have a deeper understanding of how prospective teachers or anyone that is about to go through organizational change can create their rationalization in accepting the new change.

Nonetheless, Harmon-Jones (2000a, 2000b) has theorized that dissonance is a motivated process and that the possible arousal due to attitude change is a result of a motivation to follow through with the change. However, previous research had denounced this stance and hypothesized that the effects of the change were a non-motivated, cognitive process (e.g., Bem, 1972). Nevertheless, the consensus holds that the application of the principles of this theory can provide insightful information about how desirable attitude change or readiness for change can be achieved before the implementation of a planned organizational change (Çalışkan & Gökalp, 2020).

2.2.3.2 Major Challenges of Cognitive Dissonance

Most of the limitations of cognitive dissonance as delineated by researchers pertain to its definition and its operationalization, especially as it relates to managerial decision-making (Hinojosa et al. (2016). In its conception, the term dissonance was used by Festinger to refer to three different phases – the theory itself, the triggering mechanism, and its conceptual phase (Festinger, 1957). While these have been used over the years in many studies (Martinie et al., 2017; McGrath, 2017; Cancino-Montecionos et al., 2018), other researchers have indicated means to further explicitly defined the

entities by denoting ‘trigger’ as representing ‘inconsistency’ and anything that evoke stimulation as ‘cognitive dissonance’ (Vaidis & Bran, 2018; Harmon-Jones, 2019).

Another point of reservation about the theory by some researchers had to do with its ‘simplicity.’ (Kowol, 2008). However, that concern was addressed by many theorists, due to the results that could be achieved from its application (Kowol, 2008; Glatz et al., 2012; Çalışkan & Gökalp, 2020). This is because the theory has yielded several successful and useful findings and can serve as a fruitful source of ideas for subsequent research. (Kawol, 2008).

This study will rely upon both Festinger’s description as well as Vaidis and Bran (2018) and Harmon-Jones (2019) as part of this study as they all engender the aim of the study as well as will aid in understanding how cognitive dissonance relates to resistance to change which has been denoted as a major concern of successful change endeavours.

To this extent, the conceptual framework of this study is positive psychology as it relates to positive organizational change outcomes. The premise of positive psychology insists that it is important for organizational leaders to understand what works in people’s life (Sheldon and King, 2001) as much as what can go wrong (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As such, positive foundational perspectives and objectives have laid the foundation for the functioning of positive psychology (Sheldon et al., 2011). Therefore, this study argues that positive psychology is a crucial determinant in effecting positive or successful organizational change outcomes, particularly in the Transport Authority, the based organization for this study.

2.2.5 The Study’s Theoretical and Conceptual Rationale

A unified framework of organizational change will be used for this study’s conceptual logic in the context of utilizing varying theories to conceptualize the outcome of how positive psychology can influence organizational change initiatives in the Transport Authority, the based organization of this

qualitative case inquiry. This unified framework illustrates how organizational change can be understood from the standpoint of humanistic analysis and how these systems interact.

This study will also seek to investigate how cognitive dissonance can aid in ‘avoidance responses’ or ‘resistance to change.’ Further, the emphasis within appreciative inquiry will be on the conversational and practical life of the organization rather than the logical-rational aspect of the organization, especially as it relates to the social-political aspects of the life of an organization, in this context, the Transport Authority through established models. The appreciative inquiry and cognitive dissonance approach to organizational change focus on human nature, which includes emotion and cognition.

Previous research has suggested that a ‘softer’ approach to organizational change is needed to change the compelling narrative of more than 70% failure rate of change management efforts (Hughes, 2011; Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Waterman et al., 1980). This can be realized when change is conducted at the micro-level of change to understand the human side of change (Clegg & Walsh, 2004; Ford & Ford, 1995; Orlikowski, 1996; Çalışkan & Gökalp, 2020). What makes people so important in the change process are their varying attitudes, be they positive or negative. As such, their readiness to change will help to frame the expected organizational outcomes, which is defined in research as one of the most renowned constructs of change (Bouckennooghe, 2010; Weiner et al., 2020). However, managing behaviours is not an easy feat. As such, organizational leaders must seek to understand what motivates employees to a particular action. This can be accomplished through exploring theories such as cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry (Fox & Amichai-Hamburger, 2001; Kiefer, 2005).

Nonetheless, while no one theory has been denoted as the sole model for successful organizational change, researchers have argued that theories in the realm of positive psychology may be an effective methodology (Sidorko, 2008, p. 316). However, to a great extent, most research on the application of positive psychology is not publicized and as such; most organizational leaders do not know how to really implement it in their organizations (Bushe & Kassam, 2005).

Therefore, to explore how to identify the organizational impact of positive psychology, I will conduct my research through an exploratory, single-case study analysis of positive psychology practitioners to both mediate and moderate conditions that will influence how the research topical construct could be best accomplished as well as the conditions, opportunities, and limitations. Please see the following unified conceptual framework (Figure 2.2) below that will be used to illustrate this research focus.

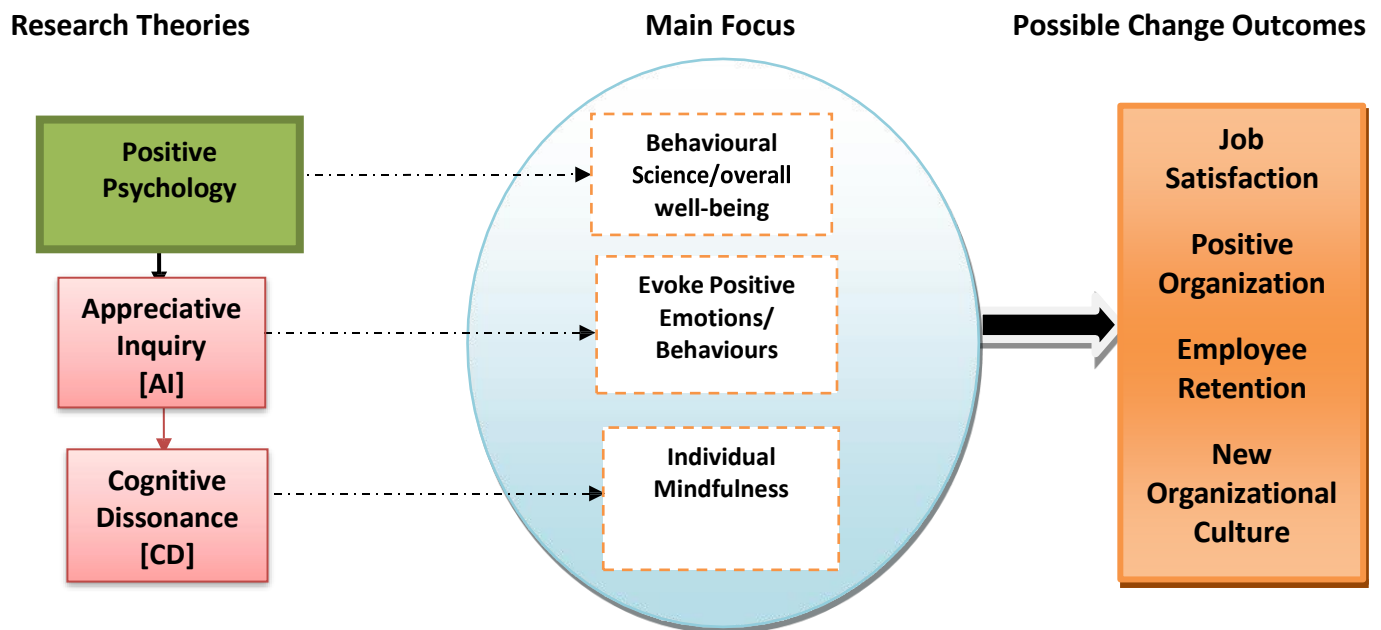


Figure 2.2: Unified Conceptual Framework of Research - (Source: Researcher - A Summary of the Theories mentioned in the Theoretical and Conceptual Framework).

This is a critical analysis of how the impact of positive psychology will be determined as well as the theoretical basis to validate the selected determinants. As per Figure 2.2 above, the determinants of Appreciative inquiry and cognitive dissonance will evoke behavioural impact and ignite individual mindfulness as it relates to the proposed organizational change. This could result in positive change outcomes that will impact job satisfaction, employee retention, and ultimately a new organizational culture.

2.3. The Models and Principles of Organizational Change

The literature on change management is replete with prescriptive models of change which are usually directed at higher level management with instructions on how to implement planned organizational change from that of Abraham Maslow's with his infamous theory - 'the hierarchy of needs' to the humanistic psychologist, Carl Rogers with the personality theory which suggests that for one to grow, they must be provided with an environment that is supportive, empathetic and holds employees in a positive regard (Rogers, 1951). These models usually provide a sequence of steps to be considered when implementing change. Usually, the steps are conveyed to be employed across many different organizational change initiatives (Rogers, 1995).

For this study, four (4) popular and well-known prescriptive models were explored, all focusing on organizational change principles, including positive organizational change, due to the overall objective of the study. The models are presented in chronological order, featuring the earliest to the latest models, presenting the author(s) earliest and latest writings, in order to highlight core ideas, criticisms, and in some instances, prescriptive steps of how organizational leaders are required to install organizational change to achieve successful outcomes.

2.3.1 Kurt Lewin – 3 Steps Change Model

Kurt Lewin has been credited with creating one of the earliest models of organizational change. The model is regarded as a fundamental approach to managing change and is widely accepted in psychology for implementing change (Hussain et al., 2018). Lewin's classical theory considers organizational change in three (3) steps: Unfreeze – Change and Refreeze. Lewin believed that for change to be successful, it must be planned to defunct any idea that the change was 'accidental' and involve the sharing of organizational power. As such, change requires a system decision approach that involves analyzing and understanding the dynamics of the organization as well as the social group formations that are in place to motivate people to maintain the change. Please see Figure 2.3 below for a pictorial representation of the model.

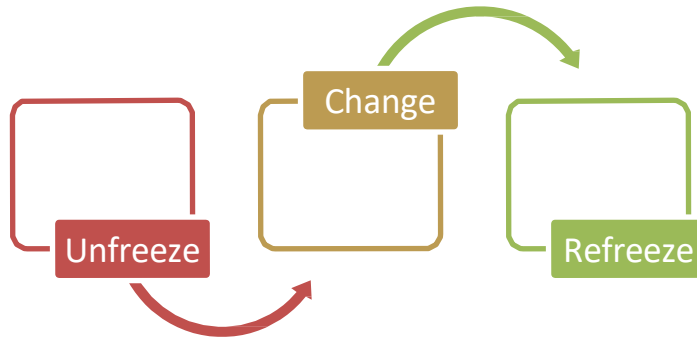


Figure 2.3: Lewin's 3-Steps Change Model (Sources: Lewin, 1947; Hussain et al., 2018),

As per the model, in the **unfreezing phase**, the organizational leader seeks to engage the employees about the upcoming change and its processes. This is a way of preparing them for the change as well as attempting to inculcate a spirit of togetherness and enthusiasm for the change. This phase, according to Lewin, is considered the most challenging of the phases as organizational leaders seek to adjust employees' behaviours, ones that have been developed over the years. As such, this phase challenges the organization's core beliefs and values which have helped to frame its foundation (Lewin, 1947).

The **change phase** focuses on which attitudes and behaviours employees need to adjust to accommodate the organization's new direction. Therefore, as the change begins to materialize, employees will begin to defy the process and even assess how the change will ultimately benefit them both in the short and long term (Lewin, 1947). This is where the common downside of change comes in – the resistance to change, a factor that has been cited as a fundamental hazard in the success of organizational change initiatives (Jones et al., 2016).

Finally, the **refreezing phase** is where the change is materialized, and the organization and its employees are working together to embrace the change. Further, it is at this stage that the organization works to institutionalize the change to create an environment of stability and build employee trust and confidence for long-term success (Lewin, 1947).

However, the very simplicity on which the model is founded became one of the main points of contention by scholars and researchers since its inception. Kanter et al. (1992) criticize the theory's overly simplified premise of change with its three (3) steps linear model. Kanter et al. (1992, p.10) were even harsher when they stated that it was merely chance that the model survived, better yet prospered due to its static conception of placing organizations in what he described as an 'ice cubed.' This degree of criticism was extended by Child (2005, p. 293) who argued that Lewin's 3-step model of change was 'rigid' and would not appropriately fit in the complex world in which businesses operate today.

Nonetheless, the harshest criticism seems to be that of Cummings et al. (2016) who argued on the authenticity of Lewin's work, denoting that while Lewin has been declared as the noble founder of the theory, which throughout the years formed the foundation of change management by supporters, the theory has only been repackaged and marketed to fit the narrative of a field that somehow claim to advance the theory of change. Therefore, researchers like Cummings et al. (2016) have stated to have conducted more of a dialectic analysis of Lewin's work on the backdrop of its authenticity and foundation. However, as many as there are critics, there are opponents who have come to the defense of both Lewin's and his theory of change. These include Burnes and Cooke (2012, p.97) who described Lewin's model of change as an interrelated whole that has advanced beyond its years.

However, while Lewin's model focuses majorly on helping organizational leaders to understand organizational change from a more structured perspective, other models attempt to offer ways and methods in allowing for a deeper understanding and insight into how change works as well as attempting to integrate both the emotional and practical elements of change. One such model is the McKinsey 7S Model of organizational change.

2.3.2 McKinsey 7S Model of Organizational Change

The McKinsey 7S organizational change model was developed by two consultants Robert Waterman and Tom Peters during the early 1980s. The McKinsey model presents an Eight (8)-Steps Change Model that has been described as a value-based management model due to its strategic

management depiction (Reganfar, 2015). The model views any organizational movement whether it be a change to training or recruitment from a strategic management standpoint to reap the desired results (Reganfar, 2015). The framework was developed in the 1980s by McKinsey Firm Consultants namely, Tom Peters, Robert Waterman, and Julien Phillips. However, Robert Waterman was most often singled out as the main contributor to the model. The model is a tool that examines an organizational design through the lens of Seven (7) Key internal elements namely - *strategy, structure, systems, shared values, style, staff and skills* (Waterman et al 1980). Please see Figure 2.4 of a pictorial presentation of the model below:

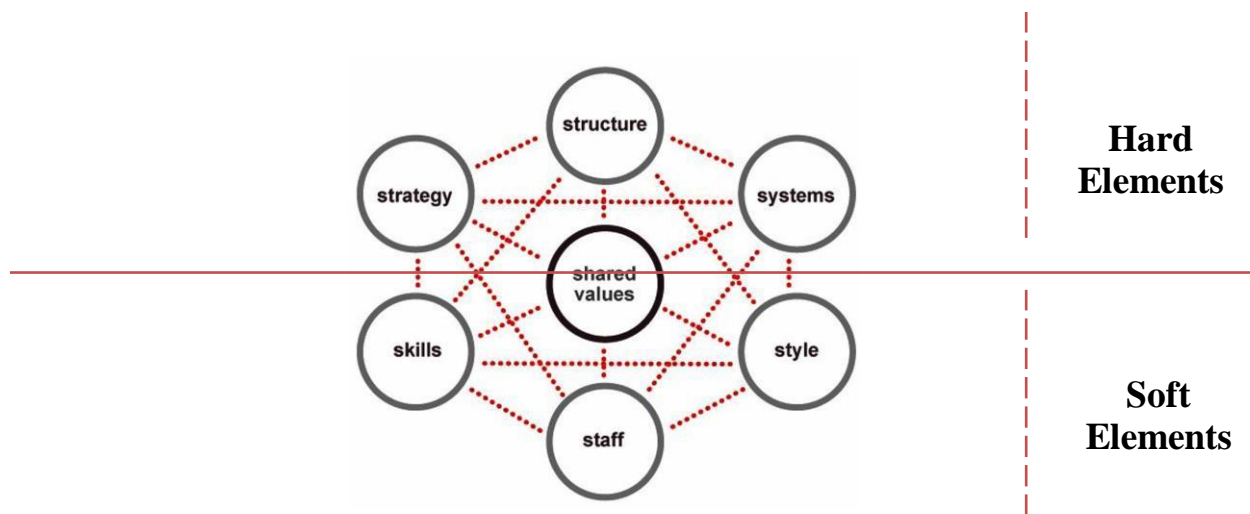


Figure 2.4: McKinsey 7 Steps Change Model (Sources: Adopted with adjustments from Zincir et al. (2017 and McKinsey.com, 2019).

The model above was adopted from Zincir et al. (2017) with a few minor additions that I have made as it relates to the model's overall description by McKinsey (Manktelow and Carlson, 2015). The model's emphasis is mostly on human resources instead of the traditional approach to organizational performance with a one-size-fits-all foundation of capital, infrastructure, and equipment (Reganfar, 2015). As such, the main objective of the model is to elaborate on how the seven (7) internal elements, when aligned can allow an organization to achieve organizational effectiveness (Waterman et al. 1980; Zincir et.al. 2017). The elements are divided into two (2) main categories – Hard and Soft(S). Hard

elements are those that are said to be easier to both identify and manage while Soft (S) elements are those which are harder to manage, but without them, the organization will find it difficult to create as well as maintain a competitive advantage. As such, strategy, structure, and systems fall under the 'hard element' category while style, staff, skills, and shared values are under the 'Soft (S) element' category (Waterman et al., 1980).

Strategy is the organizational plan that articulates the organization's long-term goals to remain current or maintain a competitive edge. However, it must be aligned with the organization's vision and mission as well as its core values to be truly effective. Systems and structures are the processes and procedures that guide the implementation of organizational decisions, especially when it comes to organizational change. On the other hand, in the Soft (S) category, staff focuses on the type of employees that comprises the organization and how many of them will be needed in the change process. At this juncture, the organization also looks at how to train and motivate these desired employees during the change process. As a result, staff is considered an organization's crucial asset, its "sine qua non," a must (Zincir et al., 2017).

While the model is valued by academia and practitioners as a popular strategic planning tool, McKinsey and its other developers contend that it can be applied in four (4) key areas in an organizational life namely, to facilitate organizational change, to implement a new strategy, to investigate how the various areas of the organization may change in the future as well as to facilitate organizational mergers (Waterman et. al 1980).

The McKinsey 7S model of change holds the theoretical principle that organizations that are stable and secure are more compatible with systematic structures. However, those that are insecure are better able to respond to the needs of the environment. Nonetheless, while McKinsey in his study pointed out that over Thirty percent (30%) of change management programs failed, a survey conducted by Prosci in 2016 on the best practices in change management denoted that over Ninety-four percent (94%) of change management programs are reportedly highly successful, but only when the processes involved

are managed properly by organizational leaders (Rayan and Ganesan, 2017). Some of the practices by Prosci in his study of 2016 entail – applying a more structured approach to change, engaging with front-line workers, communicating with staff frequently and openly, having dedicated change management resources as well as engaging and supporting middle managers. Nonetheless, due to the McKinsey model’s consistency and flow, it has been criticized as making organizations too predictable which could render an organization less competitive as the competitor can easily decipher their strategy, especially if the competitor is using an aggressive management strategy.

2.3.3 Kotter’s Model of Change

Kotter’s change model is regarded as one of the best-known frameworks for the management of organizational change. One of the reasons for this characterization of the model is due to its straightforwardness and simplicity in implementation (Borrego and Henderson, 2014; Pollack, 2015; Wentworth et al., 2018). The model is infamously known for its eight (8) reasons why change initiative fails as well as the eight (8) phases that are necessary for effective organizational change (Kotter, 1995; 1996.). These phases were duly highlighted in an article published in the Harvard Review by Kotter in 1995 – “Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail.” According to the model and its Eight (8) phases, organizational change initiatives fail due to several reasons. These include 1) failing to establish a sense of urgency for change, 2) not creating a coalition around the change mantra, 3) lacking vision, 4) not communicating the organization’s vision to gain employee’s buy-in, 5) not removing the obstacles that exist to the new vision of change, 6) not systematically planning or creating opportunities for short term ‘wins’ which would help in solidifying the change, 7) declaring victory prematurely and 8) not institutionalizing the change so that it can become a part of the organization’s new culture. Taking these into consideration will advertently help the organization to get rid of obstacles that could threaten successful outcomes.

People want to work and be a part of an organization that seems stable and appears to be going somewhere. In this phase, the organization must also seek to design and communicate plans to better

engage its customers and become more behaviour oriented. In that, the organization must seek to differentiate between the old and the new behaviours it wants to model to create organizational success. Forthrightly though, the model is designed with the expectation that change initiative must be executed in a step-by-step execution protocol to achieve success (Kotter, 1996; Ramasamy, 2016). Please see a diagrammatical representation of the 8-step framework in Figure 2.5 below.

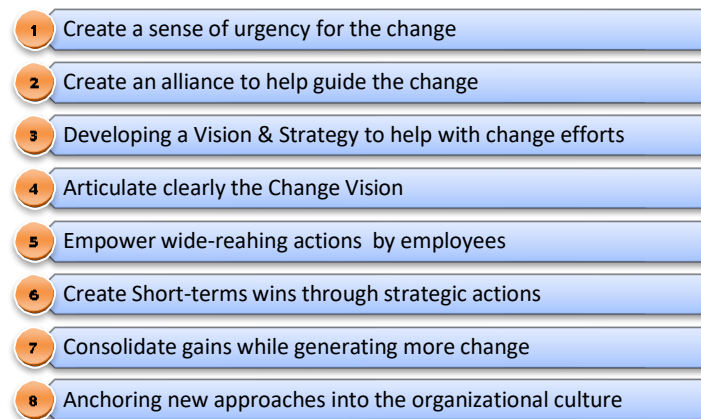


Figure 2.5: Summary of Kotter's Eight (8) Steps Approach to Organizational Change (Source: Kotter, 1996).

While Kotter's model has been described as focusing on the culture of an organization (Casey et al. 2012) and being more aligned to the private sector (Stewart and Kringas, 2003) others view it essentially as a planned approach to overall organizational change whether it be the public or private sector (Pillay et al., 2012, p.60). On the other hand, By (2005) denotes it as an emergent model of change and not necessarily a planned approach to change management. In addition, the model has also been critiqued on the grounds that it provides little to no detail to guide organizational leaders in the change management process in all situations (Applebaum et al., 2012, p.775). Similarly, Ansari and Bell (2009, p. 157) criticized it based on it not being general enough to guide some aspects of change as well as being too planned and thus not representing the realities that may exist in organizations, especially in the 21st century. However, the conversation was tempered by Sidorko (2008, p. 316) who declared that managers should not look to one model to provide a 'one-size-fits-all' solution to

organizational change, especially due to the global and arduous environment in which businesses operate.

2.3.4 Seligman Model of Change

Martin Seligman in 1998 presented a model of positive psychology or what has been denoted in some circles and by Seligman himself as the ‘psychology of well-being’ (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2002, 2011, 2019). The premise of the framework surrounds positive individual traits and promotes normal successful human development as opposed to the treatment of mental illnesses which was the hallmark of traditional psychology (Seligman, 2018). Research in the field of positive psychology analyzes one’s state of happiness, flow, values, strength, and virtues in light of how they can be used by social systems and institutions in general (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

The overarching aim of this model is to help people live life to its highest potential (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Seligman’s research in positive psychology seeks to understand positive emotions, traits, and positive organization in general or the study of happiness and well-being. As such, it infers that when people recognize their strengths, they tend to use them in something of value which creates a sense of empowerment that can translate into organizational performance, especially in times of uncertainties and change (Seligman, 2018). To this extent, the theory challenges the prevailing view of seeing humans as ‘resistance to change’ in that it challenges the organization to human growth and changes to view them as resourceful and adaptive as well as a key component of the change process (Lewis et al. 2008). Additionally, to measure human strengths, more recent constructs and approaches were viewed as a means to advance previous discourses on the theory and thus give it a new direction including mental health, happiness, hope, and overall well-being (Wong, 2020b; Yakushko, 2019).

In a methodical review of over Fifteen (15) studies in the context of positive psychology, it was revealed that positive psychology can serve as a promising tool for enhancing employee well-being and performance. Conversely, the literature revealed that a noted side effect was the reduction of stress and

burnout and to some extent depression and anxiety (Meyers et al., 2012). Further, the study discovered that there is an increasing interest in the topic of positive psychology in the 21st century. Many studies have been investigating positive interventions and employee flourishing, especially in an organizational setting (Harty et al. 2016; Hulsheger et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2018; Meyers et al., 2012 and Collin et al., 2016).

While these researchers differ in their approaches, the foundation of their study rests on how to use positive tenets to impact positive organizational change and not necessarily to correct laws or damages in the aftermath of change. However, some researchers have criticized this approach to organizational change on its conceptual framework of ‘positivity’ noting that ‘too much of a good thing’ can become overused and not needed anymore (Rose, 2016). On the other hand, Durston (2015) posited that it should not be seen as the only scientific method to achieve happiness, well-being and flourishing in the workplace when managing change as such beliefs can lead to scientism which can thwart scientific progress.

Nonetheless, Wong (2015) argues that positive psychology is both necessary as well as inevitable. However, Ivztan et al. (2015) believe that both the positive and the negative must be taken into consideration to help people overcome and transform and become positive agents of change and self. This was concurred by Fowers (2017) and Mayer et al. (2019) in that they posit that the application of the theory must emphasize the meaning of life by working through both positive and negative situations with a subtle appreciation of the uncertain nature of what is considered the ‘good life.’ Please see a pictorial presentation in Figure 2.6 below of the models of the evolution of change management as discussed in this literature.

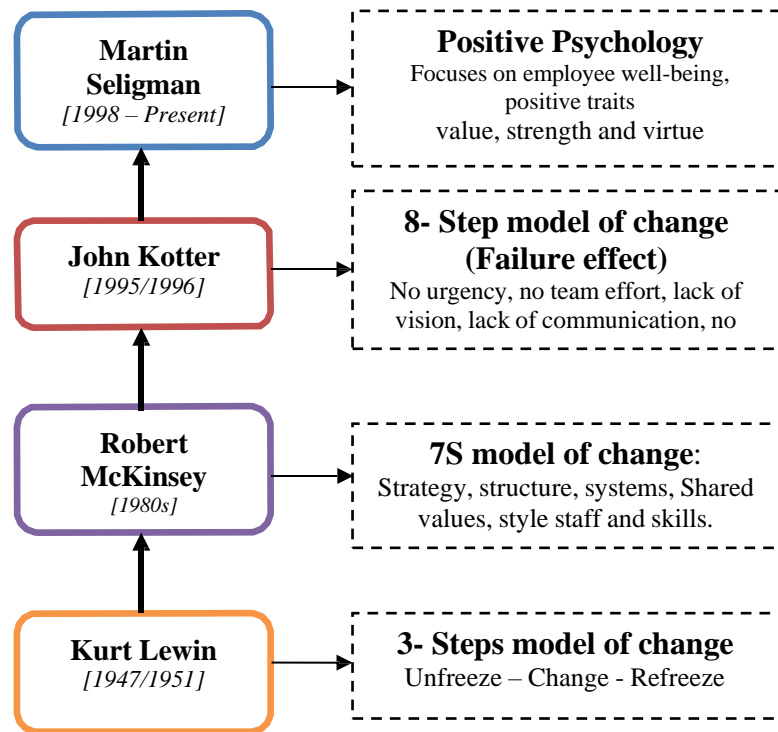


Figure 2.6: Summary of the Major Change Management Theories and Models over the Years. (Source: Researcher, based on a summary of the theories presented).

2.4 Public Sector Change – Overview and Determinants

While the public sector may defer from country to country, it is usually considered in general, as a statutory body or one that is government owned. As such, it was defined by Callender (2001) as those entities that have been established to manage the policies and operating requirements of government to enable them to achieve the stated objectives of public governance. The term ‘public governance’ according to Rainey (2003) refers to the management of a nation through the tentacles of political powers. As a result, public sector organizations usually carry out a wide range of tasks to help in the efficient function of government and public bodies (Callender, 2001). On the other hand, the private sector is simply defined as any entity that is owned by entrepreneurs and shareholders (Boyne, 2002). However, Bozeman (1987) argued that no organization is entirely public or private. Therefore, he contends, that both public and private sector organizations can be characterized by varying

dimensions of 'publicness.' This suggests that 'all organizations are public', but in principle, 'all organizations are private', which can be considered an equally valid inference.

In Jamaica, the public sector is made up of several organizations including the military, public transit, and public education as well as agencies of government such as Transport Authority, the based organization for this study. To this extent, the public sector in Jamaica is considered one of the major employers of the country. But how does the public sector in Jamaica carry out change? Well, this is one of the focuses of this study so as to provide the foundation for change outcomes at the agency level, such as the Transport Authority. This is important because organizational changes, especially major ones, are usually implemented at the larger public sector bodies and trickle down to the agencies. To this extent, this research will seek to garner this information scientifically, through qualitative interviews of the employees of the Transport Authority.

According to the literature, several studies have been aimed at the implementation of public sector change (McNulty and Ferlie, 2004; Fernandez and Pitts, 2007). However, while these studies have been similar to those conducted in private sector organizations, both share similar outcomes due to the arguable hindrances to successful organizational change such as leadership and the notion of resistance to change, which appears to be a stable concept in change management research (Higgs and Rowland, 2010, 2011; Herold et al. 2008). Further, many prescriptive models have been cited by literature on change management which attempts to outline a step-by-step approach to the implementation of change in organizational transformational efforts (e.g., Rogers, 1951; Lewin, 1947; Kotter, 1996). Nonetheless, while Sidorko (2008, p.316) denoted that no one model must be viewed as a pure and the only solution to change, researchers, in general, contend that formulating a vision, communicating the change at various levels, and using diverse means and empowering employees, motivating them to implement the change as well as institutionalizing the change is paramount to the success of any transformational programme (Fernandez and Rainey, 2006). To this extent, this study

will seek to examine the influence of positive psychology as an approach for an effective management of organizational change, at the Transport Authority, a public sector agency.

According to (Kotter, 1996; Seligman, 2018), positive psychology is a theory of change that focuses on inducing positive mechanisms such as hope, optimism, and self-awareness among change recipients as it relates to change management. As such, positive psychology is expected to be positively related to positive change outcomes. Therefore, organizational leaders are expected to foster positive behaviours which include positive well-being, positive traits, strength, and virtue, which according to research, are related to positive engagement, motivation, and empowerment among change recipients which can lead to successful change outcomes in organizations – public and private sector alike (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Kotter, 1996).

2.4.1 The Operationalization of Public Sector Change

Research in public sector management highlights that societal problems are no longer being treated in isolation by individual government organizations, but rather, through the collaborative effort of both the public and private sectors as well as civil society (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Klijn et al., 2010). Further, research on public sector change or reform usually emphasizes the continuous modernization as well as the minimization of the public sector, which most often leads to job cuts among other factors both human resources and structurally related. In addition, not wanting to be isolated any longer, the public sector has been networking with the private sector on policy formation to the extent that private sector techniques are often used to guide public sector change initiatives and decision-making (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004; Kickert, 2007 & Bekkers et al., 2011).

In so doing, Jamaica's public sector is no exception to this approach to organizational change, especially as it relates to the continuous reform of public sector organizations via its Public Sector Modernization Programme of 2008 which has become a prominent fixture for public sector change, even to-date. As such, Van der Voet (2013) asserts that these developments will ultimately imply changes in

the public sector as well as employee behaviours. In fact, this was one of the core tenets of Jamaica's Public Sector change management program or the more formal '*The Public Sector Modernization Vision & Strategy Medium Term Action Plan* (MTAP). A reform programme that was re-established in 2008 to effect change in the public sector at a national level.

While there are no clear plans on how to enact change, the modernization programme seeks to provide the foundation for government policies across all government entities. As such, the government intends that accountability is levied at both the organizational and individual levels and that policies are aligned to transformational efforts and subject to scrutiny. Notwithstanding, the framework indicates that it will endorse the principle of 'let managers manage' which is in keeping with international best practices, particularly the Canadian Accountability Framework from which Jamaica's change reform is constructed (Ref. 2.5.2 p.17). This model, according to the document, was chosen due to its recorded success as well as its comprehensive nature and international concurrence (Government of Jamaica Accountability Framework, 2010).

Nonetheless, despite the increase in research on public sector change, research contends, that little to no attention has been paid to the implementation of change, especially at the agency level (Stewart and Kingas, 2003; Kickert, 2010). In fact, Boyne et al. (2003) and Ongaro (2010), denoted that most research on public sector change is taken from a public sector reform perspective as seen in these modernization programmes (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Kickert, 2007). Public sector reform is defined as the 'deliberate changes' to the structure and processes of public sector organizations to improve how they are governed or run daily (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004. p.8). As such, most public sector change initiatives are influenced by reform programs instead of a stated theory (Wise, 2002).

The same holds true for Jamaica, as the *Public Sector Modernization Vision & Strategy Medium Term Action Plan* (MTAP) program is what has been setting the tone for public sector change ever since its implementation in 2008 after the failures of many prior reform programmes over the years. As such, Van der Voet (2015) contends that most reform programs are mostly focused on change on a national or

sectoral level rather than at the individual organizational level. This was one of the reasons for many of the failures of the recent year's reforms, having that centralized, 'trickle down' effects of the implementation of change instead of allowing individual organizations to enact the necessary changes required for their respective organizations (Jenkins, 1994; World Bank, 1996; Mills, 1997, pp. 25-26). Therefore, many academic studies have been focusing on the extent to which these reform initiatives have improved the performance, effectiveness, or cost-efficiency of public sector organizations rather than how change is executed (Heinrich, 2002; Ackroyd et al., 2007; Pollitt, 2000). To this extent, this research will seek to address the questions of how change is carried out in the public sector (are there any guiding principles?) to garner an overall understanding of organizational change at the Transport Authority, the based organization of the study which is lacking in previous research on change management as cited by literature and the history of reforms in Jamaica's Public sector from as far back as the 1970s (Tindigarukay, 2004).

Correspondingly, the pertinent question that seems eminent is 'Are these types of change, based on reforms, meaningful?' Well, studies have argued that most reform programmes are not based on the logic of appropriateness, but instead on the logic of consequence (March & Olsen, 1989; March, 1994). As such, Goldfinch & Wallis, 2010, argues that public sector organization does not adopt reforms to increase organizational effectiveness but rather adopt such reforms because they are instructed to do so by legislators (Pollitt, 2001; Goldfinch & Wallis, 2010).

The researchers also believed that some reforms are even endorsed due to market uncertainties as well as due to the influence of professional norms and standards. Nonetheless, Van der Voet (2015) strongly believes, that these types of reforms are merely symbolic gestures rather than a means to legitimately improve the performance and effectiveness of public sector organizations. As such, Van der Voet (2015) infers, that organizational reforms only offer little insight into 'how' change is implemented in individual public sector organizations, such as the Transport Authority. As such, these

programs seem to focus more on the ‘what’ or ‘reason’ for change, or the ‘why’ of organizational change rather than the process by which organizational changes are implemented.

Therefore, reform programmes of Jamaica in general are not able to provide insights as to the experience of change or the factors that have influenced the process of change. Consequently, researchers contend that this type of ‘cherry picking’ have allowed literature over the years to overlook the challenges of bringing about organizational change in public sector agencies (Van der Voet, 2015). Additionally, several researchers have contended that this may be one of the reasons why organizational change in the public sector may be taken for granted. Hence, this might also be the main reason why some change management literature concurs that the implementation of organizational change often fails (Kotter, 1996; Burnes, 2011). As such, Van der Voet (2015) purported that, while the reform perspective can be used to highlight the content of change, varying change management perspectives are better suited for studying how organizational change is actually implemented in the public sector, including its agencies.

To this extent, the overarching aim of this study is to investigate how positive psychology, conducted through outlined research practical principles, could influence positive organizational change at the individual organizational level, rather than by cabinet or permanent secretaries of major government ministries. As such, this study will focus on change at the organizational level, the Transport Authority. It is hoped that the findings will, to some extent, contribute to a model of change that can be implemented and used not only at the agency level but on a national scope.

2.4.2 The Bureaucratic Nature of Change in the Public Sector

One cannot elaborate on public sector change without looking at the nature in which the public sector operates. According to (Boyne, 2002; Rainey, 2014), public sector organizations are often characterized by a bureaucratic structure. According to Mintzberg (1979), a bureaucratic organization can be defined as one whose operations are mostly prearranged and predictable. However, a more classical definition was provided by Weber (1978, pp.956-1005) in which he defined a bureaucracy as

an organization where the tasks and activities are coordinated by national rules, hierarchy, and written documents. Nonetheless, many scholars after Weber have argued that bureaucracy is both a result of modernization and constitutive modernity (e.g., Boulding, 1953; Jacoby, 1973; Hasan, 2018).

To this extent, public sector organizations are usually characterized by high levels of control or what is categorized as ‘red tape’ with a limited amount of transformational leadership style (Wright and Pandey, 2010). Nonetheless, according to Bozeman and Feeney (2011), ‘red tapes’ are usually perceived as ineffective rules of governance. On the other hand, red tape is viewed to some extent, as a necessary pathology of organizational change and management (Van der Voet, 2015). In fact, this was the argument to some extent by Lam (2004, p. 118) who posited that bureaucratic organizations are traditionally viewed as ‘good’ for dealing with routine issues in the organization but are very rigid and inflexible in dealing with novelty and change in general.

Many organizational change initiatives, particularly those relating to ‘organizational reform’ as in the case of Jamaica’s public sector, have been aimed at cutting ‘red tape’ and improving communication among public sector organizations (Pandey & Moynihan, 2006). However, limited attention has been placed on how red tape affects change implementation in the public sector and its agencies (Pandey & Moynihan, 2006; Moynihan et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the high levels of red tape can limit the impact of leadership in organizational change initiatives (Van der Voet, 2013). This was concurred by Pandey & Garnett, 2006) who argued that ‘red tape’ or ‘rigid rules and procedures’ can restrict the formal and informal communication of managers. In addition, ‘red tape’ can also make communication during periods of change even more complicated (Pandey and Bretschneider, 1997; Bozeman and Feeney, 2011; Van der Voet, 2013).

In this regard, Serpa and Ferreira (2018) denote that bureaucracy is a disseminated concept in sociology and organizational theory and one that is often illustrated with an air of negativity. This degree of pessimism is considered a major consequence of red tape. Nonetheless, according to the literature, negativity can influence organizational performance (Pandey & Moynihan, 2006). Further, research

contends, that the existence of bureaucracy can aid in the continuous complexity and interdependence of social systems and hence organizational change (Van der Voet, 2013). Correspondingly, red tape can further cripple the process of change as it can limit the opportunities of managers to effectively communicate change to subordinates (Van der Voet, 2013; Pandey and Bretschneider, 1997). Importantly, red tape and high levels of bureaucracy can also limit the extent to which change leadership can stimulate employee participation in organizational change initiatives (Brown and Osbourne, 2013).

Therefore, Van der Voet (2013), concurs that studying organizational change in the public sector through the lenses of a change management perspective, is considerably practical and relevant, especially in the 21st century. One such perspective is that of the psychology of change, which is considered an emerging philosophy of this era. Notwithstanding, while some researchers are skeptical about the capability of public sector organizations to implement change (Isett et al., 2012; Karp & Helgo, 2008), others are quite more optimistic about public sector organization's abilities to implement change and quite so, successfully (Fernandez & Rainey, 2006; Borins, 2002).

2.4.3 Positive Psychology and Organizational Change

According to Frankl (1959), the meaning of life is viewed differently by all men. As such, what matters most is the specific meaning of one's life at a particular moment in time. This quote from Viktor Frankl, a psychiatrist and holocaust survivor, underscores the very essence of the theory of 'positive psychology' which according to research speaks to the scientific study of what makes life worth living (Seligman, 1998). This was the initial purview of Seligman, one of the founding fathers of the theory, who denoted that positive psychology was a collection of studies which seeks to investigate what makes life worth living (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). On the other hand, other researchers such as (Peterson, 2006; Gable and Haidt, 2005, p. 104) articulate it as a scientific study of what makes people flourish from a holistic perspective. The theory has experienced rapid growth since the famous Presidential Address by Seligman in 1998, Donaldson et al. (2015) and has helped to poise many interventions and programs (Schuller and Parks, 2014) as well as proliferated across multiple disciplines.

In addition, interventions derived from positive psychology have been implemented in various spheres of life including individuals, schools, workplaces as well as in communities and have helped to make people feel good as well as productive (Kern et al., 2019). Principally, it has been notarized to have been successfully connected with Policy Makers as well as with the general public (e.g., Global Council for Happiness and Well-Being, 2019).

Notably, the theory of positive psychology is sometimes judged to be like the pseudo-scientific fad of ‘positive thinking.’ However, the two (2) concepts are not one of the same (Pluskota, 2014). In fact, the premise of positive thinking is that an individual only needs to think positively to become successful, rich, happy and enjoy what is denoted as the ‘good life’ in an instant. This type of argument contradicts the findings of the theory of positive psychology, which is anchored in the tenets of humanistic psychology and does not equate to instantaneous justifications.

The theory of humanistic psychology is routed in the precept that people in general are innately good. As such, the tenets of morality, ethical values and good intentions are the driving force behind this theoretical construct. Nonetheless, unfavourable social experiences can cause one to divert from these naturally, inherent tendencies (Bland et al., 2017). The American Psychologists Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers are named as two (2) of the pioneers behind the theory of humanistic psychology (Maslow, 1957; 1968; Rogers, 1951). To this extent, Pluskota (2014) argues that positive thinking is simply a pop-psychological trend and in some instances an ideology that is based on a lack of knowledge and can even be considered deceptive.

The theory of positive psychology rests on the foundation of positive emotions (e.g., happiness, joy, inspiration, and love), which all encapsulate what is considered ‘well-being.’ According to Kern et al. (2019), the study of positive psychology has made it possible to empirically study constructs such as – Happiness, love, spirituality, gratitude, and hope. In its application to real-world circumstances, two (2) of these constructs have set the stage – Happiness and Overall well-being. These two (2) pillars will also be major constructs that will guide the analysis of the main objective of this research, which seeks

to investigate the influence of positive psychology as an approach for an effective management of organizational change, at the Transport Authority, a public sector agency.

To this extent, this research will seek to answer the questions of how change is carried out in this organization, are there any guiding principles? How are change initiatives viewed by change recipients, especially in the bureaucratic atmosphere that is usually created or perceived about government-based organizations? This will be done to develop a model of change that can be used as a mechanic to drive successful change outcomes not only as it relates to the Transport Authority but being able to be generalized in the general public and private sector organizations in Jamaica as a whole.

This model of change encapsulates the pillars of change – what makes people happy and how to translate that feeling of ‘happiness’ into organizational change initiatives which is the very essence of Frankl's (1959) philosophical viewpoint. The theory of happiness is depicted in Seligman's famous PERMA model which speaks to understanding positive emotions, engaging, and developing a relationship with employees during the change process and beyond, allowing them to find meaning for the change as well as applauding their accomplishments (Seligman, 2012).

2.4.3.1 Happiness – The ‘Good’ Syndrome

According to Seligman (2014), happiness, by many researchers is viewed as a cause rather than as a consequence of desirable work outcomes, be it in the public or private sector, school, health care, or in one's relationships. One of the central contributors to this ‘happiness syndrome’ was Ed Deiner, aka ‘Dr. Happiness’ whose research findings contradict as well as in some instances, emboldened other research findings as it relates to the causes of happiness and well-being (Deiner & Deiner, 1996). Ed Deiner is considered a leading researcher in the field of positive psychology and has been attributed with inventing the phrase ‘subjective well-being’ which is a feature of the concept of ‘happiness’ and that which can be empirically measured (Deiner, 1994; 2011; 2017).

As such, while some researchers viewed external conditions such as employment, safety, health, and community participation as having an impact on one's overall well-being, Deiner and Chan (2011)

as well as Deiner et al. (2017a) found that happiness was central to one's personal life and that of an organization. Additionally, Haidt (2006) equates happiness to moral good. On the other hand, moral philosophers view the happiness of an individual as the second path to righteousness (Kaczmarek, 2017). Further, if one should meet upon a situation that requires a show of bravery, then if that individual displayed the required level of bravery that the situation beckons, then according to moral philosophy, he/she would be a person of moral good and equal parts happy (Fulmer, 2015).

Therefore, the locus between right and wrong affects happiness and is contingent on the outcome of one's actions. Nonetheless, Alexandrova (2017) argues that well-being is something that is valuable to all human beings, but he cautiously denoted that, what is considered valuable is inseparable from the socio-historical perspective and context of the people that are within the ambit of such systems. Notwithstanding, Kern et al. (2019) suggest that any attempt to delineate what is considered the 'good life' will be dependent upon one's judgment of what is worthwhile, and of course, would be contextualized instead of statistically motivated.

The concept of happiness, especially what contributes to it has been largely debated throughout history (Kern et al., 2019). According to Seligman (2009), happiness tops the list of the things that people desire for their children. On the other hand, well-being and flourishing are viewed as a meta-construct that takes into perspective factors such as cognitive, social, physical as well as spiritual dimensions (e.g., Deiner et al., 2010; Forgeard et al., 2011; Hone et al., 2014; Hupert and So, 2013; Seligman, 2011 and Wong, 2011). Subsequently, flourishing is defined in terms of five (5) measurable elements according to Seligman (2011, p.16-25). These domains include Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationship, Meaning and Accomplishment, or the PERMA model of well-being. Seligman (2012) defined the elements as follows: positive emotion –displaying emotions that go well beyond just mere happiness and thus include such traits as hope, interest, compassion, and gratitude. This element according to Fredrickson (2001) is a prime indicator of the concept of flourishing, which is an attribute that can be learned.

Engagement is being in tune with oneself and to be completely absorbed into an activity. On the other hand, positive relationships encompass the various interactions of an individual daily, whether it is with family, friends, or bosses. It allows an individual to feel a sense or feeling of support, being loved and valued (Seligman, 2012). Meaning, which is another element of the model, discusses belonging or an individual trying to achieve something greater themselves. It is having that sense of purpose which can help an individual to face life's challenges. Lastly, the element of Accomplishment or Achievement focuses on having that sense of accomplishment or mastery of something and reaching goals. This, according to Seligman (2012) will help to motivate one to finish what they intended to do.

The PERMA model is said to constitute a different kind of well-being instead of just pure building blocks (Seligman, 2018). It is also said to be the five (5) measurable elements that encapsulate one's overall well-being (Seligman, 2011, pp.16-25). As such, Goodman et al. (2018) research confirmed that PERMA constitutes at least some of the elements of well-being. These researchers further believed that if people have one of the elements, then they automatically have the other elements to the same or varying degree. (Goodman et al., 2018).

To this extent, Wong (2011) purported that hedonic life engagement as well as a feeling of being blessed all contributes to well-being. Wong (2011) further denoted that the combination of the different domains both looks and feels different from person to person. This led to Huppert and So (2013, p. 838) defining 'flourishing' simply as 'feeling good and functioning well.'

As denoted by Wong (2011), a major element of happiness is that of 'hedonic happiness' which according to Deiner (1984; 2009) refers primarily to high levels of positive emotions (for example, pleasure, excitement, and gratification) as well as the subjective element of 'feeling good' which equates to low negative emotions such as sadness, anxiety, and anger. As such, Deiner contends that human beings are driven not to experience pain and as such, they will attempt to avoid it at all costs, especially during change. Therefore, Fredrickson (2001, 2013a) suggests that negative emotions limit one's attention to an eminent problem, while positive emotions help one cope and connect with others to build

resources, which can be used to help them better navigate through stressful times (Pressman and Cohen, 2005). Further, this type of mechanism, according to (Christakis and Fowler, 2012; Kramer et al. 2014) can proliferate to others through social networks and thus all spheres of life - individual and organizational alike. Kramer et al. (2014) denoted this proliferation as somewhat of an emotional contagion. This type of attitude is necessary during times of organizational change, which is often characterized as highly stressful.

Nonetheless, Kaczmarek (2017) cautioned that, for the sake of scientific accuracy, the term ‘happiness’ must be linked to a specific theory when being used in literature. Hence its linked to positive psychology in this research. This is because the conceptualization of happiness differs drastically among researchers. For example, for some, happiness is seen in the context of what people experience (Deiner, 2000; Kahneman, 1999) while for others, happiness is what people do and achieve (Waterman et al. 2010).

2.4.3.2 Translating Happiness into Organizational Change

The complexity which surrounds today’s organizations such as globalization, new technologies, increasing cultural differences and the changing needs and values of employees (Rodriguez-Carvajal et al. 2010) are causing organizations to look to different methods such as ‘soft mechanisms’ to manage organizational change (Rodriguez-Carvajal et al. 2010). One such method is that of ‘subjective happiness’ which is a central tenet of the theory of positive psychology.

According to research, as it relates to the application of the ‘happy strategy’, the abundance approach concept comes into play. The abundance approach is a method of translating happiness into organizational strategies, especially those deemed as ‘stressful’ (Linley et al., 2010). The abundance approach encourages the organization to embrace as well as enable the highest potential of both the organization and its employees. As such, employees’ health and well-being are viewed as critical ends in their own right. According to Wright and Quick (2009a) and Wright and Quick (2009b), health is

defined as both the absence of dysfunctional behaviour as well as the presence of human growth and upliftment.

Therefore, to create and sustain an abundant organization, organizational leaders should first identify key moments in which both the organization and its employees perform at their best, and then seek to understand what makes these optimal performances possible. Further, they will also evaluate moments that can be replicated for future use as well as those which can be abandoned and then design interventions that are aimed at resolving issues at ideal or future organizational performances. To this extent, finding ways to invoke organizational happiness can help the organization in moments of stress and chaos which is often associated with transformation and organizational uncertainties. Therefore, the application of positive psychology can help organizations to focus on the application of positive orientation of human resource strength which can be measured, developed, and effectively managed the outcomes of performances in the workplace (Luthans, 2002, p.59).

Albeit the abundance 'happiness approach' to translating happiness in the organizational realm, can help organizational leaders to take into consideration both the people 'human factor' and organization into account when managing organizational change and thus, search for mutual gains in today's rapidly changing and complex work environment (Rodriguez-Carvajal, 2010). Further, the study of Rodriguez-Carvajal (2010) concluded that enhancing 'positivity' in the context of work was associated with increased organizational gains. In addition, in a qualitative and quantitative review which was based on Forty-one (41) studies on human resource management, it was found that employees' well-being seems to function as mutual gains with performance, principally when it is considered in terms of happiness and relationships (Rodriguez-Carvajal, 2010). In this vein, Linley et al. (2010) denoted that, the application of positive psychology to world organizations, might indeed work. As such, at the end of the day, positive experiences, positive personal characteristics, and positive institutions are the overall premise of positive psychology and should be the focus of organizational leaders in adapting it to change (Jones, 2017).

2.4.3.3 Positive Psychology and Real-world Application

Positive psychology surmised that what works in the lives of people is just as important as trying to understand what can also go wrong (Sheldon and King, 2001). This was not the case with the traditional approach to psychology which focused on the alleviation of stress, struggles as well as other negative symptoms. On the other hand, positive psychology focused on the sources of what makes humans strive, flourish, and make them happy (Seligman, 2014). To this extent, the principles of positive psychology have been used to improve education as well as clinical and general counseling practices. It has also been applied in managing relationships, workplaces, and organizational cultures as well as in communities and general societal contexts (Lomas et al., 2014). Therefore, positive psychology has always sought to enhance people's well-being (Parks & Titova, 2016). Further, Kahler et al. (2014) denoted that clinical psychologists have been using positive psychology successfully in many areas of their practices such as smoking cessation as well as the management of chronic and non-chronic pain (Hausmann et al., 2018; Hausmann et al., 2014). As such, this makes positive psychology a relevant tool in today's world of work, especially in the management of organizational change.

Another useful intervention tool to translate positive psychology into the world of work was the –taxonomy of character strengths and virtues that was developed by Peterson and Seligman (2004) from the Book with the same title – Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification. The book has at its core an apt and sort of polar opposite subtitle – ‘A Manual of the Sanities.’ This was in response to further provide meaning and context to the engagement component of Seligman's PERMA model of well-being, which was used to establish a model for the implementation of organizational change (Seligman, 2012; Jones, 2017). The taxonomy identifies twenty-four (24) basic character strengths. The taxonomy has been studied extensively for more than fourteen (14) years and has become trendy among scholars. It's used as also been extended in the areas of personality and clinical research because it reflects the core significance of positive psychology (Seligman, 2004). As such, it focuses more on one's strengths and capabilities instead of characteristics of weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

The twenty-four (24) character of strengths are – wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. All these characters of strengths have a total of twenty-four (24) virtues among them. For example, for *Wisdom*, there are the virtues of creativity, judgment, and love of learning, and *Courage* – the virtues of bravery, honesty, etc. *Humanity* – Kindness, love, and social intelligence, *Justice* – fairness, leadership, etc., *Temperance* – forgiveness, humility, and prudence, etc., *Transcendence* – gratitude and hope, etc.

According to researchers, practical applications of the virtues can help organizations identify their strengths and use those strengths to improve or sustain the organization's well-being. This contrasted with the problem-solving traditional change models where the starting point of organizational change was finding the problem and trying to find a solution, which usually led to a chain reaction of just looking for problems, calling them out, and trying to solve them, which of course oftentimes led to people issues, and barriers to change (Kotter, 1996.). The study also recommended that the virtues or characters of strengths exist on a continuum for positive traits rather than on the basis of an all-or-nothing approach to solutions. Additionally, studies have shown that these human strengths can act as a buffer against one of the tides that can overtake an organization if not managed – mental health issues of employees, which incorporates a plethora of concerns such as stress (Robinson, 2015). For example, research shows that if someone is optimistic, 'positive' then that can prevent depression with life or even particular circumstances of life such as substance abuse, social skills, etc. (Seligman, 2003; 2014; Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2012) even though on the flip side, other researches might indicate otherwise (Gibson & Sanbonmatsu, 2004; Norem, 2001; Shepperd & McNulty, 2002). However, research has shown that the development or displaying of optimism and happiness can help in improving positive effect and flow, which is one of the elements in Seligman's model of change (Layous et al., 2013). Additionally, people who possess the strength of learning are described as being intrinsically motivated to use every opportunity as a learning opportunity even if they feel frustrated due to the materials to be learned (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). In contrast, pessimistic explanatory expectations have been

purported to cause a feeling of helplessness and even depression. This was observed in an experiment from as far back as the 1970s. In this experiment, animals that received electric shocks that they did not have any control over, after a while, became submissive and did not attempt to escape the shocks even when the opportunity to escape was possible (Seligman and Maier, 1967).

Nevertheless, the framework has been criticized on a few of its stated ‘happy treats.’ One such is that people may overly use them, which can become a liability rather than an intended asset. For example, one might use humour, not for the virtue it truly represents but rather as a kind of defense mechanism to deal with a tragedy or some other undesirable life challenges (Shepperd & McNulty, 2002). Additionally, Fowers (2005, pp. 10-11) argues that the framework used as a ‘piecemeal approach,’ stems from researchers' neglect to thoroughly develop a general concept of virtue.

Nonetheless, the development of this model led by the researchers, Peterson and Seligman, has been considered a ground-breaking study for the development of a theoretical framework to assist with the practical application of the theory of positive psychology by practitioners, scholars, and organizational leaders alike (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

This strength-based model has been applied in the field of education (Park and Peterson, 2008; Seligman et al 2009), the public sector (Jones, 2017) as well as in general organizational settings - the public and private sector (Harzer and Ruch, 2013; Littman-Ovadia and Steger, 2010, Peterson and Parks, 2006). It has also been successfully applied in youth development programs (Park, 2004, Park and Peterson, 2006; Proctor et al., 2011).

In a clinical application of the theory, Mongrain et al. (2018) showed that acts of kindness can help reduce depression in individuals and thus improve mental health. As such, it was purported that integrating positive psychology with dialectical behaviour therapy can be mutually beneficial (Warlick et al., 2018). Additionally, from a counseling perspective, positive psychology principles were adopted for a programme for disadvantaged youth to teach resiliency (Jarden et al., 2018.). This was a strength-based approach to building resilience while fostering well-being. The principles of positive psychology

were also applied to the field of physical health by Jaser et al. (2018) via the use of Smart Phones, which is a common feature of today's society, to help to increase the adherence to medication for adolescents with diabetes and other chronic illnesses.

In a global Gallup Study of 2016, it was found that workplaces that incorporate strength-based or positive psychological approaches to their change interventions saw an average increase of 15% in employee engagement and in some cases over 71% reduction in staff turnover as well as up to 59% fewer incidents as it relates to workplace safety (Brandon & Asplund, 2016). The research was an extensive study to examine strength-based interventions application in the workplace. It comprises over Forty-nine Thousand, Four Hundred and Ninety-five (49,495) business units of over Seven (7) industries with over 1.2 million employees participating across Twenty-two (22) organizations and Forty-five (45) countries. With its success, the researchers concluded that organizations must seek to employ strength-based strategies if they are desirous of improving organizational performances as well as crucial organizational change outcomes (Brandon & Asplund, 2016).

Another widespread application of these principles has been in the educational arena. Educational Psychology generally speaks to the development of effective cognitive and social competence of young people (Pluskcota, 2014). As such, the basic tenets anchored into humanistic psychology posed an absolute resemblance to positive psychology (Pluskcota, 2014). As a result, the concept of positive psychology was used to help young people to develop positive self-esteem and have a sense of the meaning of life as well as gain self-discipline (Pluskcota, 2014).

Another good example of the integration of the principles of positive psychology in a government-based organization was that of the City of Cleveland in the United States, in their effort to develop a strategic and sustainable plan in 2009 for all-around change (Jones, 2017). As such, the mayor at the time, Frank Jackson, established what was considered a transformation vision (Cooperrider, 2012). This was done by leveraging appreciative inquiry, a principle of positive organizational change. The mayor challenged the over Seven Hundred (700) stakeholders to help identify the city's strengths and

then build on them to create a ten (10) year plan change initiative. As such, the aim was to redirect the government's focus and its mission from merely looking at 'what was wrong with the city' to instead starting its change initiative from a positive viewpoint which is the foundation of positive psychology. This strategic start was done to develop a plan of change that could impact economic growth as well as individual and environmental well-being. It worked! And the efforts and success of the plan continue to this day, with a positive impact (Sustainable Cleveland, n.d.).

To this extent, Jones (2017) in his 2017 work – 'Positive Public Service – Turning Purpose into Progress by changing how Government Works from the Inside,' surmised that positive psychology research over the years has continuously shown that fostering well-being in the workplace was associated with not only an organization having engaged employees but improved productivity, which of course lends itself to organizational change success (Jones, 2017).

Therefore, while a lot of the research on positive psychology and public sector change rests outside of Jamaica, research has shown its successful application in organizations as a whole, be it the public or private sector. To this extent, it is relevant. As such, research of this nature in Jamaica, is critical, as it will not only provide concrete research on the topical construct instead of anecdotal declarations but provide models of change, that are gauged by scientific findings. Findings, that can be replicated across sectors, for the good. Especially, as the country rears its way forward to the achievement of its 2030 vision, one that is being mostly led by the public sector.

2.5 Political Party in Power and Organizational Change

Political parties have been investigated for many years (Guaja et al., 2021). This is due largely to the role they play as central actors in representing a country's democracy (Guaja et al., 2021; Allern & Kosiara-Pedersen, 2007). The nature of a political party's centrality is based on the notion that they nominate persons for public elections. To this extent, they are established to coordinate groups of individuals to achieve political outcomes (Scarrow, 2015). Nonetheless, over time, political parties

evolved, but the main theme remains, being separated from another party by its focal philosophy (Allern and Kosiara-Pedersen, 2007). Additionally, the narrative of being a membership organization with several individuals has also evolved with the emergence of member-less political parties (Mazzoleni and Voerman, 2017). But do these political entities influence change in the public sector, based on the fact that they become the overseers of these organizations in their time of reign? This is one of the questions that this research will investigate, based on the research findings of employees of the Transport Authority, the based organization for this study.

In Jamaica, there exist two (2) major leading political parties. The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the People's National Party (PNP). These political parties have been in existence for years and remain the parties that maintain power over varied periods, even when challenged by single-member political representation, as was seen in the case of the last election of February 2021, when the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), retained its position as the country's government.

The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) was formed in 1943 and was the first to win the national election in Jamaica in the year of its Independence in 1962. On the other hand, the People's National Party (PNP) was formed in 1938, a year before the beginning of World War II, and was the first party to gain power in 1955 while Jamaica was still under British rule (Jamaica Journal, 1983; Handbook of Jamaica, 1964).

Both parties have been controversial over the years, especially as it relates to their influence on public sector entities, especially when they are in power (Jamaica Journal, 1983; Handbook of Jamaica, 1964). However, how true is this or how widespread is this perception? Well, no research has set out to explore this phenomenon, even from the viewpoint of employee perception. As such, this is one of the objectives of this research. To find out if the political party in power plays a role or is perceived to play a role in organizational change, in the public sector, particularly the Transport Authority, the based organization for this study and an agency of government.

One such means of highlighting this epidemiological-wise is through the exploration of the concepts of employee perception and transparency as it relates to organizational change. This is

fundamentally critical, as most organizations will not deliberately state political party involvement in their organization's operations, public or otherwise.

2.5.1 Employee Perception and Organizational Change

According to research, when employees begin to absorb information about the proposed change, they will begin to develop an opinion about it and its impact. This can either be positive or negative. If the opinions are more negative, especially at the onset of the change, this can lead to the development of stressors which can further lead to an overall negative evaluation of the change (Fugate et. al., 2008; Caldwell & Herold, 2006). As such, managing employee perception has been a critical feature of research that deals with change management. This is because, during change, employees will evaluate the change, how it will affect them as well as its outcome (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003; Kotter, 1996; Rock & Schwartz, 2006). This is a natural human tendency which may be either negatively stated or appraised. As such, managers must be careful not to align this behaviour as just being a 'resistor' or a situation where it is treated as benign-positive, but a phase that the organization can move away from. As such, Wanberg and Banas (2000) opined that it is the nature of humans to avoid what we do not believe and could accomplish while still focusing on what we truly think we can do.

2.5.2 Transparency During Organizational Change

Of late, transparency in government in Jamaica has been gaining increasing attention with several organizations coming under scrutiny about how they operate. The most recent is the One Hundred and Twenty-four (\$124) million dollars loss in the Ministry of Education, a government-based organization (Jamaica Gleaner, 2021). Considering this, the government has joined forces with stakeholders from Jamaica's civil society to formulate a national plan of governance that will seek to encourage transparency, trust, and accountability in institutional practices (Ministry of Finance, 2021).

Transparency breeds trust, which has been denoted in literature (Salazar, 2017). But what is transparency? According to socio-political literature, transparency is the deliberate attempt to ensure that

all legally releasable information is available, whether that information places the organization in a positive or negative light (Rawlins, 2008a). Rawlins (2008b) further denotes, that the information, while being made available, must be accurate, timely, and balanced so as to enhance the reasoning ability of both consumers and businesses alike. Having this mechanism in place will help in ensuring that the responsible individuals are held accountable for their actions.

Therefore, with transparency, comes trust, an association that was examined by Rawlins (2008a). The findings of this study indicated that organizational transparency was a major predictor of employee trust and trust is an important factor in an organization, particularly in times of change, as expressed by employees of the Transport Authority. Rawlins (2008a) findings were further confirmed by Berrgen and Bernshteyn, 2007). In this study, over One Thousand (1,000) organizations from over Thirty-nine (39) countries were studied. The findings suggest that transparency was critical for employees to become actively engaged in organizational change behaviours.

Trust is an individual's belief that another person or an organization will act in accordance with their expectations of positive behaviour (Coley-Graham, 2019). However, trust is low and is falling at a rapid pace in both Latin America and the Caribbean as denoted by a Latinobarometro survey of 2018 (Coley-Graham, 2019). Interpersonal trust, which is one of the trust factors that exist within an organization, was said to be about Fourteen (14%) percent in Southeast Asia which was reportedly three (3) times higher than that of Latin America and the Caribbean (Coley-Graham, 2019).

As such, organizations that are undergoing change must ensure that employees are strategically aligned with the change initiative. Therefore, if employees feel like the organization is withholding information or a political party is influencing decisions, they may be less accepting of the change initiative (Salazar, 2017). In contrast, if employees view the organization to be transparent, they are more likely to be receptive to the change. To this extent, transparency is an important aspect of positive psychology to realize successful change outcomes.

2.6 Employee Involvement in the Change Process

Employee involvement is an approach to management that focuses on providing employees with adequate decision-making authority, particularly as it relates to organizational change (Lawler, 2003; 2006). As such, Orgambidez-Ramos et al. (2017) opine that it is based on the concept of organizational leaders managing employee behaviours to achieve their goals. On the other hand, Lambert et al. (2016) define it as the extent of an individual's psychological interest in a particular job. Therefore, the employee's psychological condition becomes cognitively involved, active, and very much interested in the work to be conducted. As such, having a highly involved workforce is attributed to the potential success of one's organization (Yuspahrudin et. al., 2020). This is because an involved workforce can contribute to an organization's level of production which may in turn help to lower the rates of turnover (Srivastava, 2013) as cited in (Abdallah et al., 2017).

Over the past three (3) decades, employee involvement has become a part of management practices that involve high performance and commitment to work (O'Toole and Lawler, 2007). This is particularly relevant due to economic frailties, globalization, and the competitiveness of work (Fernandez-Salinero et al., 2020). As such, according to Mudrack as quoted by Fernandez-Salinero et. al. (2020), job involvement is correlated to an employee's personal growth. To this extent, this research will seek to understand employee involvement in the workplace, particularly as it relates to organizational change and demonstrate the benefits of employee involvement, singularly and as a team, for successful organizational change. This is one of the questions and objectives of this research, which set out to investigate how employees perceived change and how involved they are in the change process at the Transport Authority, the based organization for this study.

The principles of employee involvement were pioneered in the 1960s and 1970s in the manufacturing sector of both Europe and the United States (Boxail and Macky, 2009). During this early acceptance phase, many organizations were incorporating principles of teamwork and flat organizational structures in their business operations (O'Toole & Lawler, 2007). However, while the concept was being

practiced by some, many others, especially Fortune One Thousand (1000) companies were not practicing this purported successful form of management (Osterman, 1994; Mohrman & Benson, 2001). Additionally, reports contend that no large-scale research has been conducted over the last few years, which might be an indication that studies of employee involvement have somewhat slowed or remained stable (WER, 2011). But how beneficial is this practice for organizations particularly, in times of change, which is one of the objectives of this research?

According to a meta-analysis conducted in 2006 from over Ninety-two (92) studies, employees' involvement was proven beneficial and effective in several different forms of organizations including Fortune One Thousand (1000) firms, Manufacturing and Service sector (O'Toole & Lawler, 2007). As such, critics believe that the seeming decline or loss of interest in the subject area might be due to how it is sold (Kaufman, 2011). Taken into context though, research has offered several reasons why employee involvement is not seemingly adopted in some organizations as a tool to assist in the implementation of organizational change. These include employee resistance to employee involvement, lack of resources to implement the change, communication of the change and management, and overall employee support (O'Toole & Lawler, 2007).

To this extent, employee engagement is a valuable measure of organizational change as it speaks to an individual's optimal state of functioning (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). As such, it is the 'E' in Seligman's PERMA model and one which is characterized as a central component of human flourishing (Seligman, 2011). According to Csikszentmihalyi (1990), employee engagement can lead to purposeful, enjoyable, and productive work by an individual, all of which are imperative in times of organizational transformation.

2.6.1 Employee Involvement and Resistance to Change

One of the motivations for developing models of employee involvement has to do with people's resistance to change which has been cited in the literature as one of the main concerns of successful change implementation (Trice & Beyer, 2001). As such, research has shown that employees do respond

positively to work practices that tend to garner their involvement (O'Toole and Lawler, 2007). According to Freeman and Rogers (1995), most non-managerial staff of employee involvement initiatives reported that they had benefitted personally. In fact, in his report, the number was a staggering Seventy-nine (79%) percent. Therefore, researchers have concluded that practices of employee involvement are usually associated with a feeling of belongingness as well as trust in management, which are crucial factors in times of organizational change (Kalmi and Kauhanen, 2008; Goddard, 2004). This, however, does not negate the criticisms that have been leveled against employee involvement, as it too can become a resistor for work initiatives (Hunter et al., 2002).

One such criticism is that the practice is sometimes used to undermine worker unions while increasing the workload of employees, which would be more beneficial to the organization rather than the employees. This could serve to eradicate the whole concept of the feeling of belongingness which can in turn increase the stress level of employees (McHugh & Kim, 2008; Goddard, 2004). As such, the extent to which employee involvement can be used as a successful strategy for the implementation of change will not be linear, but rather dynamic and flexible.

2.6.2 Organizational Resources and Organizational Change

According to Shin et al. (2012), in its broadest terms, resources for change speak to anything that can help employees or an individual employee cope with the pending change. Therefore, research contends that employees will have a more favourable perception of change if they believe that they have sufficient resources to deal with the change. Therefore, they will be more committed to the change. According to research, education and training can serve to increase job satisfaction, as it has the potential to positively impact an employees' attitude as they will perceive it as a form of personal development, which can further help with a reduction of staff turnover (Arthur, 1992; Jaeseong & Sang, 2020).

2.6.3 Communication and Organizational Change

According to Bruce (2018), change is the new normal in today's world and organizations. As such, in this new charge, people are required to learn new skills and adapt to work and find ways to communicate work (Bruce, 2018). Therefore, if the change is not communicated effectively and timely, during the change process, then that can become a barrier to successful change implementation. This was the sentiments of Henley (2018) who posited that leaders' failures to communicate or to be honest about change and its impact has been noted as one of the reasons for failure. As such, research has denoted that communication can be a tool used to overcome resistance to change (Armenakis et al., 1993; Kotter and Schlesinger, 2008). Therefore, to lead change, leaders must seek to use a variety of means to deliver the proper messages to solicit feedback, create a sense of readiness for the change, and motivate the employee to perform during the change (Gilley et al., 2009). As such, the proper tools of communication can lead to continued support and cooperation of all stakeholders, which is required for the successful implementation of the change (Stillwell et al., 2016).

2.6.4 Leadership and Employee Involvement in Organizational Change

The behaviours of organizational leaders, particularly during change are an important determinant of success and high involvement of employees (Benson et al., 2013). According to Fenton – O'Creevy, 1998), a lack of managerial support can undermine the full involvement of employees during change initiatives. As such, while some amount of resistance might be experienced when giving information and automation to lower-level staff, particularly by supervisors, it is needed to garner support for the change. Therefore, research denotes that supervisors must seek to move past any stress and insecurity that may be associated with employee involvement. This will help to support the new means of work and achieve the goals of the organization (Mahoney, 2008; Batt, 2004).

Nevertheless, managerial actions are important in the implementation of change as pointed out by Yost et al. (2011) in their qualitative work. As such, researchers denoted that an organization leader's

passion and how they pursue change can be an important factor for success. Therefore, organizational leaders must be able to navigate the obstacles to the change, secure the necessary resources to effect the change, communicate a clear plan for the change, and importantly, ensure that the change to be implemented fits the design of the culture of the organization (Oreg & Berson, 2011). To this extent, the leadership role of the organizational leader becomes somewhat more transformative than dictatorial. According to research, transformational leadership focuses on instilling a clear vision of the future state of the organization in the minds of employees, which can allow them to better identify with an objective of organizational change (Morgan & Zeffane, 2003; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002).

Change cannot take place without people. As such, employee involvement in the change process is critical to its success. Therefore, research contends that a highly involved workforce is a potential attribute for success (Yuspahruddin et. al., 2020). Additionally, the lack of employee involvement can lead to issues of resistance and communication barriers, factors which have been suggested may contribute to unsuccessful change outcomes.

To this extent, the research will seek to answer the questions of how involved employees at the Transport Authority are in the change process as well as how are change initiatives viewed by them, especially in the bureaucratic atmosphere that is usually created or perceived by government organizations. This will help to develop solutions to enact organizational change, which can be used as a mechanism to drive successful change outcomes not only as it relates to the Transport Authority but the wider public sector.

2.7 Cognitive Dissonance and Resistance to Change

The theory of cognitive dissonance has been proliferating the mainstream in social psychology literature since it was pioneered in 1957 by the psychologist, Leon Festinger (Hinojosa et al., 2016). The theory has been applied in many situations, especially as it relates to management literature to explain as well as predict the motivational nature of dissonance in producing attitudes and behaviour change in

managerial decision-making as well as the broader organizational context (Hinojosa et al., 2016). The theory has inspired research in areas such as economics, philosophy as well as political science (Metin & Camgoz, 2011).

Several theoretical perspectives have been employed to understand as well as to explain an individual's resistance to change. These include cognitive dissonance, psychological capital (Hultman, 2014; Van den Heuvel & Schalk, 2009), and dispositional resistance (Laumer & Eckhardt, 2010; Oreg & Sverdluk, 2011) among others. The theory has also been employed by many researchers to understand why and how an individual resist organizational change (Burnes & James, 1995; Gawronski, 2012). In fact, in a study conducted by Gawronski (2012), it was found that the organizational culture and cognitive dissonance which arises from a change initiative can influence the degree and nature of employee involvement that was necessary to create a positive climate for organizational change. Additionally, research from the fields of cognitive dissonance and behavioural sciences in general including neuroscience and psychology, have been used to explain the types of resistance that certain audiences will cognitively employ to counter behavioural attitude change (Flynn, 2015).

According to Festinger (1957), an individual is motivated by the unpleasant state of dissonance and engages in what is called 'psychological endeavours' to reduce the inconsistency. This type of effort supports the cognition that is most resistant to the change. The resistance to change according to Frey et al. (1982) should be examined in terms of the 'degree of dissonance as per the cognitive system' especially if a particular cognition is more resistant to change.

There are many ways in which an individual can reduce dissonance (the unpleasant feeling). This includes adding consonants (making a thought/behaviour consistent with a decision), lessening the dissonance cognitions, increasing the significance of the consonant cognitions or in the same breath decreasing the significance of the dissonance cognitions. Nonetheless, one of the most evaluated ways of reducing dissonance is that of a change in attitude. The attitude that is expected to change is those that are in line with the cognition that is most resistant to change (Festinger, 1957). In tests of the theory,

it is usually theorized that whatever knowledge exists about recent behaviours is the one which is typically the most resistant to change. This is because people behave in a certain way, as such, it is usually going to be very challenging to change or undo the behaviour. Therefore, the attitude change will be considered consistent with the recent behaviour (Festinger, 1957). Nonetheless, when Festinger discussed their theory in its early days, dissonance was discussed in terms of being a cognitive consistency theory (the perception of conflicting information); actually, it was one of the earliest thoughts associated with social psychology, with Fritz Heider being attributed with its earliest development (Fritz, 1958).

This then saw the proliferation of several developments surrounding this notion as researchers then believed the theory was novel and contained an important element that was not presented in any other consistency theories (Brehm and Cohen, 1962; Wicklund & Frey, 1981). This novel element was that both dissonance and consonant cognitions are described in terms of central incentive conditions (Beauvoise & Joule, 1996, 1999; Mills, 1999). Nonetheless, this central cognition is generally related to behaviour. However, to truly understand the cognition with resistance to change or what role the theory can play when it comes to mitigating or managing undesired decisions, one must examine some of the major paradigms associated with cognitive dissonance. These paradigms are typically used to test or administer principles of cognitive theories. These include free choice, induced compliance, and effort justification. These are three (3) of the main paradigms that are used to test the theory's constructs.

2.7.1 Free Choice Paradigm

This paradigm was first tested by Brehm (1956) to test the theory of cognitive dissonance. The experiment was done to test the predictions derived from dissonance theory. The paradigm looks at the effects that the decision of choice has on an individual's subsequent preferences. Studies have continuously found that, after an individual is asked to make a choice, their evaluation of their chosen alternative usually declines (e.g., Brehm, 1956; Festinger, 1964; Gerard & Whit, 1983; Lieberman et al.,

2001). This 'spreading of alternatives' as it is called, is what has been taken as evidence of 'free choice' - induced attitude change and is noted as a premier example of the wider phenomena of the reduction of cognitive dissonance (Aronson & Mills, 1959). Note, dissonance, is the unpleasant motivational state that arises when individual behaviours and cognitions are inconsistent with each other. To reduce this unpleasantness, the individual will shift the attitudes and beliefs to eliminate the inconsistency (Festinger, 1957; 1964).

Therefore, the argument is this, if an individual has a choice between two (2) different flavours of ice cream or appliances, the act of choosing one flavour over another is said to create dissonance because any negative thought about the chosen alternative or positive thought about the rejected alternative will become inconsistent with the decision that was already made (Brehm, 1956; Festinger, 1957; 1964). As such, to reduce this now inconsistency and the experience of dissonance, the individual will shift his or her preferences to desire the chosen object more and the rejected object less than before the initial choice. Therefore, once a decision is made, dissonance is likely to arouse. Consequently, after a choice is made, then each of the negative aspects of the chosen alternative and positive aspects of the rejected alternative is dissonant with the decision. On the other hand, each of the positive aspects of the chosen alternative and the negative aspect of the rejected alternative is consonant (in agreement with the decision). As such, decisions that are deemed more different will arouse more dissonance than those considered easy (Harmon-Jones, 2019). Hence the understanding of this concept in the implementation of organizational change, particularly as it relates to resistance to change.

2.7.2 Induced Compliance Paradigm

The concept of dissonance arises when an individual says or does something contrary to a previous belief or attitude. As such, from the cognition experience from the prior belief or attitude, it would assume that the individual would not engage in such behaviour. Nonetheless, inducement to engage in that behaviour through a promise of being awarded or threats of punishment will end up

providing cognitions that are consonant with the behaviour. This type of cognition will justify the behaviour the less dissonance arises (Harmon-Jones, 2019).

One of the first experiments using this paradigm was conducted by both Festinger & Carlsmith in 1959. The pair of researchers tested the hypothesis, that the smaller the reward to say something that one does not believe, the greater the opinion changes to agree with what one has said. In the experiment, a few men performed what was considered a 'boring task' for an hour. They were then told by the researchers that two (2) groups were performing the seemingly 'boring task.' It was stated that the first group did not receive any introduction, but the second group was told that the task was enjoyable by someone who had supposedly just completed them. The participants 'the boring group' was then asked to substitute for someone from the 'enjoyable' group and to make themselves available for any future engagement. They were given either \$1 or \$20 to tell the next person (which was a female accomplice of the researchers) that the task was enjoyable and that they should remain on call for any future engagement. When the participants were asked to evaluate the task by an interviewer, it was found that those who were given the \$1 rated the task as being more enjoyable than those persons who were given the \$20 or those who merely performed the tasks and were not asked to describe them to anyone else.

According to Festinger and Carlsmith (1959), the participants engaged in what is referred to as 'counter-attitudinal behaviour.' As such, the less money they received for engaging in the counter-attitudinal behaviour, the more positive the person's attitude was which was labeled as the 'negative-incentive effect.' The researchers posit that this is because there is a negative relationship between the amount of incentive (money) and the amount of attitude change in the direction of the counter-attitudinal behaviour (Aronson, 1969). The result was later proven in a research by Linder et al. (1967), in which they posit that the negative incentive effects occur when an individual feels free to decide about engaging in the counter-attitudinal behaviour, but when there is no perceived freedom, the later effects occur, that is, the more incentive, the more the attitude displayed.

2.7.3 The Effort-Justification Paradigm

This paradigm asserts that dissonance arises whenever an individual engages in any activity that is deemed unpleasant to obtain some desirable outcome (Harmon-Jones & Mills, 2019). Therefore, just the very cognition of believing that the activity is unpleasant, it would follow that the individual would not engage in the activity. As such, the cognition that the activity is unpleasant is dissonant with engaging in the activity. Therefore, it is purported that dissonance must be greater, once the unpleasant effort required to obtain the outcome is greater (Harmon-Jones & Mills, 2019). In so doing, dissonance can be reduced by amplifying the desirability of the outcome, which would now make the cognition consonant. This paradigm was tested by researchers Aronson and Mills (1959) where they had a group of women go through one of two (2) initiation activities – Severe or mild to gain membership to a group. In the severe-initiation, the women had to go through a series of embarrassing situations to join the group while in the mild-initiation; the activities that the women had to go through were not so embarrassing. The participants of the mild-initiation group described the activities as being dull and boring whereas the severe-initiation group had a more favourable description of their group and the set of activities that they had to undergo. This, the researcher called the ‘effort-justification paradigm’, and one that has been used with great success over the years since it was first tested (e.g., Beauvois & Joule, 1996; Harmon Jones et al., 2015).

2.7.4 Understanding the Core Tenets of Cognitive Dissonance

Festinger (1957, p. 3) defines cognitive dissonance as the ‘existence of non-fitting relations among cognitions.’ Festinger further went on to define ‘cognition’ as any knowledge, opinion, or belief about the general environment, oneself, or one’s behaviour. This was concurred by Cooper (2012) who denoted that people would feel unpleasant when there is a conflict of cognitions and as such, will endeavour to strive towards cognitive consistency instead of inconsistencies. Therefore, the notion of cognitive consonance comes into play and exists when cognitions support each other instead of being in conflict, as in the case of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957, p.7). Hence, the theory underscores two

(2) overarching pillars – consonance and dissonance. Festinger described ‘consonance’ as any form of consistency in beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours and the term ‘dissonance’ in terms of inconsistency among those attributes (Festinger, 1957).

Accordingly, when an individual is thinking about two (2) conflicting beliefs at the same time, then he or she will experience cognitive dissonance. This state of dissonance will then become a motivator to reduce this dissonance (psychological discomfort) to return to a state of harmony (Festinger, 1957). Mathematically, the state of dissonance can be illustrated as $M = D / (D + C)$ where M represents the degree of dissonance, D, is the sum of cognitions that are conflicting, and which is derived from a state of cognition and C is representative of the number of consonant cognitions that are coming from a place of cognition (Festinger, 1957). Therefore, according to Hinojosa et al. (2016), the state of dissonance can be reduced by an individual by engaging in what is called ‘discrepancy reduction,’ which will lead to the altering of one’s cognition to reduce the cognitive discrepancy or by simply changing the original cognitions. Importantly though, an individual must be willing as well as motivated to engage in some kind of ‘dissonance reduction’ to effectively move to a state of harmony or a justifiable state of positivity or happiness.

Albeit there will be instances when an individual will be unable to resolve the level of dissonance being experienced via the application of the principle of ‘dissonance reduction.’ As such, that individual will remain in a state of negativity (Hinojosa et al., 2016). Therefore, understanding the concept of cognitive dissonance, as it relates to behavioural tendencies is critical to organizational leaders, especially during organizational transformation which is the core tenet of this research study. The theory of cognitive dissonance can be graphically illustrated as follows:

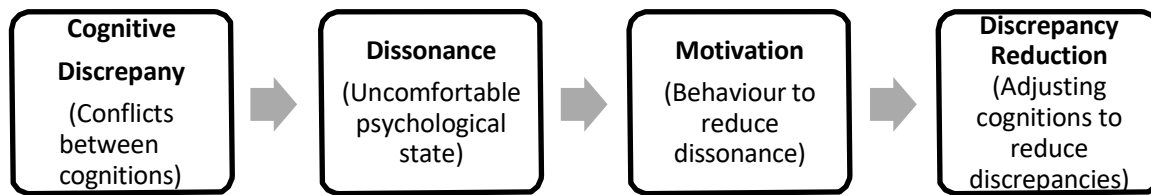


Figure 2.7: The 4-Step Process of Dissonance and Arousal [Source: Hinojosa et al. 2016].

As per Figure 2.7 above, dissonance arousal commences when an individual experiences a conflict or discrepancy between two or more cognitions. As such, the individual then enters a state of dissonance which is a state of unpleasantness and negativity. Cooper (2012) refers to this experience or state as a break in consistency. This state will then serve as a motivator for the individual to alter the cognitions to restore cognitive consistency and a more pleasant state (Festinger, 1957). The final component, discrepancy reduction, is predicated on the notion that an individual can alter their cognitions. According to Festinger (1957), people will seek to reduce cognitive discrepancy by altering any cognition that is the least resistant to change.

2.7.5 Further Breakdown of Resistance to Change and Cognitive Dissonance

An organization can be described formally as a group of people working together to accomplish a particular goal of the organization and which ultimately helps them to achieve their individual goals (Muo & Muo, 2014). As such, Robey and Sales (1994) in (Oghojafer et al. 2012, p.83) denote that an organization is a system that is developed to accomplish shared goals and purposes. To this extent, organizations will always seek to position themselves competitively to remain afloat and relevant (Aninkan, 2018). This response to change, whether willingly or due to demands of the dynamic nature of the global economy, can bring about some sort of resistance due to uncertainties, nervousness, and tension which normally accompany periods of change. According to Hultman (2014), on its own, change is neither inherently good nor bad. As such, change will either make people better or worse off as it will make people different from what they were before.

Nonetheless, as pointed out by Jorgensen et al. (2009), change is necessary, but should not be underrated (Bernerth, 2004). Simply put, change happens when an organization does something different or new (Hultman, 2014). However, due to the complexity of the business environment especially, the rapid change in technologies, organizations by default will be subjected to pressures for change in response to the demands of the global market (Yilmaz & Kilicoglu, 2013). Notwithstanding, change must be responded to in a timely manner if an organization is desirous of fostering positive organizational performance (Aninkan, 2018).

In the context of attitudes towards proposed change, Piderit (2000), made a distinction between one's behaviour as well as intentions to ratify that behaviour in the face of change by outlining the three (3) different dimensions to the definitions of resistance to change - the behavioural, cognitive and affective. The behavioural dimensions relate to the specific way an individual may react to change or develop an intention to do something about the change (Oreg, 2006). The cognitive dimension relates to an individual's beliefs and thoughts as it relates to the change (Oreg, 2006; Piderit, 2000), and finally, the affective dimension relates to how an individual feels about the change. As such, Piderit (2000) considers resistance to be a restraining force that is working to maintain a particular status quo. Hollander and Einwohner (2004) expanded the argument by denoting that the term resistance always implies a sense of opposition, but in actuality, it is a natural part of the change process (Zaltman & Duncan, 1997).

In addition, Hultman (2014) denoted that resistance can be contrasted with readiness, which he interprets as being a state of mind that reflects a willingness or receptiveness to change. As such, resistance manifests itself behaviourally most times, as an individual will either actively oppose it or make attempts to escape or avoid it. For this reason, resistance to change has been cited in the literature as one of the most important factors in the failures of organizational change (Hultman, 2014). As such, it is noted as one of those factors that can devastate both the organization and employees alike as well as have a negative impact on the job-related outcomes of employees (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008; Piderit, 2000).

According to Bersentaite et al. (2012), the typology of change usually entails a change in the human resource process, management structure, employees, and culture. Therefore, the context of change is broad and often touches every aspect of organizational life, including its emotional side. As a result, organizational change can be an emotional as well as a rational endeavour that can bring about human fears while at the same time, has the capability of invoking hope (Hinojosa et al., 2016). As such, Kotter and Cohen (2012) argued that change is about matters of the heart and not necessarily the head. Therefore, this makes it challenging at times for change to work.

Nonetheless, empirical evidence has shown that the more an organization's environment is changing or is about to change, the higher the degree of the organizational capacity for change (Judge and Douglas, 2009). With the heightened pressure of the environment (internally and externally) to implement change, the ability to manage change by organizational leaders become of increased importance. Research has shown that two (2) out of every three (3) or Seventy (70%) percent of change initiatives fail (Caldwell, Chatman & O'Reilly, 2008).

While many factors have been surmised as leading to failure - from an organization not having an appropriate framework in how to implement change to paradoxical theories from both academia and management alike (Burnes, 2004), Luecke (2003) argues that people are at the core of some of these failures, as people need routines to be effective and productive. Therefore, people must be prepared to undergo organizational change to maintain a sense of stability even amid uncertainties (Burnes, 2004; Rieley & Clarkson, 2001). This was concurred by Erdogan (2008) and Abdullahi and Kherun (2014) who argue that the consequence of any change initiative depends on an organization's employee processes as well as the nature and type of change, but most importantly, how the change is administered.

Hence, Abdullahi and Kherun (2014) denoted that change management strategies were essential in managing change to overcome individual resistance. Abdullahi and Kherun (2014) further posited that new management techniques were necessary to create readiness and commitment as well as a change in mindset and behaviour so as to effectively manage the factors of resistance to change. In this regard,

the theory of positive psychology and its constructs such as cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry becomes crucial strategies and alternatives in investigating change and change outcomes, especially as it relates to understanding and managing human behaviours. Factors, which are the core tenets and objectives of this research study.

No two (2) humans are the same. Thus, people differ as it relates to their perception of change (Burke, 2008). Therefore, some people may be able to tolerate change and as such, is more adaptive to the process while other may be otherwise. Nonetheless, Smollan (2011, p.12) argues that the concept of resistance to change is not understood by organizational leaders, which can breed misconception as to who resist change and why. Smollan (2012) also suggests that there needs to be a richer understanding of this seemingly misunderstood phenomenon to negate its negative effects. According to Muo (2014, p. 96), this level of appreciation of the theory of resistance to change is necessary as it is considered one of the greatest obstacles to the achievement of organizational change initiatives.

Conversely, in a research conducted by Struijs (2012), it was reported that employees who were most resistant to change were those who were not satisfied with their jobs as well as had a greater intention to leave. As such, the research contends, that the relationship between resistance to change and staff turnover was mediated by job satisfaction. The study also showed that one's emotional state reinforces resistance to change. According to research, the theory of cognitive dissonance which can shed light on one's emotion and emotion regulation strategies in the face of change is often ignored in organizational change initiatives (Fox & Amichai-Hamburger, 2001; Kiefer, 2005, Liu & Perrewe, 2005). However, while technological factors and globalization may demand employees to adapt to organizational change (Ployhart and Bliese, 2006) they often still resist change (Cummings and Worley, 2009). As such, Fox and Amichai-Hamburger (2001) and Kiefer (2005) denoted that organizational leaders must pay attention to the role emotion and emotion-regulation strategies play in managing organizational change. Therefore, organizations must seek to understand emotion-regulating strategies to manage or minimize resistance to change.

One of the major premises of organizational change is that change will give rise to insecurities and uncertainties. Therefore, employees do not know what the future holds and the personal consequences of the change (Bordia et al., 2004). As such, according to Cummings and Worley (2009), employees may develop a negative perception of the change. This misunderstanding about the nature and consequence of the change is directly related to the concept of resistance to change (Struijs, 2012). Therefore, the more negative the perception of the change in the minds of employees, the more resistant they will be toward the change (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008).

2.7.6 Objective and Subjective Norms and Resistance to Change

Thinking is a cognitive process that is directed by an individual's facts, beliefs, and to a great extent, one's feelings, which are linked to one's emotional well-being. The non-existence of feeling in the cognitive process would make thinking a robotic process (Hultman, 2014). Accordingly, an individual's state of mind is comprised of his or her facts, beliefs, and values. Facts are defined as truths that can be objectively proven empirically while beliefs are subjective opinions and predictions (Hultman, 2014). On the other hand, an individual's value is their concept of what is important in life (Hultman, 2014). To this extent, the concept of cognitive dissonance underscores human behaviour and how they manage conflicting thoughts will invoke some sort of resistance, especially in times of organizational transformation.

In fact, an evaluation of several quantitative studies on organizational change over a Sixty (60) year period concluded that individuals' reactions to proposed change initiatives were a decisive factor of success (Oreg et al., 2011). Therefore, it is imperative that organizational leaders seek to understand the 'who' and 'why' of resistance in order to experience more successful change outcomes. One method of understanding behaviours and emotions is that of the gross process model of emotion regulation (Struijs, 2012; Gross, 2002). The model denotes four (4) ways in which an individual will seek to manage their emotions and conflicts in the face of change to experience psychological comfort. These

strategies include the situation selection, altering the emotional impact by altering the situation, attentional deployment, and cognitive change (Gross, 2002).

The situation selection strategy refers to the employment of a particular avoidance mechanism to evade the change. As such, an individual may choose to avoid visiting certain places or people in the event of change (Gross, 1998; Aldao et al., 2010). As such, (Aldao et al., 2012; Gross, 2002) denotes that this strategy is mostly concerned with avoiding the change, which is not necessarily healthy both in the short and long term as it can lead to social isolation and aggravate other issues cognitively as well as mentally. As such, research suggests that there should be a trade-off between short and long-term emotional benefits (Gross, 2002). Secondly, an individual may seek to alter the emotional impact by modifying the situation to cope with the change (Gross, 1998).

Therefore, in times of change, employees may seek help by talking to someone about the change to find solutions to cope and get other support (Blair et al., 2004). Attentional deployment is another strategy that an individual will employ in regulating his or her emotion. In this strategy though, instead of concentrating on the change, the individual may choose to refocus on the non-emotional aspect of the change which can lead to a reduction in the negative emotional response (Gross, 1998; 2002). As such, they can focus on the positive aspect of the change which positively affects one's emotional response which is similar to the refocus or distraction of change as denoted by Wegner and Bargh (1998). Finally, the cognitive change strategy denotes that an individual will seek to either magnify or reduce the emotional response to the change as well as to change the emotion itself (Gross, 1998; 2002). This according to Mikolajczak et al. (2008) is referred to as cognitive restructuring. However, the success of any of these strategies is dependent on an individual's reaction to the situation of change, their well-being, health and degree of job satisfaction (Struijs, 2012). Nonetheless, Cummings and Worley (2009) argue that social support can also help to reduce the negative effects that may arise from resistance to change.

Accordingly, positive refocus emotional strategies can lead to a reduction in resistance to change. As such, reinforcing the positive aspects of change can help to reduce the negative emotional response which implies an effective emotion regulation strategy. These strategies can help employees to create a more objective and positive perception of change (Buunk, 1982). To this extent, the negative effect of resistance to change and the subjective change - perception of change can also be reduced (Struijs, 2012). Therefore, organizational leaders must seek to accept the realities of change as well as learn how people think, behave, and interact in the change process. Such understanding may reduce dissonance and the stresses that are usually inevitable during organizational change. Further, research has shown that psychological anxiety is a factor that can block an individual from learning new knowledge or obtaining evidence during a transformational period which can give rise to mistrust, dissonance, and emotional instability (Dechawatanapaisal & Siengthai, 2006).

Additionally, empirical evidence has been cited on how employee participation and communication at the onset of change have helped to reduce resistance to change (Hultman, 2014). This was evident in a study conducted in 2001 by Thomas Kent Gaylor which focuses on the four common factors that can affect resistance to change in public organizations. The research supported the concept that participation and communication improved the level of trust in management and impacted the level of resistance to change (Gaylor, 2001). This was confirmed in a study by Ismail et al. (2006) which posited that including employees in the onset of change can help to culture interest, disseminate knowledge, and maximize involvement and thus reduce dissonance and resistance to change. Therefore, less employee involvement in the decision-making process of change can lead to a lack of trust in management and thus highly contributes to resistance to change (Boohene & Williams, 2012). Another major factor that can also help in reducing cognitive dissonance and resistance to change is human resource management and interventionist strategies. This was a major highlight of a study done by Adeniji et al. (2013) which found that human resource management and interventionist strategies can make employees more adaptive and receptive to change.

Nonetheless, understanding the concept of cognitive dissonance and emotion-regulating strategies (the who and why of resistance) may help to avoid dissonance and inconsistencies in attitudes and behavioural tendencies toward organizational change (Struijs, 2012; Karatepe, 2011). As such, Leon Festinger, the pioneer of the theory of cognitive dissonance, claims that one's reality will force them to direct the appropriate cognitive elements in their response to change. As a result, Festinger (1957, p.11) suggests that an individual will reduce cognitive discrepancy by altering cognitions that are the least resistant to change. Ultimately, employee responses to organizational change are critical to the success of organizational change outcomes (Hultman, 2014).

However, while positive psychology focuses on positivity, research has shown that radical and negative thinking usually erupts during organizational change (Crestani, 2015). As such, organizational leaders must seek to understand techniques to communicate change so as to add depth and richness in navigating the dynamics of communication (Crestani, 2015). In this regard, scholars and practitioners alike have proposed the theory of appreciative inquiry, as a shadow process in creating meaningful conversations during the change process to help employees develop a sense of feeling and worth (Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Bushe, 2012; 2013). The theory of appreciative inquiry is discussed further below.

2.8 Appreciative Inquiry and Positive Organizational Change

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a strength-based approach to organizational analysis and learning that facilitates the core tenets of the theory – discovery, understanding and innovation of social organizational structure and processes (Cooperrider et al., 2008). The theory of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) was principally introduced as an alternative to traditional organizational development methodologies which was viewed by opponents as a managerial deficit and problem-solving technique to change management. However, instead of viewing organizational change as a problem, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) practitioners invited a more holistic and humanistic philosophy to change that promotes the collaborative effort of the entire organization. As such, the organization's visions and dreams are shared

among organizational members and thus help to form a positive foundation to serve the organization's agenda for change (Davis, 2018).

The theory of Appreciative Inquiry was conceptualized by Cooperrider and Srivasta during the 1980s (Cooperrider and Srivasta, 1987). It was initially conceived as a conceptual framework of action-based research and was particularly based on the generative capacity of organizations (Davis, 2018). Therefore, (AI) posits that any act of asking generative questions will have an insightful impact on the cumulative systems of the organization. Hence, inquiry and change are not viewed as separate moments in time (Stavros et al., 2016). The theory has been impressively applied in various organizational settings successfully, including areas such as education, religion, healthcare, and non-profit as well as in government organizations (Ludema et al., 2003, p. 7).

Nonetheless, while the principles of Appreciative Inquiry have been applied successfully in some organizational settings as cited by Ludema et al. (2003), most studies on its implementation are not publicized (Ludema et al., 2003). Researchers have argued that one of the main reasons that the application in other types of organizational settings is not cited by literature could be due to a lack of understanding of (AI) by those organizations (Bushe & Khamisa, 2004; Rogers & Fraser, 2003). This was further concurred by Bushe and Kassam (2005) in their meta-analysis titled *"When Is Appreciative Inquiry Transformational?"* One of the findings of the analysis was a lack of published research as it relates to what makes appreciative inquiry effective and the conditions that are necessary for such an application to be effective. Notwithstanding, the theory is noted to be one of the most powerful processes of positive organizational change ever to be conceptualized (Stavros et al., 2016 as cited in Whitney, Trosten-Bloom & Rader, 2010). As such, one of the guiding questions that motivate this research is as follows:

How the theory of Appreciative Inquiry can be used as an effective mechanism of change management especially as it relates to positive change outcomes?'

This research question is framed in the context of how Appreciative Inquiry (AI) can impact change, especially from the viewpoint of what has been learned from existing research and application. It also embodies from a wider perspective the resources and skills that are required for a successful application of (AI) in organizational transformation programmes. To this extent, the analysis that will be presented as well as the answers to be gained will represent one of the major contributions of this research and add to the existing literature on organizational change management and leadership, especially as it relates to the Transport Authority, the public sector organization that will be the focus of this research study.

2.8.1 Appreciative Inquiry – A Stimulus of Organizational Change

A standard stimulus is defined as anything that can cause a response (Psychology Dictionary, 2021). However, in psychology, it is considered an input to a person's senses which in turn causes a reaction or a response (Psychology Dictionary, 2021). As such, it is a detectable change in an individual's behaviour. The concept of 'stimuli' was made popular by the famous Russian Psychologist, Ivan Pavlov as per his classical conditioning theory (David, 2014). To this extent, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) can be viewed as a stimulus to organizational change seeing that it works at changing behaviour and mindset to bring about change. Nonetheless, before Appreciative Inquiry, most well-known narratives on change have been based on change theories such as that of Kurt Lewin with his popular Freezing and Unfreezing theory (Lewin, 1947), Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1954) and John Kotter with his Eight (8) steps change model (Kotter, 1995). Notably, while some implementation of organizational change initiatives has been successful to a certain degree, there have been cited obstacles, a major one being the resistance to change (Drew & Wallis, 2014).

Accordingly, while some researchers have arguable concerns about the resistance to change being a hindrance to successful change outcomes (Hultman, 2014; Kotter and Schlesinger, 2008; Piderit, 2000), Ford and Ford (2009) have argued that it is a misguided fear that requires more understanding as it relates to successful organizational change. Further, Ford and Ford (2009) and Drew and Wallis (2014)

argue that this misgiving as it relates to the resistance to change often led to negative thinking as well as ill-trust and demoralization which dominate change participants' mindsets.

For this reason, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) lends itself to a more positive thinking approach which researchers believed would be able to create an environment of optimism and the formation of conditions to create solutions to organizational problems (Drew & Wallis, 2014). As such, Appreciative Inquiry interventions can be used as a stimulus which can lead to collaborative change efforts and the building of trust between employees and organizational leaders. Appreciative Inquiry can also help to energize and build organizational learning and positivity that can influence positive change outcomes (Drew & Wallis, 2014; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001).

According to research, approaches to change which tend to value human beings and empower them collectively usually is capable of influencing change, positively (Drew & Wallis, 2014). This was confirmed by Chow (2007, p.67) who noted that countries such as China, which is categorized as a Communist society, often implement change on a large-scale basis and on the grounds of human empowerment and have done so with proven success. This was due to their bottom-up and gradual approach to change instead of the customary top-down, fear-driven approach as observed in Russia (Chow, 2007, p.67). Nonetheless, while some researchers may critique (AI) on the premise of its positive and uncritical approach (Fineman, 2006), evidentiary support has shown that the traditional approach to change shows a significant failure rate as most of the approaches are usually implemented with negative discourse and power politics and thus requires no further investigation due to the myriad of research available (Pfeiffer & Sutton, 2006). As such, a positive psychology framework which usually includes (AI) techniques has been cited as far more worth understanding and implementing (Drew & Wallis, 2014; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014).

Nevertheless, Bushe and Kassam (2005) posited that only a few research exist as it relates to measuring the impact of Appreciative Inquiry on organizational change initiatives. As such, there has not been much-published research examining it as a change methodology. Nonetheless, there has been

a plethora of practitioner articles on the subject matter along with exponential growth in the number of consultants available to carry out its implementation in organizational change efforts (Bushe and Kassam, 2005). Consequently, large Government Institutions such as the United States Navy have engaged in Appreciative Inquiry techniques by creating what it called a Centre for Positive Change which in effect has led to many appreciative inquiry initiatives (Ludema et al., 2003). For this reason, Appreciative Inquiry theorists proclaim that its approach is different from other change processes as it focuses more on transformational change, which is the most ambitious claim of any change process (Bushe and Kassam, 2005). Further, according to research, transformational or revolutionary change focuses on the change as it relates to the identity of a system as well as the qualitative change in the state of being of said system (Watzlawick et al., 1974; Bushe & Kassam, 2005).

Therefore, the application of appreciative inquiry (AI) principles can lead to the identification of positive transformation with the core of the system remaining intact (Bushe & Kassam, 2005). Nonetheless, research has content that appreciative inquiry (AI) theory, which evokes complex new actions contrasts with the argument posited by Cooperrider, a notable pioneer of the theory (Bushe and Kassam, 2005). As such, Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) argue that the traditional approach to change does not lead to new knowledge but rather re-create the processes that are under investigation. This rather harsh critique is aligned with the unsuccessful impact of change. Hence, in the early stages of (AI), no specific method was articulated by Cooperrider as it relates to its application in organizational settings, instead, the theory implementation was based on the linear approaches or its 4D cycle model principles (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987).

2.8.2 Appreciative Inquiry and the Application of its Principles

The implementation of Appreciative Inquiry was initially structured around five (5) classic principles namely, the constructionist – seeing things as they currently exist, poetic – creating rich life experiences, simultaneity – developing a sense of wonder, anticipatory – creating vision before decisions are made and positive – broadening positive emotions and building on it (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987).

However, the principles have since evolved into what is known today as Cooperrider's 4-D cycle model (Cooperrider, 1997). The cycle steps include discovery, dream, design and destiny. The discovery phase or the appreciating step is what gives life to an organization and where focus resides on the best of 'what is.' The second step, the dream or envisioning phase allows participants to determine how to create the ideal organization through the creation of new knowledge and models of change. This then leads to the design phase where the ideal organization is explicitly created. The final step is the destiny phase or what Cooperrider called the identifying phase. This phase is concentrated on what will be sustained in the organization for the long term.

Nevertheless, there has been some level of controversy as it relates to the application of appreciative inquiry (AI). One such is due to the modification of the 4-D cycle model, where the fourth step – destiny was originally called 'delivery'. One of the main reasons given for the change by Cooperrider was to prevent Consultants from viewing the model as an extension of traditional change practices. As such, Bushe (2011) argues that it is this change which has left the industry in an ambiguous state and thus inconsistencies in the application of Appreciative Inquiry as an intervention method for organizational change. A pictorial presentation of the model is presented in Figure 2.8. below:

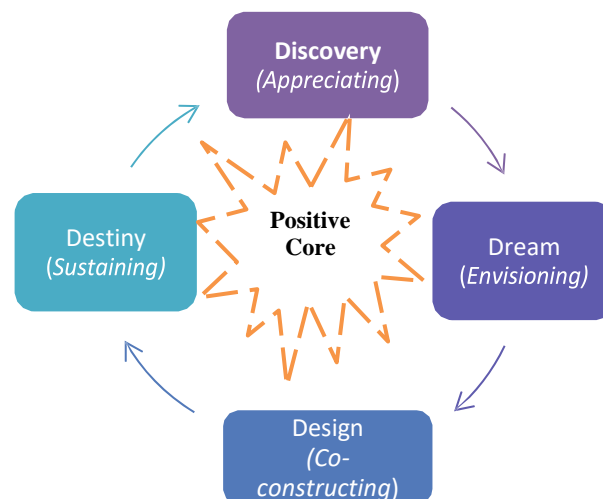


Figure 2.8: A Graphical Representation of the 4-D Cycle Model (Source: Cooperrider, 2012)

In line with the principles of positive emotions, a factor of positive psychology, the researchers of appreciative inquiry (AI) argue that those same sentiments including hope, excitement, and togetherness, are central tenets of the process of change (Ludema et al., 1997). According to Cooperrider and Whitney (2001) the more positive the questions that are asked, the more lasting and successful the change effort. To this extent, many researchers have defined (AI) as simply a collection of stories from stakeholders. However, these stories focus on the participant's best experiences (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001; Ludema et al., 2000). As such, Ludema (2002) suggests that organizational leaders must articulate change in ways that are understandable to all actors of change to be action-based. This, they conclude will allow organizational actors to make sense of the stories told based on their own experiences (Bushe, 2001).

In the application of Appreciative Inquiry, practitioners focused on uncovering and magnifying the positive core of the organization (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001). Further, while most traditional approach to change focus on a long list of action plans, practitioners of (AI) implores organizational leaders to refrain from such methods, which usually include the formation of steering committees and special teams all given a mandate to complete a list of change actions (Bushe & Kassam, 2005). Therefore, research recommends the 4-D principles as detailed above which focuses on creating images and ideas that will compel employees to seek ways on their own to transform both their social and work processes (Bushe & Kassam, 2005). This, according to Bushe and Kassam (2005) will cause change to be effected from the bottom-up and from a collaborative perspective instead of the traditional top-down, shock-driven approach which is often prone to failures and resistance to change.

2.8.3 A Case for the Application of Appreciative Inquiry

According to Grant and Humphries (2006), Appreciative Inquiry is founded on the pillars of social constructionists. The philosophy of social constructionists works from the premise that language, knowledge, and actions are inextricably linked. As such, the outcome of this linkage is that of the organization and is based on the interactions of all its agents and includes the organization's culture,

socio-economic and political occurrences (Grant & Humphries, 2006). As a result, Appreciative Inquiry evangelically focuses on the positive (Dick, 2004). Hence, its use in this study is part of the framework to be investigated for successful organizational change outcomes.

One of the ways in which Appreciative Inquiry is used in organizational change initiatives is through the technique of ‘storytelling.’ As such, research participants are encouraged to tell stories that would allow them to identify what is good in the organization. This according to (AI) practitioners provides a platform in which employees can move towards new action (Grant & Humphries, 2006). Therefore, focusing on what is good will allow participants to develop a sense of appreciation and to be conscious of or take account of what is to come (Grant & Humphries, 2006). The technique of storytelling, in which participants become engaged, is considered one of the key innovations of Appreciative Inquiry methodologies and is highly regarded as an essential tool for setting the tone of an (AI) intervention (Ludema, 2002; Khalsa, 2002).

As a result, Barrett and Fry (2005) view this as a catalyst for change due to the impact that storytelling can have on both the storyteller themselves as well as others hearing and sharing their stories. Bushe (2001) also contends that Appreciative Inquiry can elicit new stories that can change the assumptions that change is taken for granted and thus profoundly change the behaviours of group members. Further, Ludema (2002) purports that this technique of Appreciative Inquiry can result in an upsurge of counterbalancing micro-narratives that when aggregated, can change any prevailing narrative of the organization, in the long term.

To this extent, Cooperrider and Whitney (2001) stressed the importance of language in the implementation process of (AI). Cooperrider and Whitney (2001) contend that the language of inquiry will shape the foundation of discursive theories. Discursive theory denotes that it is through discourse that relationships are created and where words come to have meaning (Oswick et al., 2005; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001). This is the very reason why researchers purport that Appreciative Inquiry is influenced heavily by theories of discourse and narratives as applied to organizational change (Barrett

et al., 1995; Boje, 1991; Marshak & Grant, 2008). As such, Cooperrider likened an organization to a book rather than a living organism (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001).

The tool of storytelling as well as other aspects of Appreciative Inquiry was prominently highlighted in several studies. One such study was that of a meta-case analysis by Bushe and Kassam (2005) entitled “*When is appreciative inquiry transformations? A Meta-Case Analysis.*” As per the methodology, the researchers examined Twenty (20) published cases on the impact of Appreciative Inquiry on organizational transformation. In addition, the twenty (20) cases reviewed were those that were touted as being successful cases of the application of (AI) through the collaboration of positive stories and the adherence to Cooperrider’s 4-D cycle model as well as the Five (5) principles of appreciative inquiry.

Based on the results, it was found that all twenty (20) cases, though not perfect, could be considered successful examples of Appreciative Inquiry and transformational change. As such, the cases reported transformational outcomes as follows: 100% created new knowledge as well as penetrated the grounds of the organization. However, 83% implemented an improvised approach to the destiny phase, which is the last step of the 4-D cycle model by Cooperrider. Nonetheless, Bushe and Kassam (2005) cautioned that these results must not be seen on the assumption that only (AI) techniques led to the successful outcome of these cases as this may lead to a false impression that transformation can only be achieved by the application of scenarios of this nature. Also, more than 50% of the Appreciative Inquiry cases were not applied any differently than other managed changed processes. However, competent management was a major determinant of successful outcomes.

In another study recounted by Damatteo and Reeves (2011), it was found that participants reported feeling energized and enthusiastic as a result of the Appreciative Inquiry intervention. On the other hand, the same study reported participants being incapable of translating Appreciative Inquiry processes into an achievable structural level, for example, in their professional lives and culture. The study entitled “*A critical examination of the role of appreciative inquiry within an interprofessional*

education initiative” included the examination of Fifty (50) interviews of an inter-professional education initiative in which Appreciative Inquiry was employed as a change agent for the implementation of the inter-professional initiative in health care institutions (Damatteo & Reeves, 2011).

An even less conclusive finding was observed in a case study in 2016 by Delgadillo, Palmer, and Goetz. In a study entitled – “*A Case Study Demonstrating the Use of Appreciative Inquiry in a Financial Coaching Programme*”. The case study adopted the 5-D model of appreciative inquiry as an intervention tool. The 5D model by Cooperrider is simply an adjustment of the 4D model to include a new step one – ‘Definition’ which is to define and state the focus of the inquiry (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). As per the result, the authors were unable to make generalized conclusions about any one case. As such, they were not clear on the long-term efficacy of this method in the field of Finance. Nonetheless, they did view (AI) as the initial step in any continuous process that could provide empirical data in the future (Delgadillo et al., 2016). Notwithstanding the contrasting outcomes as it relates to the different case reviews, one consensus was that (AI) can lead to organizational transformation that can be correlated to the intervention (Davis, 2018).

Nevertheless, a more recent report by Panagiotaropoulou (2017) found that the principles of appreciative inquiry could be successfully applied in an organizational setting, after a change has been announced, vertically. This was the case with Experian. Experian considers itself a leading global information service company, which provides data and analytical tools to clients all over the globe. A current visit to their website would approximate that global reach to Forty-five (45) countries. However, back in 2001, the organization was about to undergo significant changes due to the appointment of a new executive leader. In addition to the vertical appointment of the new leader, the organization underwent other changes such as the reassignment of a long-standing manager, as well as their data centers operating on a 24x7 basis. This change saw the shift systems increase from four (4) to five (5) shifts. These changes were unpopular among employees and some managers.

Additionally, a consultant group was appointed to work with the leadership team so that they could achieve their mandated objectives. The report did not indicate that the consultants were appointed to work with employees initially. However, that changed due to the resistance that the organization started to face, with even managers themselves boycotting meetings. Additionally, the change saw every shift manager working in silos to meet their objectives. As such, there were no collaborative efforts and several inconsistencies across the shift arose, which caused significant challenges. However, major changes were observed after the consultancy team was permitted to work with both the management team and employees alike. As such, the staff was advised upfront that they were going to introduce the organization to appreciative inquiry. After initial meetings which produced agreed-upon strategies for the way forward, both management and employees gave their commitment to the strategies and appreciative inquiry (Panagiotaropoulou, 2017).

Several meetings and sessions were planned with the application of both the classical principles of appreciative inquiry, framed according to the agreed-upon strategies as well as certain aspects of the 4-D cycle model. Some of the principles include career destination, collaboration, empowerment and structured training programs. In the end, the report denoted that the organization was able to meet its mandated performance targets in a little over a year. As such, according to the consultants, what initially was seen as a fearful contentious organization was now a high-functioning, collaborative team. Additionally, employee engagement increased, and communication and dialogues were significantly improved (Panagiotaropoulou (2017; Poole, 2001). It must be noted that the principles of appreciative inquiry were continuously applied in the organization for four (4) years, which was the overall duration of the study.

Appreciative inquiry is empirically considered a positive approach to organizational change. Its main premise is to build on the strength of the organization rather than its weaknesses. This is achieved by employing interventions that will help to mould and change the mindset as well as the behaviours of

employees to achieve positive organizational outcomes. As such, Drew and Wallis (2014) view it as both a process and philosophy of change.

Appreciative inquiry has been applied in many organizations, private and public sectors alike via Cooperrider's 4-D cycle model (Watkins et al., 2011). Nonetheless, while many cases have been touted as being successful, especially due to the transformational effect of the change in mindset and purported new knowledge of participants, researchers still cautioned its application on the grounds of being considered the one and only method of change. An assertion, that researchers believe could only lead to false claims and misinformation. Notwithstanding, research has empirically shown that Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a tool that can be used in organizations during transformational efforts.

2.9 Summary

This chapter outlined the literature review of the study, which is pertinent to the exploration of the research questions, key determinants, and the overall topical construct. The literature determined that the exploratory case study method was the most appropriate to investigate how positive psychology can influence positive organizational change, particularly at the Transport Authority which is the based organization of this study. As such, the chapter explores the various theories that form the crucial determinants to complement the topical construct of the study. These include positive psychology, which is the primary construct being examined to influence positive organizational change outcomes, appreciative inquiry (AI), and cognitive dissonance. Additionally, other delineations as it relates to the research questions and overall objectives were explored.

Researchers over the years have argued that a 'softer' and more people-centric approach may be more appropriate in the face of organizational transformation, especially, if it is to be successful (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Waterman et al., 1980). As such, the theory of positive psychology, which is the overarching theme of this study, has emerged as a natural embrace of this approach to the potential success of organizational change. To effectively communicate the change and

manage one of the major impediments associated with ‘failures’ is that of the theories of appreciative inquiry - AI (Cooperrider & Srivasta, 1987) and cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Both theories, according to research, focus on the whole man and try to delineate how people think as well as the behavioural attributes that are relevant to positive change outcomes (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.1 Chapter Overview and Introduction

This chapter constitutes the research methodology and methods of data collection employed by the study. Therefore, it outlines the research paradigm and provides a description of the population and sample as well as a detailed description of the sampling techniques employed. Importantly, the chapter also detailed the concepts of validity and reliability of the research study as well as highlights the role of the researcher throughout the data collection phase and the research as a whole.

To this extent, the chapter will commence with a description of the research paradigm which provides an understanding of the philosophical approach of the study. This is followed by a description of the study's methodology, which guides the overall research agenda. To this extent, the chapter will describe the study's sampling strategy, which involves an in-depth description of the study's population as well as ethical considerations. Additionally, due to the nature of the chapter, the data collection methods and methods of analysis will also be explored.

The chapter will also seek to explore the reasons as well the implications for an attempt at triangulation of the research data, with a more detailed discussion in the subsequent chapter based on the findings of the research. The final segment of the chapter will provide a thorough discussion of the trustworthiness of the methods and methodology of the study.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Research studies comprise many proposed paradigms which, according to practitioners, can be grouped into three (3) main categories (Candy, 1989) namely, positivist, interpretivism, and critical paradigms. The positivism paradigm, which was pioneered by the French Philosopher Auguste Conte in the later Eighteen century, focuses on providing a worldview of research and is thus grounded in using more scientific methods such as experiments and even observations in some instances. On the other hand, the critical paradigm surrounds social justice issues including political and economic constructs

(Martens, 2015). Finally, the interpretivism paradigm focuses on the researcher trying to gain a deeper understanding of the human experience from the viewpoint of the subjects being researched rather than that of the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). As such, its execution would be like the researcher's attempt to 'get into the heads' of the participants to not only speak and understand their language but to also interpret their thoughts and meaning based on the context.

3.2.1 Interpretivism Paradigm

This research will utilize an interpretivism framework to guide the topical construct as it is aligned with the overall methodology of the research study. As indicated, an interpretivism framework is a research philosophy that is usually engaged in small samples but is in-depth in its investigations as well as qualitative (Myers, 2019). Its anthropological assumptions postulate that social reality is subjective, rather than objective in nature, and as such, is shaped by one's experiences and particular social context (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

According to research, this paradigm seeks to integrate human interest into the study and as such, relies heavily on research methods that are usually categorized as being naturalistic, such as interviews, observations, and even the analysis of existing documentation (Angen (2000; Saunders et al., 2014). Unlike, the positivist paradigm, where the researcher commences the research with a theory and tests using empirical data. The interpretivism approach starts with data and then allows the researcher to derive a theory about the study's phenomenon from the research data (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Sociology Dictionary, 2020).

To this extent, this paradigm is aligned not only with the research methodology but with the means of data collection being employed namely, the use of semi-structured interviews as the primary source and a questionnaire survey in an attempt to triangulate the research data. Therefore, this research meets the common principles that are usually ascribed to research employing an interpretivism framework as outlined by Bhattacharjee (2012), these include:

1. Being qualitative and naturalistic. The research is a case study of the Transport Authority, employing the organization as the study's environment and using the employees as the sole subjects and source of data collection.
2. The researcher will be used as a unique instrument in the data collection phase of the study. As such, both questioning and observational reasoning skills will be employed in the data collection process to develop a level of trust where the participants are concerned as well as ensuring that the correct information is extracted.
3. Employing an interpretive means of analysis in the form of thematic analysis in the findings and analysis phase of the study will allow for a rich narrative of the phenomenon being explored.

Therefore, both the philosophical assumptions and interpretive framework will form what Creswell and Poth (2017) called the paradigm perspective and the theoretical orientations of the qualitative research process of this study.

3.3 The Study Methodology

To garner a more profound understanding and appreciation of how change initiatives are carried out at the Transport Authority, the based organization for this study, the research will employ a qualitative exploratory case study approach with a holistic perspective. The rationale for this selection is based on two (2) distinct premises 1) the type of data collection mechanism - quantitative vs. qualitative data and 2) the research method - an exploratory case study methodology. As such, while quantitative data is usually gathered in a laboratory or via experiments and surveys which are often presented in means of tables or charts as in the case of some social or natural science investigations (Creswell, 2014), qualitative data is usually descriptive and employs open-ended questions or case studies, especially as it relates to the collection and interpretations of the data based on perceptions and reflections. As such, the qualitative data approach is more concerned with establishing explanations of

a particular social phenomenon. Therefore, it attempts to create an understanding of what researchers called the “social” world as opposed to the “real” world concepts as that of quantitative research. To this extent, Thomas (2003) states that qualitative methods focus on describing different kinds of characteristics of people and actions without using any sort of comparative relations in terms of measurements or amounts. On the other hand, quantitative research underscores objective measurements as well as events that can be quantified in terms of numbers and statistics.

Notwithstanding the clear distinctions between both the qualitative and quantitative approaches, there remain heightened discourses among researchers as to the relative merit of qualitative research approaches. However, the stance taken by researchers and scholars is usually based on a researcher’s preference or philosophical viewpoint. These positions are oftentimes influenced by several factors including, the research questions, the sampling population as well as the way the data is to be gathered, analyzed, and reported. However, this is to be expected based on the proven tendencies of human beings. In that, we are always interpreting or trying to come to an understanding of a situation which is our way of being a part of the world (Gadamer, 1960). To this extent, this research has considered these criteria, hence the qualitative data approach for this research study.

On the other hand, an exploratory case study methodology is one with a general tenet to explore the research questions and does not intend to offer final conclusive solutions to an existing problem or set of problems but rather provides a better understanding of the problem or phenomenon. One of the main differences between an exploratory case study research and one that is conclusive according to research is that exploratory case studies will result in a range of causes and alternative options for a solution to an issue that is specific while conclusive studies are those that identify final information as the sole solution to an existing problem (Sandhursen, 2000; Nargundkar, 2008).

As such, researchers conducting exploratory case studies must be willing to change his/her trajectory if a new revelation is unearthed (Saunders et al., 2012). To this extent, exploratory case studies can help in ascertaining the varying facets of the research study, such as its design, sampling

methodology as well as the method/s of data collection (Singh, 2007). While these types of studies are not forthrightly aimed at proving conclusive solutions, they are best at tackling new problems on which very little or no previous study has been conducted (Brown, 2006).

Therefore, the main purpose of employing this methodology is to construct a meaningful perceptive of this public sector agency, the Transport Authority, from a more in-depth, non-numerical analysis and within a real-world application (Yin, 2009). Therefore, an exploratory qualitative case study was chosen as an appropriate methodology based on the proposed aims and objectives of the research (Pollitt & Hungler, 1991; Nargundkar, 2008). Additionally, case studies are valuable as they allow the researcher to gather information from a variety of sources across the organization and thus provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being explored.

According to Holloway and Wheeler (1996), there is no such thing as the best method. However, an appropriate relationship must exist between the topical issue and the method that will help to shed light on it. Further, an approach of this nature can enhance the validity of the research which is integral in any research undertaking (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; (McLeod, 2019).

3.3.1 The Case of the Transport Authority

The Transport Authority is an organization that has undergone many changes throughout the years of its existence. Currently, the organization is going through another phase of organizational change which was initiated by the recent national election in 2020 when the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) assumed government a third time, following its previous victory in 2016. Previously, the People's National Party (PNP) was in government for more than Eighteen (18) years. It must be noted that this organization goes through major changes, especially at its senior levels after each election victory. In Jamaica, National Elections are held every four (4) to five (5) years. The senior level of the organizational structure constitutes the Board of Directors, Managing Director, and General Managers.

As such, this organization seems to be the right choice for carrying out research of this nature, especially due to its mandate, scope, and organizational and societal reach.

3.4 Sampling Strategy

Research is generally executed on a sample of subjects instead of an entire population (Banerjee, 2010; Martínez-Mesa et al. 2014). A sample can be defined as a finite part of a geometric population whose properties are studied to garner information about the whole (Merriam-Webster, 1985; Mujere, 2016). A simpler definition was posited by Banerjee (2010), who defines a sample as any part of a fully defined population, those set of persons from whom the data will be collected. When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for a survey. On the other hand, a population is a group of individual persons, objects, or items from which samples are taken for measurement or the entire set of cases from which the sample is drawn (Taherdoost, 2016). The target population refers to any inferences from the already defined population (Banerjee, 2010; Mujere, 2016).

The targeted population for this study is the permanent employees of the Transport Authority. The Transport Authority is a statutory body established by the Jamaican Government for regulating and monitoring the public transportation system on the island. The organization has been in existence since 1987 and now operates under the Ministry of Transport and Mining within the remit of the Transport Act of 1987.

The organization comprises about One Hundred and Seventy-five (175) to Two Hundred and Fifty (250) employees at the time of this research. This figure is one that somewhat constantly fluctuates due to its high turnover rate. For example, at the initial contact a few weeks before the data collection phase of the research, the staff compliment was stated to be around Two Hundred (200), which included temporary employees. However, at the time of the data collection, that number was far reduced to around One Hundred and Seventy-five (175) employees, which also included temporary employees. The primary sample population for this research study is Sixty (60) employees. The employee's age ranges

from 18 years to around 65 years as the organization only employ persons as per the confines of the labour laws. Additionally, the participants of this study will be persons who have been employed by the organization for at least six (6) months and over or those of a permanent status.

It must be noted that a sample size of Sixty (60) represents Thirty (30%) percent of the sample population, which according to research is sufficient to increase the confidence of interval of the sample population (Martínez-Mesa et al., 2014). As such, this sample had a confidence level of Eighty (89%) percent based on statistical analysis (Hazra, 2017). This in and of itself will allow the researcher to garner meaningful results and thus ensuring the statistical significance of the results (Martínez-Mesa et al., 2014; Vasileiou et al., 2018) as well as satisfy the principle of data saturation.

Saturation is used in qualitative research as a criterion for discontinuing data collection and/or analysis (Garrett et al., 2012; Lipworth et al., 2013). Further, this sample size is well within the ambit of research recommendations by several pioneered researchers, these include Morse (1994) who suggested approximately 30 – 50 participants for a grounded theory study while Creswell (1998) suggested only 20 – 30. For phenomenological studies, Creswell (1998) recommends 5 – 25, and Morse (1994) suggests at least 6.

All participants will be required to complete a Consent Form before being allowed to participate in the study. The consent form is to garner their written and oral agreement to take part in the study. Demographic information will also be collected at the completion of the Questionnaire. This type of information will assist the researcher in gaining a sense of the type of employees who are participating in the research (APA, 2002). It must be noted that participants will be constantly reassured that their participation is entirely voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time without providing reason/s. Participants will also be advised that any data collected before a withdrawal will be destroyed.

3.4.1 Sampling Method

Sampling is a method of data collection that involves the selection of a representative population. Frey et al. (2000:125) define a sample as simply a “subgroup of a population.” Further, according to Fink (2003:1), a good sample is a “miniature version” of a population of which it is a part. There are two standard categories of sampling methods - probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling according to Henry (1990, 25) is a sample that has the “distinguishing characteristic that each unit in the population has a known, “non-zero” probability of being included in the sample.” Further, randomization is the overarching principle of probability sampling and includes methods such as simple random, where the subjects are selected randomly based on some numerical framework while in cluster sampling - participants are selected randomly from a large group or ‘cluster.’ On the other hand, non-probability sampling is subjective, and as such, participants are not provided with an ‘equal’ opportunity to be chosen as part of the sampling population. However, according to Babbie (1990), this method of selection can be proven quite advantageous for researchers as it is a convenient way of assembling a sample as it does not require representativeness as in the case of probability sampling.

On the other hand, non-probability sampling involves methods such as convenience sampling where participants are selected merely on their availability at the time of the research, and quota sampling which involves the gathering of data from a subgroup based on predefined characteristics as opposed to random sampling. Further, judgment or purposive sampling is where participants are selected based on the judgment of the researcher. According to Babbie (1990), purposive sampling is based on the researcher’s knowledge of the population, while snowball sampling adopts the principles of ‘referral’ in the development of the sample population. According to MacNealy (1999), Snowball sampling is applied in those instances where the target population can only be identified by someone knowledgeable of other persons who share the same experiences or characteristics as the research agenda.

This qualitative study will employ a purposive non-probability sampling approach. According to Patton (2002; 2017), purposive sampling is a method that offers the researcher the opportunity to

glean information-rich cases, especially as it relates to situations of limited resources. Consequently, Creswell (2011) asserts that the participant's knowledge and experience must be a crucial element for selection as well as their availability and readiness to participate. Further, this type of sampling technique is usually based on the researcher's judgment and for control purposes rather than randomization as in the case of probability sampling. As such, purposive sampling offers the researcher the flexibility in selecting the target sample based on the purpose of the study and the knowledge of the population as opposed to random studies, which intentionally include a diverse cross-section of demographic information such as age, background, and culture. Further, the main tenet of purposive sampling is to focus on participants with particular characteristics who will be able to assist with the relevant research.

This focus by extension can be proven more economical for the researcher as it relates to time, money, and effort. In addition, the purposive sampling method has the propensity to gather large amounts of data due to the different purposive sampling techniques that are available such as critical case sampling which is used to determine the feasibility of a research phenomenon, and expert sampling which serves to examine specific research constructs.

3.4.2 Sampling Bias

Research or experiment bias is a situation in which the researcher, who is conducting the research, influences the findings to portray a particular outcome. It must be noted that bias, while it is unfavourable, can affect any stage of the research process, from design to publication. However, biased research loses validity, both internal and external, with respect to the degree of the bias (Berk, 1983; Miller & Wright, 1995).

According to research, there are three (3) main categories of biases that can impact the validity of a research - selection or sample biases, measurement biases, and intervention or exposure biases. Sampling or selection bias is one in which a sample selection is not a true representation of the sampled

population. As such, there is some over-coverage or under-coverage of the sample population. In addition, a more formal definition of the term was provided by Goodfellow et al. (1988: 239) whereby sampling bias was said to be “any characteristic of a sample that is supposed to make it different from the population being studied in some significant way.”

On the other hand, measurement or systematic error is a bias whereby a particular measurement is chosen because the researcher is in favour of a particular outcome, and as such, the measurements are skewed accordingly. In fact, measurement bias is technically considered a deviation from the truth that will ultimately lead to inaccuracy in the measurement of the stated variable. Finally, intervention or exposure bias is usually associated with the differences in how a research intervention was conducted or simply, how the research participants were exposed to the particular feature of interest.

3.4.3. Correcting Sampling Biases

Several methods were developed for detecting as well as statistically correcting sampling or selection biases. One of the most common pioneers was the “Heckman” Two-Step Estimator (Heckman, 1976). This model was used for estimating regression models, which is a set of statistical processes for estimating the correlations among variables. As such, under Heckman’s model, the dependent variable was only observed for a segment of the data. However, it has been argued that trying to correct a selection bias using this method would lead to errors and thus worsen, rather than improve estimates, even under relatively ordinary situations (Stolzenberg & Relles, 1997).

An important aspect of any experimental study, especially in the area of social science, is to make inferences from a selected sample population. However, in this effort, biases can occur which will influence outcomes by distorting or skewing variables, which will yield incorrect results and threaten both internal and external validity. However, while sample selection models are viewed as methods for statistically correcting research biases, they do have limitations. Therefore, researchers must make it a point of importance to understand research biases, especially those relating to sampling. This will allow them to critically review relevant literature and avoid analysis that can be potentially flawed. For this

research, all possible sampling biases were taken into consideration. Hence the use of a purposive non-probability sampling approach.

In this regard, sampling in research is an important aspect of the research process and requires considerable caution, planning, and attention to detail by the researcher. This is due largely to the different sampling methods that must be identified, probability and non-probability sampling, along with the sampling techniques.

Due to the qualitative nature of this research, a non-probability sampling approach will be utilized. Of this method, the critical case purposive technique will be adopted in the identification and selection of the sample population. Further, this type of sampling technique is usually based on the researcher's judgment and for control purposes rather than on the basis of randomization as in the case of probability sampling. Therefore, purposive sampling is prominently used in qualitative research as it possesses the characteristic of being flexible and can assist the researcher to gather enriched and in-depth data for analysis. Further, in purposive sampling, the validity of the research and efficiency are crucial to the research process. However, the sampling must reflect the research objectives and the phenomenon being explored.

Notwithstanding, as with any approach, there are noted concerns that must be recognized to plan and initiate the necessary mitigation strategies, one such being its vulnerability to errors due to its subjective nature as well as its incapacity to generalize research findings, which is descriptive of qualitative research.

3.4.4. Ethical Considerations

Ethics is an essential component of the research design and is fundamentally crucial in the selection of prospective participants for the research study. In this regard, the researcher must seek to recognize and manage ethical dilemmas at all stages of the research process. Some of the important ethical considerations that will be embedded into the research design include, ensuring voluntary

participation and written informed consent of the prospective participants. As such, the participant should not be coerced or influenced unduly to become subjects of the study. Further, the participant must be protected from both known and potential risks, especially as it relates to anonymity and confidentiality, both the person and the information they have provided. This is in keeping with the semi-structured interviews and questionnaire surveys that will form the basis of the data collection instruments of this research.

Further, if the information gathered will be discussed with others outside of the research domain, then that must be discussed with the participants and their consent received and documented. In addition, it must be made predominantly clear to the prospective participants that they can withdraw from the study, even if it is at the expense of the research and the validity of the data collection mechanism. The researcher must also take the ethical consideration of accountability as it relates to the accuracy and analysis of the collected data. As such, the researcher must seek to ensure the highest level of objectivity in the discussions as well as the analysis of the research. Therefore, researchers must be able to make decisions with the guidance of the best empirical evidence that is available at their disposal (Rubin & Babble, 2008). Finally, the researcher must ensure that offensive or discriminatory language is not formulated in the questionnaire and interviews.

In pursuit of ethics, the guidelines of the above ethical considerations as outlined for this research follow that of the general principles of ethics when conducting research. This includes beneficence – do no harm, respect for a person’s anonymity, confidentiality and privacy, and justice. As such, there can be ethical concerns at every step of the research process. However, the values of beneficence, respect, and justice can provide researchers with an awareness of these issues and provide a framework for managing issues involving human participants.

3.4.4.1. Beneficence

The ethical principle of beneficence is denoted by the Hippocratic “be of benefit, do no harm.” According to Beauchamp and Childress (2001), the principle of beneficence includes a researcher’s

professional mandate to conduct research that is essential and effective and that will enhance one's life and promote the welfare of the participants. Therefore, the researcher has the responsibility of protecting the research participants from unethical, inept, and unlawful practices. However, the value of beneficence can be challenging for the researcher to infer, especially in the development of the qualitative research theory. Nonetheless, Carr (1994) purported that research can effect ethical dilemmas if the outcome indicates that it was not beneficial as originally theorized. As such, beneficence would infer the benefits of the research while non-maleficence would require a greater degree of sensitivity by the researcher in denoting what comprises 'harm,' as the core tenet of non-maleficence is to protect research participants from both known and potential harm. According to Burns and Grove (2005), discomfort and harm to participants can be emotional, psychological, and economic. Therefore, any level of discomfort can affect the psychological and overall well-being of the participants. Nonetheless, the researcher has the responsibility to take into consideration all the possibilities of research risks to employ the necessary tools or structures of mitigation to minimize risks and optimize the research benefits.

The value of beneficence also denotes the notion of care as it relates to the research participants. According to Mayeroff (1971) and Jahn (2011), caring is that unique interaction between the researcher and the research constituents which can provide an opportunity for personal growth for all the parties involved. On the other hand, Roach (1987) suggested that the act of caring as per the research process is illustrative of specific moments where the participants are cognizant of the very core of their humanity while negating any feeling of being just mere subjects or pawns of the research experimentations. Further, researchers must take due care to ensure that participants are not exploited under the notion of 'care', especially those who are considered vulnerable such as children, the poor, participants with learning or mental shortcomings as well as the elderly.

To this extent, all aspects of beneficence were taken into consideration for this research, as the participants were treated with respect both before, during, and after both the interviews and questionnaire

survey. Additionally, beneficence takes into consideration the activity of debriefing with the participants (Treece and Treece (1982). According to Treece and Treece (1982), debriefing is simply the researcher explaining the aim of the research as well as advising participants of the possible disclosure of information and how such a task will be exercised. The debriefing sessions for this research were conducted both before and after the interview sessions as well as the administering of the questionnaire survey. Further, in the debriefing session, the researcher ensured that the participants were comfortable with the research undertakings and were provided with the opportunity of expressing themselves. Therefore, if the participant displays any sign of discomfort, then the researcher must be cognizant of their distress and state of being and extend due care either by further debriefing or through professional intervention.

3.4.4.2. Anonymity and Confidentiality

Respect for participants is simply the researcher's recognition of their inherent value as human beings. As such, the researcher must respect the participant's expression of anonymity, privacy, and cultural norms. Further, respect encompasses the participant's free will to express him/herself as well as to make decisions independent of any undue influence. In so doing, the researcher must hold true to the values of integrity and research merit, justice, and beneficence. A major scope of respect involves anonymity and confidentiality which denotes the participant's respect for dignity and fidelity. According to the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses, anonymity involves one not being able to perceive the identity of research participants whether it be through his/her responses to questions that were asked or in the process of documenting or disseminating the data. However, if the researcher cannot guarantee a participant's anonymity, then the issue of confidentiality becomes a crucial endeavour (Epstein & Turner, 2015).

For this research, the participant information was protected at all stages throughout the research process. As such, the researcher ensured that the highest level of confidentiality was maintained, one that extended high above the threshold of loyalty as it relates to the research participants (Levine (1976).

However, there are instances where confidentiality may be breached by a researcher. This may give rise to ethical dilemmas as the researcher has a moral duty to protect not only the participant but the society as a whole (Kelman (1977, p.33). However, for this research, no instances of ethical dilemma occurred, and the participants' confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout both the interviews and questionnaire survey. This was particularly achieved by not allowing participants to write their names on the questionnaire survey as well as not being called by their given names during the interview sessions. As such, they were provided with 'aliases' such as 'anonymity#1, anonymity#2, etc. Additionally, the information provided by the participants in the interview sessions and on the questionnaire was not shared with any other members of the organization, including management. This allowed for the achievement of what research denotes as the utilitarian theory which speaks to the happiness of society being of greater importance even though it purports to focus on the best interest of all.

3.4.4.3. Justice

Justice denotes that the researcher is being fair to the research participants as well as ensuring that the needs of the participants supersede those of the research objectives. Further, justice speaks to the distribution of burdens and the benefits of the research. It must be noted that justice can be categorized broadly - distributive, procedural, and compensatory justice. Distributive justice pertains to the fair allotment of not only society's benefits but also its burdens while procedural justice attains to several areas of society including legal which abides by strict adherence to established procedures and compensatory justice is simply an attempt to remedy past injustices. However, as it pertains to the social research of human orientation, distributive justice is mostly applied.

Therefore, for this research, all participants were treated fairly throughout the research process, particularly as it relates to the data collection phase. Further, the participant's decision to participate in the research was not influenced or coerced. The application of justice also dictates that the researcher provides copies of the research publications to the participating communities. In so doing, participants

were adequately informed as to how to access the results of the research upon its completion. To this extent, this research will be represented in culturally appropriate formats and non-technical language to aid in one's understanding.

Ethical issues and contradictory values have always been sore points among researchers. This can be based on the premise that everyone's interpretation of ethics sometimes differs, as what may seem ethical to one person may be seen as unethical or abnormal to another. However, researchers must make themselves knowledgeable of ethical principles and values as well as the issues surrounding unethical conduct and employ them in all spheres of the research agenda. In so doing, researchers must ensure that they obtain participants' informed consent without force or any kind of influence, especially in the case of the vulnerable. In addition, the researcher must ensure that the participants are protected from all harm, known or potential, and ensure that they are treated fairly, thus protecting their rights and dignity and so strengthening the research's merit and integrity. As such, ethical considerations must be embedded into the research design and must also be identified and addressed throughout the life of the research.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

The method of data collection for this research was that of primary qualitative data in the form of interviews and a questionnaire. The questionnaire was used in an attempt to triangulate the findings of the research so as to increase its credibility and validity (Heale et al., 2013).

As per the interviews, it must be noted that there are different types, especially in the realm of research - structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. The structured interview is more formal and is usually comprised of a set of standardized questions. According to Gill et al. (2008), and Stuckey (2013), this type of interview format is rigid and as such, is limited in scope and depth as only closed-ended questions are asked. In this regard, this type of interview does not offer the researcher the opportunity to ask follow-up questions that may produce additional materials for the research. However, they are

relatively quick and easy to administer. The Unstructured interview is the extreme opposite of its structured counterpart, as it is more informal and as such is often referred to as the ‘discovery interview.’ Therefore, this type of interview will use open-ended questions which can be asked in any order depending on the responses being generated by the interviewee. In fact, Legard et al. (2003) described this type of interview as a ‘conversation with a purpose,’ as it provides the researcher with an opportunity to gather in-depth information and to sort of create a type of interview-friendly atmosphere to meet the research questions outcomes. However, these views were not facilitated by Gill et al. (2008) as they argued that the unstructured interview is not representative of any pre-conceived theories or philosophies and will therefore create an atmosphere of chaos and disorder. Further, the unstructured interview can be time-consuming and costly.

On the other hand, the semi-structured interview, which was employed for this research, is like the ‘medium’ of the structured and unstructured interview. This was fortified by Gill et al. (2008) who describe it as an interview approach that comprises several key questions (structured interview) which will serve to aid the researcher to define the areas of the research that must be explored along with the flexibility (unstructured interview) to pursue a response for more detail.

Therefore, this type of interview style was chosen for this study as it allows the researcher to get to the ‘core of the matter’ and promote an atmosphere of spontaneity, flexibility, and comfort. Further, this type of interaction helped to create a type of partnership-like relationship between the researcher and interviewees. According to Legard et al. (2003), researchers should consider interviewing as a special type of “partnership” and “conversation with a purpose.” Further, while this type of interview can be time-consuming and resource intensive, it does have the propensity to provide reliable and comparable qualitative data.

Six (6) interviews were conducted for this research with groups of ten (10) employees per session. This type of collection method was based on the research being qualitative. The interview sessions were conducted on days convenient for the participating employees. Interviews of this nature

will help to create a partnership-like relationship between the researcher and participants. This type of interaction will further promote an atmosphere of spontaneity, flexibility, trust, and comfort (Stuckey, 2013).

The semi-structured interviews were conducted for durations of forty (40) minutes to an hour. To initiate the phenomenological nature of the study, participants were first asked to discuss ‘what they considered as organizational change.’ This was to get a feel of their understanding of ‘change’, particularly from an organizational perspective. While some of the questions were open-ended, the researcher was able to build and explore upon participant’s responses (Seidman, 2006).

On the other hand, while the interviews will be used as the main means of data collection, the questionnaire will be used as an extension to the interview guide and will serve to triangulate the data. A questionnaire employed in this fashion can serve as a means of providing more context to the qualitative study, helping to strengthen the findings as well as to guide future research (Cohen et al., 2011). The questionnaire employed for this research comprised fifteen (15) questions and was mostly dichotomous. However, a couple of questions used the semblance of the Likert scale method. This was purposefully done to provide for a more robust analysis of the data, as well as to attempt triangulation of the data. The response scales used included the following ‘not at all,’ ‘very much so,’ ‘very effective,’ ‘very ineffective,’ etc. This type of methodology was chosen because respondents can easily understand the questions and the type of responses to be elicited. Further, this type of questioning discriminates well between respondents’ perceptions and their degree of agreement or lack thereof. Further, this type of questioning technique is straightforward and flexible and only allows participants to provide an appropriate statement, minimally. (Fowler, 2002). In addition, this type of questioning technique is easy to interpret and has a low response bias.

Another advantage of using a technique of this nature is that it allows respondents to answer neutrally, with no perceived notion of being led as well as provides the researcher with the capacity to obtain summated values. It should be noted that some of the measures were worded ‘negatively,’ while

others were affirmative. According to Schutt (2006) and Fowler (2009), questions of this nature can help to reduce the likelihood of agreement bias as well as to ensure that both instruments are providing responses that are somewhat different as well as an extension of particular responses to further bolster data analysis.

The questionnaire had a completion duration of (10) to fifteen (15) minutes. All participants were required to sign the Informed Consent Form, Non-Disclosure and Debriefing Forms. Forty-eight (48) questionnaires were completed, and Fifty-three (53) employees participated in the interviews. This provided a total number of respondents of One Hundred and One (101), due to the attempts at triangulation.

As indicated, the primary data will constitute that of the semi-structured interviews with the questionnaire serving as a follow-up statistical endeavour for a means of triangulation of the data. The interview data will be analyzed using thematic analysis as stated by Creswell (2014), the development of codes and themes are useful techniques in qualitative data (p.198). If needed, other coding mechanisms will be used to help with the breakdown and amalgamating of the data in a worthwhile manner (Bowen, 2009; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Finally, documented materials, if available, will be used to bolster and add further value to the research findings. Documented materials constitute any written records such as company policies, mission statements, governmental records, and reports based on actual organizational statistics, events, or other forms of historical company information. This type of second-handed data will complement the methods of interviews and focus groups that will be employed in this study. As Bernard (1998) writes “I see no reason to collect new data in the field if there are documentary resources already available that address some of your research questions.” In this regard, the documents to be collected will serve as an objective reflection of the organization’s reality as well as assist the researcher in understanding how the organization constructs its truth. However, it should be noted that documented materials will only be utilized on an ‘as-needed’ basis in this study.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

Primary data was collected via semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire survey. As such, both thematic and factor analysis was adopted as the methods of analyzing the collected data. It must be noted that the study is qualitative and only applied the use of a survey, which is usually a quantitative approach to data collection, in an attempt to triangulate the data and further validate the research findings (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Heale et al., 2013). As such, practitioners view this type of approach as an ‘attempt at triangulation’ instead of a comprehensive ‘mixed methodology’ (Campbell and Fiske, 1959; Denzin, 1978). The triangulation method adopted for this research was that of ‘method triangulation.’ The reason for this approach is discussed further in this chapter.

Thematic analysis, which is the primary means of analysis employed for this research, is considered useful in identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Further, this type of analysis is more akin to the qualitative and triangulation research approaches. As such, the type of analysis that will be generated will be used to adequately highlight any trends as it relates to the organization's change management processes (Jick, 1979; Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Denzin, 1978). Additionally, as discussed by Cohen (2014), this type of analysis recognizes themes in qualitative data through iterative processes and coding methods so as to break down and synthesize the data in meaningful ways (Bowen, 2009; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). On the other hand, factor analysis, a quantitative analysis method, will be used to analyze the questionnaire responses. Employing this method of data analysis will help to facilitate further reduction of the variables, resulting in a comparative and more in-depth analysis of the findings (Howard, 1992; Watkins, 2018).

It must be noted that the interviews were recorded and saved on the researcher's personal computer and transcribed accordingly. This is to facilitate the development of thematic analysis. Further, to build trust and validate the data, preliminary themes will be sent to the participants. The data collection commenced in 2nd week of July 2020 and concluded on September 15, 2020. The extended

duration was due to the administering of the questionnaire, which was subsequently requested by the University's Ethics Committee.

As indicated, data triangulation will be used to validate the analysis and will thus help to bolster the findings of the data between the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires. As such, the coding process will help in linking the theoretical context to actual observations. The statistical software that will be used for the analysis of the collected questionnaire data is the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS is a software program for data analysis that is used by both researchers and academia alike. It is best used for the processing of critical research data.

The use of triangulation in a study that shares the same phenomenon can be traced back to Campbell and Fiske (1959) in a paper addressing quantitative research. In this study, the authors argued that validity always requires the use of multiple methods as well as multiple data sources. However, the concept was further applied and popularized by Jick (1979) in his work "Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action." Further, triangulation is also considered a qualitative research strategy for validity testing through the convergence of information from multiple sources. However, Webb et al. (1966) argued that the uncertainty of interpretation decreases when a proposition is supported by two or more independent measurement processes. While controversies continue to be perpetuated in the research realm, the application of triangulation can result in a stronger research design which can lead to more valid and reliable research findings.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the Methods

Despite the value of qualitative methodologies and their contribution to research both academically and scientifically, there still exists a narrative that this type of research is more difficult to publish as some academic scholars may not be thorough in the methods employed to arrive at the findings. This connectivity gap oftentimes brings about a trust factor in the data collection methods (Lemon and Hayes, 2020). However, extracting and analyzing qualitative data is not a straightforward process due largely to the nature of the research method. Additionally, unlike the analysis of quantitative

approaches, there is no clear method to develop the data collected via qualitative means (Bryman, 2012). This brings about the question of the credibility and ‘worthiness’ of the data collected for publishing. To minimize these doubts, the topic of the trustworthiness of data came into being.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), this brings to the forefront concerns with not only initiating the factors of research validity, reliability, objectivity, and generalizability but also expanding them. To this extent, to justify and assure the trustworthiness of the research data, the researcher has taken a thorough reporting of the process of the data collection process as well as the results of this qualitative exploratory case study (Henderson, 2006 cited in Veal, 2011).

The trustworthiness of qualitative research methods comprises four (4) different components as outlined by the infamous study of Lincoln and Guba (1985) namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Transferability speaks to the validity of the research findings – how well the findings can be applied in other contexts while dependability pertains to the reliability of the findings both in the current and near future - is it repeatable within the same cohort of the sample? On the other hand, credibility tries to establish confidence in the research results, especially as it relates to the perspective of the participants – are the results true and believable while confirmability rests on the objectivity of the researcher in the process of conducting the research – can the results be confirmed or corroborated (Veal, 2011; Bryman, 2012 and Loh, 2013).

On this wise, to ensure a high level of rigour in this qualitative research study, the researcher took the responsibility of outlining the areas of the research which constitute the compliance of the trustworthiness criteria of the data collection process. Thus, providing examples of how the process was implemented for each criterion and technique (Phillimore and Goodson, 2004). This was also asserted by Amankwaa (2016), who stated that researchers, in each study, should seek to establish the protocols and procedures that are pertinent to the study so that it can be considered worthy of consideration to readers.

3.7.1 CONFIRMABILITY AND TRANSFERABILITY

3.7.1.1 Population Sample and Recruitment

The concerns about the generalizability of research findings are often linked to the quality of the sample population. To this extent, this research study employed a form of purposive sampling technique to ensure that the selected participants met the criteria of the research as well as were representative of the variety of views across the organizational setting. For purposive sampling to be used, one or more predefined groups or characteristics are required to fulfil the criteria of an effective sample and the phenomenon of interest (Cresswell et al., 2011). Purposive sampling is widely used and accepted for qualitative research for the discovery and selection of information-rich cases as it pertains to the research phenomenon (Palinkas, 2015). As such, research participants were recruited primarily through the assistance of a Gatekeeper and comprised only employees of the Transport Authority.

The Gatekeeper was a designate of the senior management team and one selected by the General Manager of the Human Resource Department with the consent of the Managing Director. As such, the researcher sent an email about the research and participant attributes. This email was then repurposed and then sent to the general staff body who then submitted their names as per the stated requirements for volunteers. To accommodate staff who do not have access to emails, which were primarily those of the Inspectorate body of the organization. Small meetings were held, and the same information that was presented in the email was conveyed to volunteered participants based on the stated criteria. Additionally, the email was printed and posted on the Company's Notice Boards; both by the Administrative Division and the Inspectorate (Please see Appendices G & H – Call for Participation – Email sent to all staff). The names of the volunteered participants who met the study criteria were then grouped and dates for the interview sessions were finalized between the Gatekeeper/s and the Researcher.

Several dates were conferred which were then communicated to the volunteers. As such, volunteers were provided with the opportunity to choose a date based on their availability, which was

very crucial due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the many safety measures that were in effect for the organizations and the country as a whole. However, the total number of persons for the interview sessions was limited to a maximum of eleven. As such, the availability of participants was aligned accordingly. All the forms were then emailed to the gatekeeper/s for copying. The main one being the Informed Consent Form (*see Appendix M - Participant Informed Consent Form*). A copy of the Semi-Structured Interview sheet was also sent to the main Gatekeeper and the Managing Director for reference purposes only (*see Appendix J – Semi-Structured Interview Guide*). Please see Table 3.1 below with a summary of the recruiting exercise and responses for both the interviews and questionnaire participants.

Table 3.1: Solicitation of Participants, Responses and Retention

	Email invitations	Initial Responses	Drop-out	Retention
Interviews	3	65	12	53
Questionnaire Survey	2	59	11	48
Total # of Respondents				101*
Response Rate (Interviews)				88%
Response Rate (Questionnaire Survey)				80%

Source: Researcher, based on the Data Collection and Analysis.

(*) Represents the overall number of Respondents for the research which included the number of persons who participated in the questionnaire survey as part of the efforts to triangulate the data.

One major recruitment criterion was that volunteered participants must be employed with the organization for at least six (6) months which would represent mostly those who would have obtained permanent status based on the employment structure. The rationale for this criterion was to acquire participants who would have gained adequate employment history and were more likely to have experienced some sort of organizational change initiative, which would provide them with the opportunity to give their opinion on organizational change from a personal perspective rather than from an anecdotal point of view. As a result, sixty-five (65) employees volunteered, and of those, only Fifty-three (53) ended up participating in the interview sessions. It must be noted that some of the participants

that had initially indicated their participation, were not able to do so due to being absent on the day of the session/s or not being on location due to the dynamic nature of the organization.

To this extent, six (6) semi-structured interview sessions were conducted among key actors and employees of the organization. This also included two (2) offices in the other regions so as to capture the opinions of not only employees at the Head Office, but those in the regions as well who would have experienced situations of organizational change. Qualitative research conducted in this fashion will be able to identify themes within each of the participatory groups as well as display thematic links between each sample group (Garvey et al., 2012). Each interview session was stated to have at least ten (10) to (11) employees to meet the research sample of sixty (60) employees.

3.7.1.2 Risk Associated with Recruitment

Initial interest among participants was at its highest in the recruitment phase. As such, the aim was to achieve more than the stated sample quota of sixty (60) volunteers to mitigate any attrition and respondent rates. Further, having emails and meetings as the ascribed recruitment methods, a researcher runs the risk of over-sampling people as some persons may be persuaded to participate at that moment in time, but opt out of the process on the actual day of the activity. This was one of the experiences of the researcher for this research. For example, in one of the interview sessions in Kingston, one of the participants, after the initial introduction by the researcher, asked to be dismissed as he stated that *'he did not like to put his name on so many documents'*. The documents he refers to were the 'Informed Consent form', 'Non-Disclosure Agreement' and the 'Debriefing form'. The Debriefing form would have been completed after the conclusion of the respective interview sessions and before the participants left. These documents were approved by the University's Ethics Committee and were instructed for use in the conducting of the data gathering activities. As such, the over-sampling worked out in the researcher's favour, as the overall total number of participants was more than adequate to assist with the

desired data analysis envisioned. Thus, another volunteer participant was invited to participate in that session's interview.

3.7.2 DEPENDABILITY

This research was developed through the systematic search of existing literature. The detailed protocol was delivered in consultation with the Research Supervisor, and the University Ethics Committee (UREC), all of whom are experts in the field of social sciences and/ or the topical construct of the research. After incorporating all the comments, a final draft was created to offer more clarity to the research objectives as well as the data collection process.

To maintain consistency, all changes and revisions were documented so that a trackable record of the research protocol could be maintained. As such, a description of the research and the steps in the data collection process was sent to the Managing Director of the Transport Authority, the organization on which this research is based. This was after a formal meeting was convened. Additionally, there were continuous discussions with the organization as well as the designated gatekeepers across the different regional offices, particularly as it relates to the data collection process.

3.7.2.1 Establishing Audit Trail

Efforts were taken to ensure that all steps of the data collection process were adhered to (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and that the interviews were upholding the agreed-upon protocol to recruit participants. Therefore, meetings were held with the Head of the Human Resource Department followed by an introductory email providing information about the purpose of the research and data collection process. This letter also provided details about the reason and purpose of the activities of the gatekeeper (See Appendix: C – Official Letter). Additionally, the gatekeeper was provided with supporting documents as per the recruitment, interviewing, and questionnaire survey activities. All documents and emails sent and received were documented for current and future references or as needed.

3.7.3 CREDIBILITY

3.7.3.1 Analysis

The interviews were analyzed in an inductive thematic manner to produce key emergent themes from the findings. According to Boyatzis (2009), using this approach lends itself to several techniques that can be utilized for synthesizing qualitative data. This includes becoming familiar with data coding to produce a structured thematic analysis. To this extent, my approach to this data analysis encompasses the following structure – doing an iterative review of the interview audios and interview transcripts for all six (6) interview sessions. Then carrying out some level of design analysis where key points are extracted and finally, the design synthesizes where the data is constructed into themes for interpretation and additional analysis.

As such, my first reading of the interview transcripts involved searching for any words or phrases that speak to the impact of change as it relates to the questions asked. Responses that were similar were highlighted and noted. This allows me to identify trends in the data as well as potential codes as per participants' responses (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Nowell et al., 2017). This iterative process provided the initial opportunity to come up with several themes (12 in total), which were further structured as per the research questions and construct. Table 3.2 below is created to help to visualize the initial themes that emerged from the iterative exercise.

Table 3.2: Initial Research Themes via Data Familiarization

Initial Research Themes

- Perception of change
- Communication/ How and its effectiveness
- Culture of change/Cognitive dissonance
- Barriers to change/Cognitive dissonance
- Influence of Change
- Adaptation to Change – Management
- Adaptation to change – Employees/Self Awareness/Behaviour

- Trust in Management/ Appreciative Inquiry (AI)
 - Organizational goals and vision/ Appreciative Inquiry (AI)
 - Employee involvement in change/ Appreciative Inquiry (AI)
 - How change is implemented
 - What can cause successful change?
 - What can cause unsuccessful change?
-

(Source: Researcher, based on the data collected, 2020).

3.7.3.2 Member Checking Themes

Member checking is regarded as an important part of the level of rigour and integrity of a research study and one that scholars purport can help researchers to analyze the data correctly (Gunawan, 2015). Further, Guba and Lincoln (1989) purport that it is ‘the single most critical technique’ for establishing research credibility. However, Sandelowski (1993) denotes that, while member checking can help to bring about an essential component of the research, due to repeatability, it should not ultimately be expected to arrive at the same themes as the researcher.

To this extent, the initial themes were sent to the designated gatekeepers of the different offices which were then disseminated to the study participants. This was done due to the structure of the organization as well as to ensure that all the noted participants were the only ones privy to this information.

The main aim of this member-checking process was to solicit the participant’s thoughts and commentary about the initial themes and how they were aligned with their expressed opinions in the interview sessions. Only a few, seven (7) to be exact, commented and submitted their feedback. While they were not able to comment on all the themes, their responses provided valuable insights as to how the themes of the research were evolving. Additionally, I started to observe patterns in their comments and the themes that were aligned with the comments. Further, all the themes were confirmed, with persons providing additional annotations based on the described themes. A sample of the comments may

be viewed in Table 3.3 below. The table also contains verbiage from my interpretation of the data presented.

Table 3.3: Sample Theme Member Checking Comments and Relational Connections Analysis

Theme Numbers	Description of Themes	Member Checking Comments	Theme pairing and additional verbiage
1	Perception of change	Behaviour during change. How they think change is/will be.	Change readiness and Perception.
2	Communication/ its effectiveness	Done by emails/ineffective	Interactions during Change/longitudinally.
3	Culture of Change	A battlefield/resistant	Culture of change/longitudinal
4	Barriers to change	Fear/politics/stakeholders	Behaviour/beliefs
5	Influence of change	Internal/External	Change outcomes
6	Adaptation to Change – Management	No choice/Just do it	Understanding change/behavioural
7	Adaptation to change - Employees		Not readily most times
8	Trust in Management	Lack of accountability	Impact ‘buy-in’
9	Organizational Goals and Vision	Not clear	Clear and concise for Impact
10	Employee Involvement in Change	Non-existence	People central/longitudinal
11	How change is implemented	Email/Memo	Seek effective ways to communicate change
12	What causes a successful change	All on board	Shared values/communication
13	What causes an unsuccessful change	Lack of transparency/ politics.	Impact of communication
14	Surveys/Questionnaires	Find it interesting	Implementation of mechanism to guide change.

(Source: Researcher, based on the data collected, 2020).

During the interview process, some main terms were used by a few participants independently, to describe employees’ behaviours towards change as well as how change was communicated to staff. The words and phrases used were ‘rebellious’ ‘*lack of involvement*’ ‘*no emotional intelligence*’ and ‘*psychological factors*’ respectively. These descriptions of change and its implementation in the organization were of particular interest to me due to one of the core factors of unsuccessful organizational

change as cited in many literatures – resistance to change (Kotter, 1996; Rock & Schwartz, 2006), as well as being ‘ready’ for the change.

Additionally, the term ‘psychological factors’ aligned itself well with a tenet of the research which sought to introduce a ‘softer’ approach to change in having people becoming central to the change process ‘the people factor’ as linked to ‘appreciative inquiry,’ a construct to be embraced for successful change outcomes (Hughes, 2011; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Waterman, et. al., 1980). Further, these terms helped to embolden the main tenets and objectives of the study which seeks to investigate how positive psychology could be used as a factor to influence positive change outcomes.

I believe these words help to contribute to the meaning of my research data, especially for the intended purposes of this study. Further, interacting with the comments of the member checking process, provided me with an opportunity to further mold the theoretical construct of the study and hence the emergence of the final key themes as seen below:

- Change readiness and perception
- Barriers/influence of change
- Management/Leadership of change
- Employee engagement
- Communication of change

These emergent consolidated themes will form the results of this exploratory case study and will be further discussed in the presentation of the findings of the research. Table 3.4 below indicates these results.

Table 3.4: Consolidated Emergent Themes

<i>Themes</i>
Change readiness and perception
Barriers to change
Management/Leadership
Employee engagement
Communication

(Source: Researcher based on the data collected, 2020).

3.8 Better Data Validity and Reliability

An integral aspect of social science research is the researcher's attempt to quantify human behaviour through observations using measurement instruments. According to Smallbone & Quinton (2004), the concept of measuring human behaviour was a widely accepted ideology of the positivist view or the empirical analytical approach to qualitative studies to discern veracity. Nonetheless, the measurement of human observed behaviour has always been controversial in the realm of research due to its subjective and judgmental nature. One such concern was the validity and reliability of the measurement instrument being employed. The test of validity and reliability is important in the realm of research as it dictates the level of accuracy and consistency of the measurement instruments which is critical to the expected results and the acceptance of the research in the public domain (Gliner & Morgan, 2000; Wong et al., 2012).

3.8.1.1 Data Validity

In its simplest term, validity refers to how well a scientific analysis or research measures what it seeks to do as well as how well it performs as it was designed to perform. For example, is it valid or is it a true measure of the stated theoretical construct (Wan, 2002)? Several types of validity measures are utilized by researchers, these include construct validity, content validity, and criterion validity which can either be concurrent or predictive. These tests of validity are further categorized into two broad terms – internal validity and external validity, where internal validity refers to how well a measure from the research quantifies what it was expected to measure while external validity focuses on how accurate the measures from the research sample is representative of the stated population from which the sample was drawn (Marczyk et al., 2005).

Construct validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures the trait or theoretical constructs it purports to measure (Wong, 2012; Colliver et al., 2012; Anderson et al., 2015). An issue that may be of concern to construct validity is the social threat of hypothetical guessing, where people try to guess the real purpose of the study. The major concern of this threat is that the relatively uninformed guess will be reflective of the individual's behaviour. Further, the participant may realize what the aim of the research is and potentially estimate the result. Another issue is that of the researcher's expectancies and biases. As such, the researcher may unknowingly provide the subjects with clues which may influence behaviour and as such, will not be a true representative of the actual behaviour. This in effect will alter the construct validity and by extension the overall validity of the research. On the other hand, content validity is a qualitative type of validity in which the domain of the concept is made predominantly clear and the researcher judges if the measures applied are representative of the domain (Bollen, 1989; DeVon et al., 2007; Sangoseni, 2013).

According to Bollen, in the realm of social sciences, there is no harmony in theoretical definitions because the domain content is most often ambiguous. As such, the researcher must provide a theoretical definition of the concept which must be accepted by fellow researchers. Thus, this measure of validity

seeks to ensure that the stated indicators are indicative of the meaning of the concept as defined by the researcher. As such, a major issue of this type of validity is that it is highly subjective. However, to increase validity, the researcher could combine other forms of validity to increase the strength of the instrument (Patton, 2002; Golafshani, 2003). Lastly, criterion validity is predictive and is interested in determining a particular outcome to a specific criterion. One major issue with this level of predictability is that the predictor may not be available or may prove difficult to establish which can threaten the validity of the measurement (Drost, 2011; Liang Y, et al., 2014).

3.8.1.2 Data Reliability

Reliability on the other hand refers to the extent to which the findings that are derived by a measurement or procedure can be replicated and as such, is a measure of consistency (Marczyk et al., 2005; Wong et al., 2012). This was further confirmed by Bollen (1989) when he asserted that reliability is the consistency or stability of a particular measurement. As such, the same results must be obtained even with the use of a multiplicity of conditions (Nunnally, 1978). There are several aspects of reliability namely, interrater (inter-observer or equivalence reliability), stability (test-retest), and internal consistency or homogeneity. Interrater reliability refers to the measurement of the extent to which data collected from different “raters” are equivalent. On the other hand, stability or test-retest reliability provides an indication of the stability of measurement over a period; as such, the same or similar scores must be obtained with repeated tests with the same group of subjects. Internal consistency reliability or homogeneity is the extent to which items on a particular instrument are measuring the same things. Notwithstanding, there are prevalent threats to the validity and reliability of measurements. However, some threats or issues can be mitigated with careful and accurate data collection by the researcher throughout the research process.

To this extent, the instruments used in this study were developed based on the overall research objectives as well as other established peer-reviewed instruments. As such, all means of ensuring the validity and trustworthiness of the instruments and data collection processes were aligned with

appropriate literature. Additionally, a measured analysis to be carried out is that of thematic analysis. This type of analysis provides a link between the theoretical aspect of the study as well as what is observed (Suter, 2012).

To ensure the generalization of results, the findings must be deemed trustworthy and reliable. As such, in this study, every attempt was made to preserve the credibility and reliability of the data. Therefore, participants' responses were checked with them to ensure that it was their words and not the researcher's. Further, post-interview transcripts and coding will be sent to participants for checking further comments as well as for agreement on transcription accuracy.

Additionally, the coding and iterations will also be reviewed for comments and agreement from research participants. Further, to mitigate any limitations of the study, data triangulation will be used, hence the completion of a questionnaire.

3.8.1.3 The Bolstering of Validity and Reliability

As mentioned earlier, validity refers to the degree to which the research satisfies its stated aims. Therefore, one of the first issues or challenges of the researcher is to ensure that the aims of the research are clearly defined so that the research is designed to address the specific topic or phenomena. This research design must invariably include the accuracy of the data as well as the quality of the measuring instrument/s. As such, the validity of information is its relevance and appropriateness to the research question as well as how well the research stands up to scrutiny. According to research, validity is the extent to which a measure or method of data collection comprises the quality of soundness or truth (Jary and Jary, 1995; Zohrabi, 2013). On the other hand, reliability is simply a measure of the consistency of measurement or an indication of how well a procedure can be replicated.

Even though reliability is an important contributor to the validity of an instrument, it is not the only condition for the validity of the instrument. As such, the deficiency of reliability may be due to a deviation between the instruments of measurement or the instability of the characteristic being measured,

which to some extent, will affect the validity of the instrument/s and the research outcome. Further, many issues as it relates to validity and reliability include, construct validity, content validity and criterion validity. To this extent, reliability dictates that the research data is dependable, consistent, trustworthy, authentic and of good reputation. To this end, a *triangulation design* for testing and bolstering reliability was established for this research. Triangulation' in its simplest term, is defined as the combination of two or more theories, and sources of data as well as the actual means of investigation of a particular research construct as per a single phenomenon (Denzin, 1989; 2017; Fielding, 2012). As such, it speaks to the convergence and corroboration of the results taking into consideration the heightened factor of validity and reliability of results as it relates to the combination of the two research methods. According to Mathison (1988, p.13), "triangulation has emerged as an important methodological issue in naturalistic and qualitative research approaches to evaluate [in order] to control bias and establish valid propositions as traditional techniques are incompatible with this type of alternative epistemology." A parallel strength of this approach is the nature of the data when they are drawn from multiple data sources and data sets as this diversity will foster a more expansive look at the situation (Fielding, 2012; Zarhin, 2018)

The use of triangulation to validate qualitative research data was advocated by Patton (2002) when he purported that "triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. This may involve using several kinds of methods or data, including both quantitative and qualitative approaches" (p.247). Nonetheless, Barbour (1998) argues that this approach could prove challenging for some researchers as this would involve combining paradigms, and as such, should be seriously considered and cautiously approached. Denzin (1970; 1978) who has been credited with the promulgation of this approach to data analysis argues for an approach that could provide a more naturalistic inquiry to examine research issues from multiple perspectives. This was to overcome some of the intrinsic biases that typically accompany research that uses a single method, single observer or single theory. As such, he outlined four (4) types

of triangulation techniques that could be used by researchers in both data collection and analysis – data, method, investigator, and theory. These are expounded below.

3.8.1.3.1 Data Triangulation

This type of triangulation refers to the use of varying data sources which include time, space and people when conducting a study. With this type of triangulation, the research findings can be corroborated. It can also help to compensate for any weakness in the research data with the strength of the other data collected. One of the weaknesses of this method though is that it might not provide meaningful insight if sufficient data is not collected as well as issues with the quality of the data that was collected. As such, the onus is on the researcher to ensure both the quantity and the quality of the data collected (Denzin, 1978).

3.8.1.3.2 Method Triangulation

This is the use of multiple methods in a research study. One of the focuses of this method is to decrease any deficiencies and biases that may arise when only one method is used. As such, the strength of one method may compensate for the weaknesses of the other. This is like the ‘mixed method’ research approach that is usually employed in social science research (Tashakkori, 1998; Fielding, 2012). Where the results from one method are used to enhance, augment, or even clarify the results of another. Therefore, it is dependent on data being collected from different sources rather than say a different programme, location, or population. The use of this method of data analysis may result in even more meaningful insights than one would achieve with only a single method (Denzin, 1978).

3.8.1.3.3 Investigator Triangulation

This method of data analysis involves the use of one researcher, investigator, interviewer, observer, or data analyst in a study. Therefore, the ability to confirm the findings across investigators without having any previous discussion or collaboration may significantly enhance the credibility of the findings. As such, this type of triangulation of data has the potential of reducing data collection biases

as well as any other type of biases that may occur throughout the research process (Denzin, 1978). Some of the biases that may occur in a research study include *measurement bias* – where the data collected are gained under pressure, for example, in a focus group session, *sampling bias* – when the researcher is unable to cover the population for the study (omission bias) or when the researcher only cover some of the population that is ‘convenient’ (inclusion bias) and finally, *procedural bias* – placing the participants under some type of pressure to acquire the information that is needed. A popular example of this bias is that of the ‘vox pop’ style, where the participant is caught ‘off guard’ and as such, the response might be influenced accordingly.

3.8.1.3.4 Theory Triangulation

This is the use of multiple theories or hypotheses to evaluate a situation or phenomenon. As such, it offers the researcher to look at the topical construct from varying perspectives and through varying lenses. It must be noted that the theories or hypotheses that are used do not have to be similar or even compatible. In fact, the more contrasting they are, the better they are to identify different situations or concerns (Denzin, 1978).

Given the above, this research employed the use of *data triangulation* as an attempt to triangulate the collected data. This was to bolster the validity and reliability of the research by gaining useful information about the research phenomenon. This method may incorporate two (2) distinct techniques – ‘cross-method’ and ‘within-method’ methodologies. The ‘across-method’ employs both quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies (Boyd 2001, Casey & Murphy 2009). These data collection methods may include participant observation (qualitative) and questionnaires (quantitative). On the other hand, the ‘within-method’ methodology uses two (2) or more data collection procedures, such as qualitative and quantitative, but never both (Denzin, 1989; 2017). Therefore, data triangulation has been proven to be beneficial in confirming research findings, and more thorough data, as well as increasing the validity of the research while providing a greater understanding of the research construct (Casey & Murphy,

2009). As such, triangulation offers researchers the possibility of employing varying data sources to reduce the weaknesses of a single method or source which can only serve to fortify the research outcome (Denzin, 1978; Sharif & Armitage, 2004).

3.9 Study Procedures and Ethical Assurances

This study was reviewed and approved by the UREC's Ethics Committee. All amendments, based on the Committee's feedback were made, including the final amendment as indicated by the Committee. Based on the final amendments, the Data collection tools were administered to fulfil the data collection stage of the doctoral program.

The study involved only human subjects, particularly the employees of the Transport Authority, which is the based organization for the study. As such, the researcher ensure that all ethical procedures were followed including the foremost 'do no harm' which is the primary focus of ethics, especially as it relates to case studies (Yin, 2009). This level of resolve was discussed before the commencement of the dissertation phase of my doctoral program based on the University's Ethical Guidelines.

The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were maintained by not allowing them to write their names on the questionnaire, as well as to carry out proper debriefing activities including the signing of Informed Consent and Debriefing forms. Participants were also reminded of their rights and the means of confidentiality at the initial stage of the interviewing sessions as well as the debriefing after the sessions. This was the best fitting method to ensure ethical assurance for both anonymity and confidentiality of information, especially due to the nature of the interviews.

It must be noted that no potential risk of harm to participants was observed due to the environment in which the data was collected. As such, the organization's conference rooms were used in most cases or designated rooms, already considered 'safe' places for employees. Additionally, the sample population for the study was voluntary. As such, if the participants met the eligibility of the study, they were provided with the opportunity to participate.

The initial recruiting of the participants was conducted by a designated ‘Gatekeeper’ in the form of a manager as selected by the organization’s Managing Director. According to Sanders (2006), a gatekeeper is someone who arbitrates between the researcher and the participants and as such, assists with providing personnel for the research. This is often used to acquire participants due to the problematic nature at times to gain access to research participants in the conduct of social research. The manager that took on this activity was someone who reportedly had a good rapport with the staff, was deemed organized and was considered people-centric. A meeting was held between the researcher and the gatekeeper and matters about the eligibility of participants were discussed as outlined. As such, an email was completed and sent to the general staff body (*Please see Appendices B through to I*). The email was further repurposed and posted on the organization’s Notice Board. Another designated staff member, a subordinate of the manager, was provided with the responsibility to collect the volunteer names based on the instructions in the email or advertisement. This information was then forwarded to me, the researcher but only for the semi-structured interview sessions, to allow for the organization and execution of the sessions. It must be noted that there was also a designated person at the other office locations. These semi-gatekeepers as can be fashioned were designated to assist with the organization of the participants at their location. This was critical, as all the offices have their different flows and particular activities which are exclusive to them. As such, a time of 10 am for an interview session at one location, might not be possible at another location. Therefore, the best means to ensure that the sessions were successfully executed, was to have designated persons, working with the main Gatekeeper from the Head Office to successfully conduct the data collection phase of the study. This was a success.

The volunteers were placed in two (2) groups as per the respective office locations, particularly the Head office. As such, for the Kingston office, which is the head office, but with two (2) different sections, the groups were organized as such, group 1 and group 2, etc. Therefore, the main administrative arm had two (2) groups and the Inspectorate Division, located about two (2) blocks away also had two (2) groups. The sessions were conducted one (1) hour apart. The remaining locations, the out-of-town

offices, had participants organized as per the particular quota which was a maximum of ten (10) persons per group. The sessions were conducted in an enclosed area and recorded. The participants were also advised of the recording of the sessions to ensure ethical provisions. In addition to recording the sessions, the researcher also took notes where possible and necessary of the participants' responses and comments. The notes were verified by the participants through repetition, in an attempt to ensure the validity and reliability of the responses. The participants were also advised that this was being done.

The semi-structured interview sessions were conducted on different days per group but in the same week. This was due largely to the nature of the work environment, where the largest complement of staff were those of the Inspectorate Division, who mostly work on the street, and thus would be away from the office for hours at a time, sometimes, the entire day. In cases like this, they would just visit the office to collect any personal belongings or not visit at all and just go straight to their respective homes. As such, it was crucial to work with gatekeepers to ensure sufficient participants for the sessions.

The questionnaires were administered over five (5) days but in the same week. This is based on the same premise governing the access to the participants. As such, this modality was initiated to facilitate the nature of the work environment as well as the COVID-19 pandemic guidelines. Therefore, several options were established to assist in the completion of the questionnaires. Participants were able to complete it online via an email address that was sent or in person. Surprisingly, all the questionnaires were completed in person. The completed questionnaires were packaged by the designated persons at the respective regional offices and sent to the Gatekeeper in Kingston. The researcher then visits the head office and reviews the documents for completion. All questionnaires were accompanied by a signed Informed Consent Form.

4.1 Summary

This chapter provided the study's overall paradigm, methodology and methods which include the data collection techniques as well as the methods of data analysis to provide an overall perspective

of the research agenda and approach. The study adopted an interpretivism paradigm to guide the topical construct of the study. This research paradigm was chosen as it is more aligned with the research methodology and methods.

The study methodology is that of a qualitative exploratory, single-case study of interviews and questionnaire survey. This qualitative exploratory study focuses on how positive psychology could be used to effectively managed organizational change, especially from the viewpoint of the Transport Authority, a public sector agency and the based organization of the study. According to Creswell (1994), qualitative research is a process of inquiry into the understanding of a social phenomenon or human concern. As such, Creswell (1994) purported that qualitative research design is considered ‘evolutionary’ in nature and as such, allows for the in-depth investigation of the different aspects of human life experiences. On the other hand, quantitative research design seeks to expound upon a particular phenomenon by scrutinizing mathematical constructs and correlational analysis.

The sample population comprised participants of the based organization – the Transport Authority with an estimated staff complement of about Two Hundred (200) employees at the time of this research. This number included both permanent and temporary employee statuses. As such, the sampling selection strategy that will be executed is that of the non-probability sampling technique – critical case purposive sampling. This sampling technique was chosen based on the known characteristics of the population as well as the level of knowledge, accessibility of participants and the perceived level of control as it relates to the sample size. One of the ethical concerns of this sampling technique is that it is exclusive which may give rise to its theoretical soundness.

As such, the purpose, and the topical construct of the research, which is theoretically driven, will help to mitigate any arguments of the perception of narrowed scope. Further, unnecessary, and unmanageable sample sizes can have the potential to create ethical issues as it relates to manageability, resource and time constraints which can expose the participants to distress or harm. These issues can

lead to saturation on the grounds of diminishing returns and the validity of outcomes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Notably, all the other features of the research including the discussion of the findings and implications will be detailed in the subsequent chapters, commencing with the upcoming chapter, chapter 4, which details the research findings and evaluation and chapter 5, the research implications, and recommendations.

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.2 Chapter Overview and Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the research. As such, the findings from the two (2) instruments are discussed in detail. The chapter also discusses the research analysis and findings in terms of the reliability and validity of the data that was collected. Importantly, the chapter also provides a detailed evaluation of the research findings as well as its links to literature.

There is a famous saying used by Jamaicans that goes, '*Jamaica, no problem.*' It is a well-known rhetoric used to indicate that whatever the perceived problem is, there is just '*no problem*' in resolving it. While there might be other meanings ascribed to this famous saying over the years, facing and resolving any life circumstances is a fundamental reasoning. However, in the sphere of organizational change, especially in the context of Jamaica, this adage is seemingly not reflected or easily replicated. This is due to several reasons, one being, organizational change can be challenging and complex (Mendy, 2017) and sometimes, organizational leaders just do not want to deal with it (Mendy, 2017). As sociologist Jim March denotes, successful organizational change requires leaders to put on a balancing act, by exploring new ways of doing things while exploiting the ability to harness new practices and jettison older, less effective ones (March, 1991). As such, this study took on this challenge and sought to '*Investigate the influence of positive psychology as an approach for an effective management of organizational change – A Jamaica perspective.*'

This resolve was to understand organizational change from a more behavioural approach or what is classified as a 'people-centered approach.' An approach that could very well help with the factor of 'resistance to change.' Resistance to change has been cited by many works of literature as a major hindrance to the successful implementation of organizational change (Kotter, 1996; Rock and Schwartz, 2006). Therefore, research contends that advocating for having employees as core agents of change could provide organizations with a new direction in identifying both the barriers and opportunities to better understand how to effect successful organizational change (Mendy, 2017; Seligman, 2002).

To this extent, with the exploration and application of principles of both the theory of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry, it is expected that a proposed structure can be developed that can contribute positively to successful organizational change outcomes, particularly at the Transport Authority, which is the based government organization for this qualitative exploratory case study.

In so doing, the research sets out to answer five (5) fundamental questions to gain a better understanding of the research phenomenon – organizational change, to assist in the molding of an effective strategy for the management of successful organizational change outcomes. These questions include three primary or foundational questions and two (2) secondary or complimentary questions.

4.2.1 The Primary or Foundational Questions:

1. What are the principles which guide the change management process in the Transport Authority?
2. What is the role of the political party in power in the change management process of the Transport Authority?
3. How do employees perceive organizational change management processes in the Transport Authority?

4.1.2. The Secondary or Complimentary Questions:

The secondary questions that will assist to embolden the research are as follows:

4. What role do the employees of the Transport Authority play in the change management process?
5. How can the theories of Cognitive Dissonance and Appreciative Inquiry help to serve as an effective mechanism for organizational change, especially as it relates to ‘resistance to change’ and ‘positive change outcomes’ respectively?

Data was collected from One Hundred and One (101) employees, with Fifty-three (53) constituting the primary sample of the study. The main means of data collection were the semi-structured interviews. This was the primary source of data collection as per the primary sampled population. Additional data collection was carried out with the administering of a questionnaire survey. This was

done in an attempt to triangulate the research findings. Forty-eight (48) employees participated in this fashion. Both instruments served as inductive means to gather this qualitative data with the questionnaire being introduced to triangulate the data. The triangulation of the data will help to provide further beneficial confirmation of the research findings while helping to speak to the rigour of the study, provide more meaningful insights as well as serve as a means to increase the validity and reliability of the research and its stated constructs.

Therefore, this chapter will commence with exploring the narrative on the reliability and validity of the data collection process, a narrative that was discussed in the previous chapters of the research. The chapter will also set out to explore the findings of the research with detailed discussion in the subsequent sections and chapter. Further, the discussion section of this chapter will outline identified themes of the thematic analysis employed to better delineate the impact of positive psychology on organizational change. This will then lead to direct responses to the fundamental questions of the research study. The chapter will also speak to any limitations of the data collection drawn from the reality of the processes and fixated on theory and conclude with an evaluation and summary of the findings.

4.3 Reliability and Validity of Data

Steps in ensuring validity and reliability:

To further assess the rigour of this qualitative case study, steps were taken to ensure both the validity and reliability of the research and its findings. However, one must note that, while quantitative researchers usually use traditional terms such as internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity when conducting research (Jones et al., 2012). Theoretical constructs such as the psychology of change are not something that is directly observable and as such, these factors are often difficult to prove.

As such, to strengthen the degree of reliability and validity of the study, several measures were used. These include establishing trustworthiness according to the Lincoln and Guba model, which established rigorous criteria for qualitative research namely, credibility, dependability, confirmability,

and transferability (Jones et al., 2012, Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This was discussed in detail in chapter 3 above. Other methods speak to triangulation of the data via the use of an additional data collection instrument to test the relationships of the emerged variables and strengthen internal validity and finally, the means of data saturation.

To this extent, the operationalization of the measures of this study relied on the use of factor analysis to reduce items for the emerged variables for measurement validity. Further, all statements of the questionnaire were carefully tested to ensure that it was measuring the intended construct. Additionally, no items were chosen that were akin to the other items covering the construct. As such, all the questions chosen were the ones intended to cover the scope of the research construct (Field and Hole, 2003, p. 46).

Additionally, most of the questions were dichotomous in nature and thus only required the respondents to answer, 'yes' or 'no'. Further, Likert scale-like questions were used for a good part of the questionnaire items. The response scale used included the following alternatives 'not all so' 'very much so' 'very ineffective,' 'very ineffective, etc. One of the main reasons for the use of the Likert scale for certain questionnaire measures was to help respondents explicitly understand what was being asked, which would help them to discriminate against their perceptions as well as to ascertain their opinions as per 'agreeing' or 'disagreeing' to a question (Fowler, 2002, p.114).

Further, research suggests that the Likert scale is a simple and straightforward method of gathering data and has a minimal response bias (Fowler, 2002). Additionally, to reduce the possibility of agreement bias and strengthen the validity of the findings, some of the measures were negatively worded, while others were positively stated (Schutt, 2006, pp. 241-242, Fowler, 2002).

4.3.1 Measurement of the Semi-structured Interviews

Pertinent to the use of the questionnaire survey was the use of interviews as an exploratory approach to the research construct. According to Smith et al. (1995), exploratory research is usually

used in the field of social sciences to explore how an individual would react when they are in a particular setting, what sort of meaning they would apply to a question being asked in that setting as well as what would be of concern to them at that moment in time. As such, the fitting approach would be to employ some sort of qualitative method, in this case, semi-structured interviews with employees of the organization. This allowed for a greater understanding of the research construct as well as the flexibility to gather more enriched data based on the potential to build on responses.

The analysis of the data was completed through the use of thematic analysis and followed the established format of the development of *a priori* codes (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2012) which involves becoming familiar with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006), conducting theory-driven coding of the data (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2012), carrying out a review of the codes while performing additional data-driven coding (Boyatzis, 1998; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006), collating potential themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006) and finally, developing a thematic map by reviewing the emerged themes for relatedness to establish creditability of the research findings (Braun Clarke, 2006, 2012; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

The results were then compared with that of a member-checking assessment instrument to further ensure data credibility and reliability of the findings. Further, it must be noted that an interview guide was employed to cover most of the questions asked in the six (6) semi-structured interview sessions conducted. Importantly, all interviewees provided their consent for the collected data to be used for the research study.

4.3.2 Triangulation

Triangulation of data is also viewed as a qualitative research strategy to test validity through the convergence of information from varied sources, in this case, the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaire survey. According to Patton (1999) and Knekta et al. (2019), triangulation is simply the use of multiple sources of data in qualitative research to develop a thorough understanding of the stated phenomenon. Therefore, employing this methodology can prove beneficial in confirming the research

findings and increasing the validity of the research as well as providing a greater understanding of the research construct.

The application of this method in qualitative studies can serve to strengthen the measurement in a considerable way especially when similar results are achieved with different methods. As such, for this research, attempts were made to triangulate the data through the administration of both a primary instrument in the form of semi-structured interviews (qualitative research) as well as a secondary instrument in the form of a questionnaire (survey research). According to Brewer & Hunter (1989), this type of methodology can help to instill a deeper level of confidence in the validity of the research measurements.

Additionally, the use of more than one method of data collection becomes even more significant considering some of the limitations set by the capacity of this study. As such, even though purposive sampling was used to select participants. The use of this method can cause the risk of getting respondents from the same background and thus creating the possibility of measurement error. To this extent, research contends that this also raises the possibility for participants to answer questions in a socially relevant way (Hadaway et al., 1993, p. 750). In this case, one might argue that the participants would answer positively about how the organization manages transformation due to a feeling of intervention on behalf of the researcher, especially as it relates to particular questions. Therefore, using both interviews with one set of staff and a questionnaire with another serves as a serious effort on the part of the researcher to mitigate any measurement error. Additionally, the technique of data triangulation offers a broad source of data that can contribute to a more holistic understanding of the influence of positive psychology as a means for successful organizational change outcomes.

4.3.3 Data Saturation

Deep saturation into the research is also able to promote a level of validity and reliability of its findings. Therefore, data saturation was achieved mainly using practicable methods. These methods entail quantifying the number of new codes per interview throughout the interview sessions. This helps

in showing that most of the themes were identified in the first few sets of interviews, which led to a decreasing frequency of codes being identified from the other interview sessions.

While the techniques to identify the validity and reliability of qualitative measures may seem less concrete and defined than other empirical studies. These mechanisms have helped to ascertain that an appropriate level of validity in this qualitative research was achieved and as such, can be used to inform meaningful decisions.

4.3 Results of the Research Findings including Graphical Illustrations

To attempt triangulation of the research data, this research is based on two (2) types of primary data. The first and most paramount was that of the semi-structured interviews and the latter, a questionnaire survey. Both activities were conducted with employees of the Transport Authority, on which this study is based. The table below shows a breakdown of the respondents across the participating offices, four (4) in total, with the head office constituting two (2) offices as they are segmented into two (2) sections – An Administrative arm and an Inspectorate Division. Please see Table 4.1 below with the demographics for the participants of the interviews.

Table 4.1: Interview Participants Demographics

Demographics	Frequency N	Percentage %
Gender:		
Male	21	40
Female	32	60
Generation Type/Age:		
Generation Z (18-22 years old)	3	6
Millennials (23-38 years old)	29	55
Generation X (39-54 Years old)	17	32
Baby Boomers (55-73 years old)	4	7
Other	0	0
Region/Office		
Head Office (119 & 107)	30	57
Mandeville Regional Office	12	22
Ocho Rios Regional Office	11	20

n=53

(Source: Researcher, based on the data collected, 2020).

As indicated in earlier sections, fifty-three (53) employees responded to the call to participate in the interviews while Forty-eight (48) the questionnaire survey. More than half of the participants of the interviews were female, representing Sixty percent (60.4%) of the sample population while millennial participants between the ages of Twenty-three (23) years to Thirty-eight (38) years of age comprise a similar percentage representing Fifty-five percent (55%) of the sample population. Male participants only represented Forty percent (40%) of the sample population with baby boomers, persons between the ages of Fifty-five (55) to Seventy-three (73) years of age, constituting Seven percent (7%) of the overall population. The generation age ranges referenced in this study were those as per the United States Census Bureau, 2020. The age ranges are usually a bit different by some organizational standards as well as in some research.

The objectives of the interviews were to obtain in-depth knowledge of organizational change at the Transport Authority and to acquire a sense of how employees perceived this phenomenon. It was also used to gauge how involved employees were in the organizational change processes to highlight the ‘people factor’ as well as the factor of resistance to change, constructs of both appreciative inquiry and cognitive dissonance respectively, which are pertinent variables of this research study. On the other hand, the questionnaire survey was aimed at testing questionnaire item loadings on the research construct as well as investigating the correlation between these two primary components, further bolstering the results of the research findings.

All interviews were recorded with the expressed knowledge and consent of the participants. Further, the respondents also provided their permission for the researcher to use the data gathered from the interviews and questionnaires for the research.

Data from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis while data from the questionnaire were analyzed using factor analysis. This type of analysis for the questionnaire survey was found to be more useful as it was not the researcher’s intention to test a hypothesis, which is not the basis of this research, but rather to reduce larger data sets, correlate the data and provide a summary of

the different factor components if they are grounded in theory or observation. This level of correlation was then used to evaluate the constructs or variables they are akin (Field, 2005, pp. 620-621; Pallant, 2020).

Additionally, to ensure that the constructs being investigated are aligned with the components stated, a rotated component matrix was produced from the analysis of the questionnaire survey. The reliability of the deduced variables from the components was further tested to account for any resultant factor. The findings are reported respectively, first for the semi-structured interviews and then the questionnaire survey.

4.3.1 The Interviews

Six (6) semi-structured interview sessions were conducted with employees across four (4) offices namely, the Head office (2 office/sections), Mandeville and Ocho Rios Regional Offices. The participants were asked about organizational change, including how they adapt and react to change as a whole, questions which lend themselves to the construct under investigation.

The interviews resulted in a diverse range of opinions being expressed regarding organizational change initiatives and their outcomes. However, there was unanimity among those interviewed about political party involvement or the *non-existent* of other internal and external factors playing a major role towards change outcomes, which according to participants usually yield unsuccessful outcomes. Another area of unanimity among participants was that of employee involvement in the change process, which most employees pointed out as being *lacking* or in some cases, non-existent.

These research findings will be presented independently as per the emerged themes of the thematic analysis that was used to analyze the interview responses. The themes are presented below to add a sense of structure to the research study. Additionally, the fundamental questions of the research will also be delineated along with the findings. Direct quotations as per the analysis of the interviews will be presented in *italics*. It must be noted that the emerged themes from the thematic analysis

catalyzed the fundamental questions of the research study, depicting reasonings surrounding organizational change, literature-wise and those at the Transport Authority. Please see below the emerged themes as per the analysis of the interviews.

4.3.1.1 Change Readiness and Perception

This emerged theme reflects the research objectives of *employee perception* as it relates to organizational change at the organization as well as *how the organization implement change initiatives (were there some guiding principles?)*. To explore one's perception and approach to an organization's change management process, employees were asked about how change initiatives were implemented as well as how they as individuals adapt to change. They were also asked about the mission and vision of the organization and its alignment with organizational change initiatives. These questions are the ones that were in support of the research questions and objectives in exploring the 'how' of change initiatives and to see if there were some guiding principles or 'formal processes' to both the implementation and the successful outcome of change.

Most of the interviewees suggested that change was implemented mostly via email or a memo *you just get a Memo/Email, or you hear from the customers, or you hear from other employees* as well as *no plan in place to implement change*. Some others expressed that *Superiors make the decisions and put them in writing and you just have to follow, or leaders just do as they please*. Other participants also indicated that they learn about organizational change initiatives sometimes from customers or other employees, *the customers tell you, or you hear from other employees or the grapevine*. Additionally, most interviewees indicated that there was no real method in place as it relates to the implementation of change, *leaders just do as they please*, and that it was more *reactive than proactive*, or *management makes decisions based on their feelings*. Another perception was that of the political party's influence, *why every time a party comes into power, person get political appointment and organizational changes made without any consultation with employees*. Many of the participants also indicated that there was

no real method in place to carry out organizational change initiatives as changes are sometimes made when a customer complains, without further evaluation. To this extent, most participants believed that there is no time to prepare *'get ready'* for change, *you just adapt to it - Decisions are just taken and staff just have to adjust*. As such, most of the participants believed that they do not adapt well to change- *You do not adapt well, feel threatened, you just work with it or face the consequences and people just use their experiences to work with the change*.

When asked about the organization's mission and vision, most respondents across all the offices did not know what it was while others had a slight semblance of it based on their memory upon initial employment. As such, some asked *'What is it again?'* *What vision?*, some stated that *Management not working with goals/vision, when implementing change*, while one respondent referred to it as *the vision of vengeance* to which, most of the other participants agreed.

4.3.1.2 Barriers/Influence of Organizational Change

This emerged theme reflects the research objectives of the role political party plays in the organizational change process, employee perception of change or of political party influence or any other type of influence that they believed may have influenced or hindered organizational change at the Transport Authority. Therefore, when asked if they view anything that has limited the success or influence change in the organization, most respondents suggested that *lack of resources and personal development has impacted change outcomes, negatively*. Others implied *people are just resistant to the change and are not receptive*. However, most of the participants across all the offices indicated that political parties have a great influence on organizational change - *politics, different political parties if one party is installed, changes are made or being made, stops if an election is around the corner, then certain changes are effected*. Some respondents pointed to the lack of information which they believed was a contributing factor to unsuccessful change outcomes *No adequacy of information about the change, you hear by the grapevine or taxi operators* or that most changes are communicated via email.

This would exclude a large proportion of the staff body, particularly those of the Inspectorate Division who did not have access to an individual computer, or a company email address as well as are mostly on the road due to the nature of their responsibilities.

One participant even indicated that *lack of emotional intelligence has a whole had a lot to do with it*, that is, unsuccessful change outcomes. Some respondents further suggested that *people need to understand the purpose of the change, because of this, they become frustrated and do not want to participate*, as such, change is forced on them; *Do not force it down our throats*. As it relates to the culture of change, most respondents expressed that implementing change *feels like a battleground*, as some employees are just *rebellious while others do not want to see change*. Some went as far as to state that *most of these people are not educated*. As such, they respond to change aggressively and can be oftentimes very defensive and *take on the change to be more personal*.

4.3.1.3 Management/Leadership during Organizational Change

This emerged theme was directly related to how employees perceived change as it relates to management or leadership of the change process as well as the research objective of the principles that guide organizational change at the Transport Authority. Some employees suggested that management *did not know how to 'sell change' to get the necessary buy-in*. This was one of the common responses when asked how management implemented a change in the organization. As such, most respondents said that change in most cases was implemented *heavy-handed*, this they expressed to be *implemented in a top-down approach*., Some respondents also expressed that they did not trust management as it relates to organizational change, *they are not trustworthy*, while others expressed that they *have to trust them, some more than others* when it comes to change even if they are feeling like they are some ulterior motives, other than what is implied as per the change goals.

4.3.1.4: Employee Involvement in the Change Process

This emerged theme was akin to the research objectives of how involved employees were in organizational change as well as the principles of appreciative inquiry and cognitive dissonance which

specifically speaks to the ‘people’ aspect of the change process. When asked how involved employees were in the change process, most respondents expressed that *employee involvement was lacking or non-existent, Decisions are just made, you hear about it, and you just have to comply*. A few respondents suggested that *to be involved in any change process, sometimes staff have to rebel*, as such, *change feels like a battlefield sometimes* while others lamented that *our opinions are not taken seriously which is demotivating*. Others expressed that, *for some change initiatives you are trained, but that’s it and those training is ‘at face value’ as you are not allowed to implement the knowledge gained so you just continue to do things the same old way*. One respondent expressed that they were told at one point to *leave it at the door*, this was in reference to a training that was carried out for a change in a particular organizational procedure. This suggests that whatever they learnt in training is to be left in training as there was no place for it in the workplace. Therefore, most processes often remain the same, even though they are part of the organizational change agenda.

4.3.1.5 Communication of Change

This emerged theme also speaks to the research objectives of how change is implemented in the organization. When asked how change was implemented or communicated in the organization, most respondents expressed that it was via email or a memo *you just get a memo or an email*. Some also expressed that *you learn about the change from the stakeholders* who they described as ‘outsiders.’ The stakeholders at the Transport Authority refer to the Taxi and Bus operators, who must purchase and renew their licenses from the organization to transport passengers and are then regulated by the organization to ensure compliance with the road acts etc. When asked how effective the communication of change was by the leadership or management team, most of the respondents expressed *poor*, *it’s like on a need-to-know basis, information is not shared even though it is expected that communication is to be trickled down from the top management to lower-level staff*. Please see Table 4.2 for a summary of the emergent themes from the thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews.

Table 4.2: Emergent themes from the thematic analysis of the interviews**Emergent Themes – Thematic Analysis**

Change Readiness and Perception

Barriers/Influence of Change

Management/Leadership of Change

Employee Engagement and Change

Communication of Change

(Source: Researcher, based on the identified themes of the Thematic Analysis, 2020).

4.3.2 Results from the Questionnaire Survey – An Attempt at Triangulation

The questionnaire survey constitutes the secondary data instrument employed in this research study to triangulate the qualitative research data. The questionnaire participants, while being employees of the Transport Authority, comprised only individuals who did not participate in the interview sessions. This was to ensure that a different set of views were gathered as per the research constructs. This methodology was employed to serve as a means to mitigate any issues of validity and generalizability of the research data by ensuring the quality of the sample population. It was also employed to confirm (or otherwise) the findings as per the results of the interviews. Notably, it did confirm many of the findings as it relates to the interviews. Over Forty-eight (48) individuals participated in the completion of the questionnaire survey. Please see Table 4.3 below with a description of the questionnaire participants.

Table 4.3.: Demographics - Questionnaire Survey Participants

Particulars	Frequency N	Percentage %
Generation Type/Age:		
Millennials (23-38 years old)	31	64.5
Generation X (39-54 Years old)	11	22.9
Baby Boomers (55-73 years old)	6	12.5
Other	0	0
n=48		
Tenure with the company	Years	
Average years	7	
Maximum years	22	
Minimum years	1	

(Source: Researcher, based on the data collected, 2020).

Factor analysis or Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used as the main method of data reduction for the questionnaire survey. This type of analysis was also employed as a means of assessing the reliability, strength, and appropriateness of the sample population as well as the relationship between the variables of the questionnaire survey and that of the interviews (Howard, 1992; Watkins, 2018). As such, to evaluate data suitability, all twenty (20) questionnaire items were initially examined. For research data to be considered suitable for factorial analysis, a correlation matrix is required to show absolute values of a number of correlations of $r = .32$. This criterion was fulfilled as seen in the correlation matrix table below as many of the variables had values above .32. Please see Table 4.4 below of Component Correlation Matrix.

Table 4.4: Component Correlation Matrix ($r = .32$)

Component Correlation Matrix						
Component	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1.000	-.192	.109	-.075	.092	-.180
2	-.192	1.000	.115	.085	.031	-.099
3	.109	.115	1.000	-.016	-.033	-.189
4	-.075	.085	-.016	1.000	-.006	.121

5	.092	.031	-.033	-.006	1.000	-.125
6	-.180	-.099	-.189	.121	-.125	1.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

(Source: Researcher, based on the Factor Analysis via SPSS, 2020).

Further, the initial data reduction extracted six (6) components with eigenvalues above 1.0 while the Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant at ($p < .001$) and the Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin (KMO) measured of sample adequacy was .593. According to Hinton et al. (2004, p.349), any value above .5 is generally acceptable. As such, this value meets the minimum for a 'good' factor analysis.

The six (6) factors produced explained 69% (cumulative value) of the variances and reported factor loadings for each variable on the components after rotation. This partial correlation between the items and rotated components will help formulate an interpretation of the factors (components). Please see Table 4.5 of the Pattern Matrix below:

Table 4.5: Pattern Matrix - describing the loading of variables for each factor/component

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
clear concise message about the change	.786					
Understand the impact of change on self	.779					
Given reason to 'buy in' or engage in the change	.728					
Does employee understand the scale of change	.623	-.404			-.310	
Is the vision clear as per change	.589					-.423
Do employees fear change initiatives		-.735				
Are political parties (installed) have any influence on change		-.676				
Are employee's fears about change addressed – tangibly		-.658		-.504		
Can change achievements and progress be measured		-.649				
Does management behaviour supportive of change		.435				-.383

Are they able to sell the change?			.803			
Do you trust management?			.762			
Are employees being heard and responded to by management during change			.747			
Are barriers to derailed change identified and removed				-.833		
Resistance to change			.322	.552		
Provide training to assist with change					.817	
Are change team in place (engaged, passionate and informed)					.744	
Are the right people involved in the change?						-.739
Are the right systems in place to support change?						-.677
Are there barriers to change		-.403		-.416		.671

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 21 iterations.

(Source: Researcher, based on the Factor Analysis via SPSS, 2020)

Factors 2 and 5, *do employees understand the scale of change* as well as components 1 and 6 as it relates to having a *clear, concise vision of change* does show some common underpinning dimensions as it relates to the factor loading. As such, further analysis was conducted to investigate and provide more definite explanations of those components. However, the initial data reductions and their correlations can be seen below. Further, only three (3) of the components were selected. The ones chosen satisfied the assumption of having at least three (3) variables of high loadings to ensure stable results (Matsunaga, 2010). The three (3) components, which reflect important objectives of the study are discussed below.

4.3.2.1 Change Vision, Mission, and Readiness

The initial data reduction for all the items measuring change vision and mission and overall change readiness produced only one component. This component had an eigenvalue of 4.32 and

explained 21.59% of the variances. A reliability statistic using Cronbach's alpha reveals an α -level of 0.89 which suggest the minimum value for good factor analysis.

Additionally, two (2) of these items were among the category measuring employee engagement as it relates to change, and thus, the reduction revealed some underpinning relationship to the organization's mission, vision, and overall readiness to change. Please see Table 4.6 Below.

Table 4.6: Initial and valid component matrix for change vision and mission and overall readiness

	Component 1
1. Clear concise message about change	0.79
2. Understand the impact of change	0.76
3. Given reason to 'buy-in' or engage in change	0.73
4. Is the vision clear as per change	0.69
5. Does employee understand the scale of change	0.651

(Source: Researcher, based on the Factor Analysis via SPSS, 2020).

All the reduced items have a strong positive correlation to the component with the strongest items being *Is there a Clear concise message about change* (.79), where Twenty-eight (28) of the respondents indicated (No) and *Do employees understand the scale of change on self* (.76), where Twenty-nine (29) of the respondents indicated (Yes). These respondents represented more than Fifty percent (50%) of the questionnaire population. These included respondents coded as Anonymous #9, #10, #12 and #15.

4.3.2.2 Barriers/Influence of Organizational Change

The initial data reduction for all the items measuring barriers or influences to change was produced from only one component. The component had an eigenvalue of 3.55 and explained 17.79% of the variances. Please see Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Initial and Valid Component Matrix for Barriers to Change

	Component 2
Do employees fear change initiatives	-0.735
Are political parties (installed) have any influence on change initiatives	-0.676
Are employee's fears about change addressed – tangibly	-0.658
Can change achievement and progress be measured	-0.649
Does management behaviour supportive of change	0.435

(Source: Researcher, based on the Factor Analysis via SPSS, 2020/2021).

A reliability statistic test using Cronbach's alpha reveals an α -level of 0.42 which could suggest a low level of the interrelatedness of items or correlation as seen below due to the negative values. However, twenty-nine (29) of the respondents answered (Yes) to the question - *Do employees fear change initiatives*, with only Seventeen (17) indicating otherwise (No) and Two (2) provided no answer (Anonymous #40 and Anonymous #47). Also, most of the respondents, forty-three (43) to be exact, answered a resounding (Yes) to the question about *political party having an influence* on change initiatives as per the questionnaire survey with only Seven (7) responding (No). The (Yes) responses included respondents – Anonymous #1, #2, #3, #10, #15 and #19. Further, most of the respondents in the interviews provided similar responses when asked if they believed change was influenced in the organization. Most of the interviewees responded (Yes) and stated that installed political parties were a major influence as well as a barrier to successful organizational change. These respondents cited 'installed political parties' without being prompted or induced. A stronger correlation was also produced for the question *Is management behaviour supportive of change* (.435), where Thirty-two (32) of the respondents answered (No).

4.3.2.3 Management/ Leadership during Organizational Change

The initial data reduction for all the items measuring the management or leadership of change was produced from only one component. The component had an eigenvalue of 1.733 and explained

8.66% of the variances. A reliability statistic using Cronbach's alpha reveals an α -level of 0.65 which suggest the minimum value for a 'good' factor analysis. Please see Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8: Initial and valid component matrix for Management and Leadership of Change

	Component 3
Are they able to sell the change	0.803
Do you trust management	0.762
Are employees being heard and responded to by management during change	-0.747
Resistance to change	-0.322

(Source: Researcher, based on the Factor Analysis via SPSS, 2020)

The analysis revealed that most of the items have a strong positive correlation to the component with the strongest items being *Are they able to sell the change* (.803), Twenty-seven (27) of the participants or Fifty-six (56) percent responded (No) and *do you trust management* (.762), where Thirty (30) or sixty-three (63) percent of the participants denoted (No). These responses represent more than half of the sample population. Please see Figure 4.1 below of the Scree Plot of these three (3) most strongly loading components with a high eigenvalue >1.

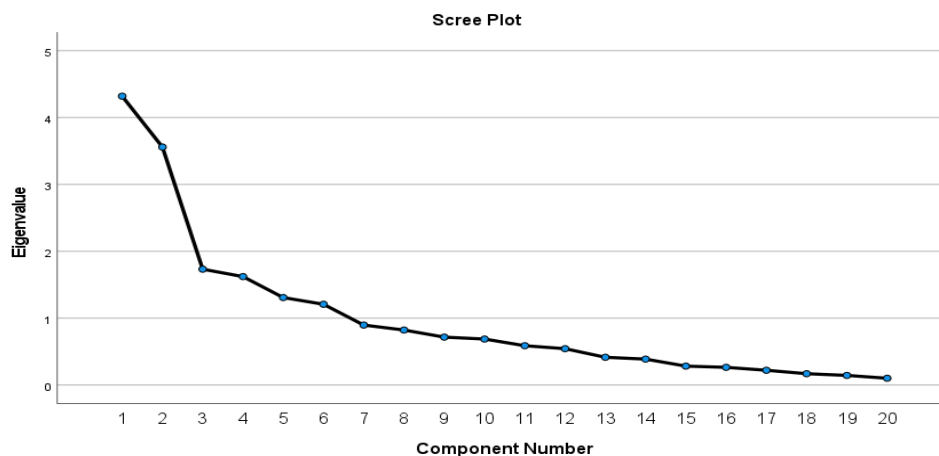


Figure 4.1: Scree Plot of the further three (3) Reduced Components. (Source: Researcher, based on the Factor Analysis via SPSS, 2020).

This figure represents the Scree Plot of the three (3) selected factor components, even though the analysis produced six (6) with eigenvalues of at least 1. Y axis = Eigenvalues of components and X axis = number of components.

4.4 Research Questions Salient to the Research Construct

As discussed in earlier sections, the purpose of the interviews was to gather information to answer the proposed research questions as well as to employ functional measures via the use of the questionnaire data to triangulate the results in relation to the propositions of the study. To this extent, the research sought to answer five (5) questions as per the overarching constructs of the study. To this extent, the findings resulted in five (5) themes from the thematic analysis that reflects the overall objectives of the study, providing a greater understanding of the application of the research topical construct. The summary of the questions below further put into perspective the results as directly related to the foundational questions of the study.

4.4.1 “*What are the principles which guide the change management process in the Transport Authority*” One of the main objectives of this question was to gather any documentation or policy the organization may have that governs change and its implementation. It was also to enquire if the organization employs any models of change or has a structure in place as it relates to the implementation of change. As such, the research questions that were dedicated to this objective included – “How change initiatives are implemented in the organization” as well as “If current or previous change initiatives achieved their objectives”.

Findings denote that there was no tool or policy/procedures in place to guide change initiatives. Further, no change models were adopted to assist in the implementation of change initiatives as the organization. In fact, most of the respondents’ replied *Decisions are just taken and staff just has to adjust, Decisions are made heavy-handed, Management makes decisions based on feelings*, and that *Change was more reactive than proactive*.

Some employees went on to further state that *Management makes decisions and put them in writing*. As it relates to the success or unsuccessful outcome of current or previous change initiatives, most respondents stated “No” indicating that most change outcomes have been unsuccessful while a few respondents replied *Some of them, minor ones that had to do with licensing of vehicles see some sort of success, due to the nature of the licensing process*. However, respondents indicated that major change initiatives to do with the entire organization ‘*Not so much*’ and even the minor ones that create some good results are short-lived *this result is short-lived*, a few respondents even went on to describe change initiatives that have a short successful reign as the “*nine-day wonder*.”

4.4.2 “*What is the role of the political party in power in the change management process of the Transport Authority?* Based on the sensitive nature of this question and the fact that the Transport Authority is a government-based organization, attempts were made to ensure that the interview guide was structured strategically to not influence a particular response or to make people feel ‘uncomfortable’ or ‘fearful’ in responding. As such, the words ‘political’ or ‘political party’ was not noted in the interviews, which was the primary data collection method. Therefore, the questions that surrounded this construct included ‘Do you believe change initiatives are influenced? As well as ‘Do you believe there are any barriers to change?’

Most, if not all the respondents across the regions answered ‘Yes’ to the question about if change initiatives were influenced. When asked, by what? Most again, if not all indicated, ‘by politics.’ *If an election is around the corner, then certain changes are effected. Most change is about employees when a new political party comes into power, a Minister says do this or do that and it is done*. Some also indicated that change initiatives were also influenced by ‘stakeholders’ *by management's need to please the public* as well as the social climate, which also speaks to stakeholders, *if stakeholders are not in agreement with a change initiative, then it is often averted or reverted*. It should be noted that stakeholders of the Transport Authority speak to both the taxi and bus operators, who are the main customer-based of the organization.

4.4.3 *“How do employees approach organizational change management process in the Transport Authority? This question strongly relates to how employee view or perceive organizational change at the Transport Authority as well as how change is implemented in the organization. Most respondents stated that change is implemented mostly by email, or heavy-handed, by management or from ‘top-down.’ Managers make the decisions, and you just have to comply or adjust. This most participants feel is the culture of change within the organization. Change happens before the email is sent to staff, there is no change management person who manages change, and employees just play catch-up in most cases. As such, the implementation of change feels like a ‘battlefield,’ especially when relating to organizational-wide change.*

4.4.4 *“What role, do employees of the Transport Authority play in the change management process?” One of the main objectives of this question was to gauge employee involvement during organizational change to highlight the ‘people factor’ in the implementation of organizational change initiatives. Interview questions that speak to this research objective include “Do you believe change is important to an organization? How involved are employees in the change process? As well as the effectiveness of communication from leadership in the implementation of change.” All participants denoted ‘yes’ to the importance of change to an organization, some even went as far as to state that change was important for growth, personnel development, to improve on things, policy and procedures, circumstances change from time to time, political party, technology etc, so an organization have to change.*

However, as it relates to how involved employees were during the change process, most respondents stated that *employees are not involved in the change process. Decisions are just made. Also, sometimes change is just made suddenly, depending on the type of change, especially if it has to do with licensing. You just have to comply as you are the one that is expected to effect the change.* Some respondents noted that sometimes for staff to voice their input, they have to rebel, *staff have to rebel just*

to voice an opinion. Also, some denoted that *employees most times do not want to corporate because of how things are done, so they are rebellious*. Some respondents indicated that organizational change is *not guided by policies or procedures*. Further, they believe that employees are sometimes only involved by being sent to training or workshops, but expressed that *after the training, that's it, nothing is used*. One respondent voiced that he was advised by management to *leave the training at the door*, a comment most of the other participants could relate to.

4.4.5: *How the theories of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry can be used as an effective mechanism during the change management process, especially, as it relates to the 'resistance to change and positive change outcomes?'* This question was asked to fulfil the cited arguments of resistance to change being a hindrance to successful change outcomes as well as the 'people factor,' how involved employees are in the change process which gives rise to the theory of appreciative inquiry. As indicated in some of the previous questions, the respondents denoted that most times they are resistant to change based on *'how it is implemented,' you just get an email or a memo after the change has been implemented by management*. Also, they further indicated that *employees are not really involved in the change process, but just have to adjust or play 'catch-up' or suffer the consequences*. Further, some respondents indicated that the culture of change is like a *'battlefield,' you have to rebel to play a part in the change process*.

As it relates to the triangulation of the data via the questionnaire survey, most of the responses confirmed the noted feedback from the interview sessions. As such, when an Oblimin rotation was conducted on the questionnaire, six (6) factors were delineated that met the criteria of having an eigenvalue equal to or greater than one (1). However, only three (3) of the factors with high loadings were considered for this study based on further reduction (Matsunaga, 2010). Please see the above section results from the questionnaire. Nonetheless, to better interpret the results of the data, additional investigations were carried out to ascertain the correlation of the variables. As such, the themes were

further reduced using a varimax rotation. This further reduction was informed using the Monte Carlo PCA random parallel analysis. This analysis revealed that only three (3) of the components had a very strong eigenvalue when a random parallel analysis was performed.

The Monte Carlo PCA random parallel analysis is useful in determining the accuracy of the scree plot from the factor analysis. Therefore, it can help in determining the appropriate number of components to retain under different conditions which include, sample size, factor or component loading as well as the variable to component ratio (Kanyongo, 2005). According to research, the Monte Carlo simulation is one of the most accurate factor retention methods (Hayton et al. 2004; Henson and Roberts, 2006; Fabrigar et al., 1999). It is also used to help strengthen the internal validity of the research findings (Kanyongo, 2005). Please see Table 4.9 below for the Monte Carlo PCA random analysis of the research sample.

Table 4.9: Monte Carlo PCA Random Analysis of the Research Sample

Monte Carlo PCA Parallel Random Analysis			
	PCA Analysis (Eigenvalue)	Cumulative Variance	Parallel Analysis (Monte Carlo)
Component 1	4.320	21.598%	1.896
Component 2	3.559	17.797%	1.714
Component 3	1.733	8.664%	1.582

(Source: Researcher, based on the Monte Carlo Random Analysis, 2020).

As seen in the table above, all three (3) components have a high eigenvalue than those produced by the Monte Carlo PCA random analysis. As such, component 1 (Change vision, mission, and readiness to change) had an eigenvalue of 4.320 while the random parallel analysis produced a value of 2.345, component 2 (Barriers/influenced to change), 3.559 while the random analysis produced a value of 1.714 and component 3 (Management/leadership and the how of change) had an eigenvalue of 1.733 while the Monte Carlo PCA random analysis produced a value of 1.582. All these suggest that these components have a strong factor loading and are statistically significant for this research study. It should be noted that Component 1 speaks to the organization, including employee readiness as it relates to change while Component 2 speaks to the overall management and leadership of change which also gives rise to the

communication of change. Finally, component three (3) speaks to the employees' involvement in the change process as well as how the organization's mission and vision are aligned with organizational change initiatives.

Additionally, the three (3) factors produced explained 48% (cumulative value) of the variances and reported factor loadings for each variable on the component after rotation. As such, the following further reduced factors were delineated. Please see Table 4.10 below of the component matrix of further reduced factors.

Table 4.10: Component Matrix of Further Reduced Factors

Rotated Component Matrix^a			
	Component		
	1	2	3
Does employee understand the scale of change	.829		
Are political parties (installed) have any influence on change	.732	-.406	
Can change achievements and progress be measured	.665		
Do employees fear change initiatives	.542	-.426	
Understand the impact of change on self	.533		.376
Are employees' fears about change addressed – tangibly	.519		
Given reason to 'buy in' or engage in the change	.456	.362	.367
Are barriers to derailed change identified and removed			
Are employees being heard and responded to by management during change		.764	
Do you trust management?		.753	
Are they able to sell the change?		.699	

Does management behaviour supportive of change	.626	
Are the right people involve in the change?	.503	.349
Are the right systems in place to support change	.317	.673
Is the vision clear as per change	.486	.670
Are change team in place (engaged, passionate and informed)	-.323	.635
clear concise message about the change	.433	.552
Are there barriers to change	.441	-.525
Provide training to assist with change		.490
Resistance to change		-.393

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

(Source: Researcher, based on the Factor Analysis via SPSS, 2020)

4.4.1 Component 1: Influence of Change and Organizational Readiness

The data reduction for all these items measuring influence and change readiness produced only one component. This component had an eigenvalue of 4.320 and explained 21.58% of the variances. A reliability statistic using Cronbach's alpha reveals an α -level of 0.761 suggesting the minimum value for a good factor analysis. Items reduced as measuring this factor include - *Do employees understand the scale of change* with a high factor loading value of .829, *Does the political party installed have any influence on change* also with a high factor loading of .732 where most respondents replied 'Yes' and *Are employees given reason to 'buy-in' to the change initiatives* with a high factor loading of .456 where most of the respondents across the regions answered "No" as they expressed that *Managers do not know how to 'sell the change.'*

4.4.2 Component 2: Management and Communication of Change

The data reduction for all these items measuring the management and communication of change produced only one component. This component had an eigenvalue of 3.56 and explained 17.79% of the variances. A reliability statistic using Cronbach's alpha reveals an α -level of 0.740 which depicts more than the minimum value for a good factor analysis. Items reduced as measuring this factor include – *Can I trust management and believe what they say during change* with a high loading value of .756, signifying 'No,' *Are employees heard and responded to by management during change* with a high loading value of .764, most respondents stated 'No,' *Are they able to sell the change* with a high loading value of -.626 were most respondents indicated 'No', and finally, *Are the right people involve in the change* with a high loading value of .503 signifying "No" as most respondents expressed that the right persons were not involved in implementing the change, *There is no change agent in place during change*.

4.4.3 Component 3: Vision, Mission, and Employee Engagement

The data reduction for all these items measuring the organization's vision and employee engagement produced only one component. This component had an eigenvalue of 1.73 and explained 8.67 of the variances. A reliability statistic using Cronbach's alpha reveals an α -level of 0.456 which depicts the minimum value for a good factor analysis. Items reduced as measuring this factor include – *"Are the right systems in place to support change"* with a high factor loading of .673, where most of the respondents answered 'No.' *Is the vision clear as it relates to organizational change* with a high loading value of .670, most respondents replied 'No,' in fact, most of the respondents stated that there were no clear objectives during change and that they do not know what the organization's vision or mission.

Other items that this factor contributed to were *'Are change team in place during change'* with a high loading value of .635 where most respondents answered 'No,' *'Is the change message clear and concise'* with a high loading value of .552, which signifies a majority response of "No," *'Are there barriers to change'* with a loading value of -.525, where most respondent noted 'Yes,' as well as *'Are there resistance to change'* which had a loading value of -.393 where most respondents answered 'Yes,'

and finally, ‘Does management provide training to assist with change’ which had a loading value of .490 where most respondents replied ‘Yes,’ in most cases, but the training is not used.

The analysis revealed that most of the items have a strong positive correlation to the component with the strongest items being ‘Does employee understand the scale of change’ (.829), where most participants responded “No” and ‘Are employees being heard and responded to during change’ (.764), where most participants “No.” Please see Figure 4.2 below of the Scree Plot of the three (3) mostly strong components with a high eigenvalue >1.

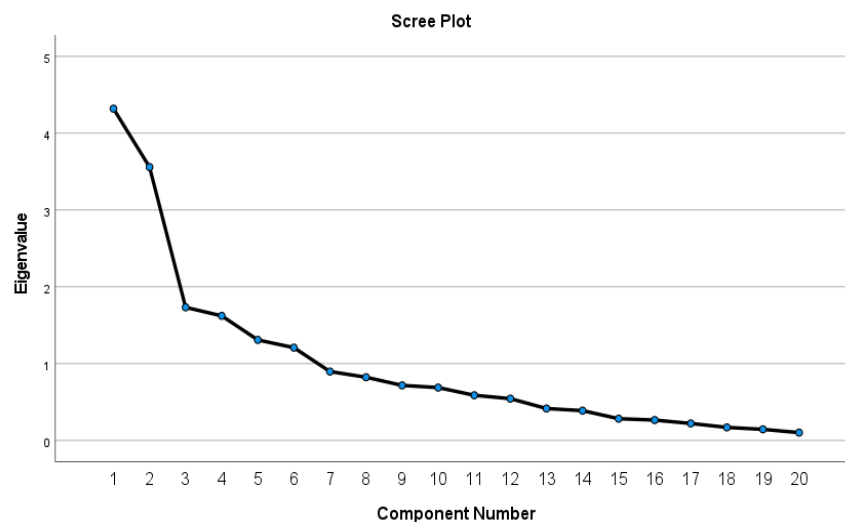


Figure 4.2: Scree Plot of further reduced Components based on Monte Carlo Parallel Analysis. (Source: Researcher, based on the Factor Analysis via SPSS, 2020).

This figure represents the scree plot of factors produced after additional data reduction based on the findings of the Monte Carlo PCA Random Parallel Analysis. Y axis = Component Number and X axis = Eigenvalue of each component.

Lickert Scale

The Lickert scale portion of the questionnaire was also analyzed, and the findings were denoted in Table 4.11 below:

Table 4.11: Likert Scale Summary of Questionnaire Responses

Effectiveness of Communication during Change	Level of comfort about organizational change	Change initiatives – detailed or conceptual	How change is mostly communicated	Most effective way to communicate change
Effective – 11 Mostly ineffective – 21	Somewhat Comfortable – 16 Mostly uncomfortable -17	More conceptual – 26 Less detailed - 12	Email – 26 Meetings - 9	Meetings – 29 Email - 15

(Source: Researcher, based on the data collected, Questionnaire Instrument, 2020)

According to the findings, when it comes to employees' perception of the communication of change, most believe that how change is communicated is mostly ineffective. Twenty-one (21) responded denoting its ineffectiveness while only eleven (11) denoted that the methods used were effective. As it relates to how comfortable they were about organizational change, most respondents stated that they were uncomfortable (17), while Sixteen (16) stated that they were somewhat comfortable. As per how detailed the organization was about change initiatives, most employees stated that change was more conceptual (26) than detailed while twelve (12) denoted that change was less detailed.

Twenty-six (26) or Fifty-four (54%) percent of the respondents stated that change was mostly communicated via email, while Six (6) stated that meetings were usually used to advise staff of organizational change. Finally, when asked what they believe would be the most effective way to communicate change, twenty-nine (29) or Sixty (60%) percent of the respondents denoted meetings with Fifteen (15) stating emails. These respondents included Anonymous #20, #21, #22, #23, #24, #25, #46 and #47.

4.5 Discussion of Results in Relation to Literature

My earlier belief of positive psychology as an influence on positive organizational change outcomes was that it is not a one-off solution, but a situation in which organizational leaders can learn about their constituents and move from an approach of just implementing the change and expecting others to comply, which to me is the easiest but less effective approach to organizational change, but rather to advance their approach to a more people-centric one. As such, I see the application of the

principles of positive psychology as an unbound, continuous process that can be used not only for change initiatives but for organizational strategic development and overall planning (Centre for Appreciative Inquiry, n.d. p.4).

Additionally, I did not believe initially, that the impact of positive psychology could be easily identified based on the review of the literature. This was observed in my interviews and the questionnaire survey. These showed that the impact of this type of phenomenon is not easily identified and will differ from one organization to the next. As such, data patterns that emerged from the analysis mirror that of the theoretical foundations of positive psychology as well as the constructs of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry which have at the forefront the need to understand the behaviour of people and addressing their needs to effect positive change.

Important to note, organizational change cannot take place without people, as people are the organization (Daniel, 2010; Seligman, 2014; 2018). Therefore, why implement change without them being at the core of the change process? (Barth and Nergaard, 2015). This is just simple logic. To this extent, positive psychology allows for the delineation of five (5) distinct factors in managing organizational change, especially in a government-oriented organization like the Transport Authority, on which this research is based.

These distinct factors were identified as my key themes, namely, change readiness and perception, identifying barriers and influence of change and addressing them as well as the management and organizational leaders fostering an environment of trust, where employees believe in management and what they say and are integral in the change process. Other emerged themes involved taking into consideration employee involvement in the onset of change, as well as having effective means of communicating the change. This will not only help in ‘selling the change’ but also impact the degree of ‘buy-in’ of the change thus mitigating resistance and contributing to the possibility of more positive change outcomes. These themes are akin to the fundamental questions set out to be answered by this study.

4.5.1 Change Readiness and Perception

Change readiness can be traced back to Lewin's classical theory of freezing and unfreezing, as it is predicated on breaking up an existing momentum of old behaviour before trying to inculcate new ones. Further, according to Schein (1979), readiness is a way for one to prepare themselves cognitively for what is about to happen, in this case, 'a change.' To this extent, Schein (1979) argues that 'the reason so many change efforts run into resistance or absolute failure is usually directly attributed to them not providing for effective freezing and unfreezing of organizational norms before attempting to implement a change (p. 144). This was one of the findings of this research where most of the participants stated that how change was implemented 'heavy-handed' or by email, did not allow them to prepare themselves for it, and as such, they just adjust or play 'catch-up' to implement the change. This too, according to the findings and as presented in other sections of this study, inculcates an organizational change culture of 'resistance' or rebelliousness.'

To this extent, change readiness procedures must be something that organization leaders implement in organizational change initiatives to mitigate resistance. According to literature, if employee readiness is not sensibly addressed, then efforts to initiate organizational change can be thwarted or severely threatened (Schein, 1979; Senior, 2002, p.205). Further, according to research, change readiness becomes an important factor in helping employees to recognize the validity of change which is not easy. However, change readiness will help employees to move from resisting the change to understanding the change initiatives, involuntarily and as such, becoming an active participant in anchoring the change (Kotter, 1996, pp. 156-157; Senior, 2002, p.205).

4.5.2 Barriers/Influence of Organizational Change

Throughout this thesis, findings have established that employees expressed that there exist barriers to change or factors that influence change outcomes. One major one according to the findings is that of 'installed political party.' As such, they influence or 'dictate' what happens or does not happen

in the organization. These influences can range from decisions which involve a simple work structure or policy and procedures to those involving the termination of staff.

Another variable identified as a factor and influence of change was that of stakeholder involvement, which according to the findings suggests that ‘if they are unhappy’ about something, then management must take action to correct it so that they can become ‘happy,’ even if that is at the detriment of employees. Nonetheless, while organizations must aim to be problem-solving instruments or reward systems, research contends that when decisions are influenced by political parties, especially to a large degree, then this can bring about tension as well as an air of credibility and trust where organizational leadership is concerned (Zaleznik, 1970).

According to literature, while it would be challenging to totally eradicate a political party’s influence in organizational change, especially in a government-based organization. Researchers who have studied democratic politics agree that political parties, interest groups and even social movements will strongly influence public policy. As such, the political organization may help to define internal and external problems as well as proposed solutions (Burnstein & Lincoln, 2002; Blee, 2012; Zons, 2013). Therefore, literature suggests that political organizations affect policy no more than half the time and that political parties and non-parties affect policy about equally often as well (Burnstein & Lincoln, 2002). However, the extent of their involvement must be controlled by leadership to develop a sense of transparency so that employees do not develop a distrust of management, feel isolated and thus seek to protect themselves by forming group norms or resisting change at every front.

4.5.3 Management/Leadership during Organizational Change

Leadership during change is critical to successful outcomes as it helps to set the pace and tone of how change is implemented and the type of outcome to be achieved. As such, research suggests that having the right leadership to drive the process of change is an essential component of the change process (Kotter, 1996). Additionally, many researchers have emphasized the important role leadership plays in

the development of a culture of change within the learning organization (Johnson, 1998; Prewitt, 2003, Saddler, 2003). Culture in and of itself is a major variable and essential factor for the development of an organization (Barrett, 1998; Hershey et al., 2000). Therefore, how change is implemented over time will help to create a culture of change within the organization.

Additionally, leadership requires those who can bring about the best in their followers and help them to be more adaptive and flexible. This type of leadership is critical during organizational transformation to bring about the necessary change (Senge, 1994). The findings of this research suggest that the type of leadership at the Transport Authority is more on the line of ‘authoritative’ as decisions of change are made at the top and then trickle down to lower-level staff for implementation.

While this type of leadership may work at certain times during an organization’s life, when it comes to change, and a more people-centered approach one at that, a more transformational leadership tone is to be set for this organization. This type of leadership according to research will help managers to communicate a clear and compelling vision of change, obtain employees' commitment or ‘buy-in,’ encourage their responses through creative and innovative ways, change their mental models, encourage new behaviours and thus help them to embrace continuous learning (Howell and Higgins, 1990; Appelbaum et al., 1998; LeBrasseur et al., 2002; Lewin, 2018).

4.5.4 Communication during Change

Kotter (1996; 2003) discussed the importance as well as the challenges of communication during the change process. As such, he stressed the need for organizations to place a sense of urgency in the implementation of change as well as to ensure that the right person/s oversees the process. Kotter (1996) also purports that organizational leaders must provide a consistent message over an extended period, via the best communicative means for their organization. Throughout this thesis, email or a memo was expressed as the main means of communicating change at the Transport Authority. While this might be quick, based on the research, most of the staff, which constitutes those of the Inspectorate division, do

not have access to emails. As such, this presents an issue in how they hear about the change and how they respond to the change.

Therefore, literature contends that leaders must seek to understand varied techniques to communicate the change to add a level of richness to the change process (Crestani, 2015). According to research, this will help employees to identify more with the process and develop a sense of worth (Fitzgerald et al., 2010; Bushe, 2012; 2013).

4.5.5 Employee Involvement during Change

Research suggests that employee involvement in the change process, especially at the onset, can help to culture interest, disseminate knowledge, and maximize their involvement which can help to reduce cognitive dissonance and resistance to the change (Ismail et al., 2006). On the other hand, a lack of employee involvement at the decision-making level can lead to a lack of trust in management and unexpected change outcomes due to resistance, lack of ‘buy-in’ and selling of the change (Boohene & Williams, 2012). In fact, research that is related to the process of change has cited a lack of employee participation in the decision-making process as having an unsatisfactory outcome to change (Toprak, 2018). This was a revelation in this study, in that, while employees had a general mistrust of management, this level of mistrust was heightened during the implementation of change. However, a remedy was purported by Adeniji et al. (2013) and as reiterated in previous sections of this thesis, that is, employing human resource and interventionist strategies to help employees become more adaptive and receptive to change. These strategies are prominent in the theory of appreciative inquiry – one of the conduits for the ‘people-factor’ for the impact of successful organizational change.

4.6 Evaluation of Research Findings

A critical component of this study involved establishing measures of the construct of positive psychology and its underpinning theories to recommend measures for successful organizational change, particularly at the Transport Authority, the based organization for this study. However, the findings of

these measures will not be elaborated in this section as they have been thoroughly explained in the data analysis section (findings) and as such, do not need any further conclusion. However, this section will evaluate the findings based on the results of the developed measures regarding the research questions as outlined in the introduction and the theoretical and conceptual framework developed.

4.6.1 Research Question one asked: What are the principles which guide the change management process in the Transport Authority? Based on this question, one main theme of interest emerged from the analysis and two (2) research objectives were realized. This involved ‘how change initiatives were implemented in the organization’ as well as if current or previous change initiatives had achieved their objectives. The emerged theme this was detailed was that of change readiness and perception.

4.6.1.1 Findings for research question one. Findings denoted that there was no structure or adopted model for the implementation of change as employees stated that ‘Decisions are just taken, and staff had to just adjust.’ The results also purport that change is implemented hierarchically by top management, who would make the decision and expect it to be trickled down to lower-level staff by other managers and supervisors. This finding was expected due to the bureaucratic nature, being an agency of a government organization – The Ministry of Transport and Mining. As such, it seems to embrace a more traditional approach to change where change is dictated in a vertical, top-down flow and employees are expected to implement the change, while not playing any role in the decision-making process. As such, this reflects literature which purports that over seventy (70%) percent of organizational change efforts failed (Caldwell et al., 2008; McKinsey, 2015).). This type of failure has been ascribed to many factors, but one major one is implementing change in a top-down, or what is oftentimes connotes as a locus of control manner (Lau & Woodman, 1995).

Secondly, the unstructured nature of change at the organization purportedly led to communication issues as most staff, particularly those of the Inspectorate division, would hear of the change via stakeholders or from other employees. The communication concern as expressed is that the

main means of communicating with the staff is emails, of which, most, if not all the staff, particularly those of the Inspectorate division, do not have access to a company email account. As such, the change would be communicated informally and via the infamous ‘grapevine’ approach. This manner of leadership during change has led to most of the change outcomes being unsuccessful as denoted by employees “*most change outcomes are unsuccessful,*” with sometimes only the minor ones having experienced some level of success, especially those having to do with the Licensing of vehicles, which is the main ‘breadwinner,’ (financial driver) of the organization. However, even in some of those circumstances, the success is short-lived as the findings suggest, and things go back to normal. These, according to the findings are referred to as ‘the nine-day wonder,’ a universal slogan, but a famous expression by Jamaicans that means something that only generates interest for a short time, after which, it is long forgotten.

The conclusion of these findings suggests that people require structure when change is being implemented as well as for leaders to have a dialogue with them and not just ‘implement’ the change with an expectation that they should just comply (Moraca, 2011). Structure presents with it a level of clarity and expresses the message of change to be enacted. Without this level of thoughtfulness, the change will simply not happen (Moraca, 2011). As such, in this case, Kotter (1996) theoretical approach to leading change and making transformation happens could be a vital guideline for the successful outcomes of organizational change for organizations in general with particular reference to the Transport Authority. As discussed in detail in previous sections, this involves, organizations creating a sense of urgency where change is concerned while creating a guiding alliance for the change. Additionally, it encourages organizations to develop a vision and strategy for change as well as communicating the vision in a way that empowers employees for widespread action. This will help the organization anchor new approaches to the culture of change and thus find that delicate balance during the moments of change without breaking the established momentum of change (Moraca, 2011).

4.6.2 Research Question two asked: What is the role of the political party in power in the change management process of the Transport Authority? This question assesses the influences of change (internal or external) that have impacted the outcome of organizational change at the Transport Authority.

4.6.2.1 Findings for research question two. Findings indicated that the political party in power plays a significant role in organizational change at the Transport Authority. Jamaica has two (2) major political parties, The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the People's National Party (PNP). Currently, the Jamaica Labour Party is installed and has been in power since February 2016 to the present as it won re-election in September 2020.

Without prompting any particular response, most of the employees in the interview sessions stated that the political party in power have a great impact on organizational change and influences how change is implemented. This was confirmed via the questionnaire survey where there was statistical significance for the barriers of change and political parties being identified as a major part of that barrier. Over 90% of the respondents to the questionnaire survey cited active political parties as being a barrier or influence of organizational change, especially changes that affect the entire organization. Additionally, when they were asked if the barriers to change have been identified by management and addressed, most of the respondents stated 'No' which represented Sixty-three percent (63%) of the questionnaire survey. A similar pattern was also found during the interviews where most participants expressed that barriers to change have not been identified and tangibly addressed by management. According to literature, this type of influence or perception thereof can create tension and mistrust, especially during times of organizational change (Zaleznik, 1970; Day et. al. 2016).

4.6.3 Research question three asked: How do employees approach organizational change management process in the Transport Authority? This question sought to examine employees' perspective as it relates to the nature of the organization as well as to get a sense of the culture of change.

4.6.3.1 Findings for research question three. Findings suggest that employees view change to be more bureaucratic than non-bureaucratic. As such, most of the respondents stated that change was implemented '*heavy-handed,*' by management and from a top-down approach. This signifies little or no employee involvement and the difficulty faced in 'selling the change.' This was the main results from both the interviews and the questionnaire survey. In fact, there was no statistical significance in how respondents view the nature and culture of change as per management style when it comes to organizational change. This is because most of them see change decisions being made at the highest level of the organization and they just have to comply. As such, Fifty-six percent (56%) of the participants of the questionnaire survey stated that management is not able to sell the change, which of course aid in creating a culture of 'resistance' or 'rebellion' when it comes to implementing the change (Kotter, 1996; Rock and Schwartz, 2006).

Throughout this study, it has been established repeatedly that organizational change is a complex feat (Mendy, 2017). This was observed in literature that arguably agrees whether it is a change involving a simple work process or one that involves structural processes, especially those of a dynamic nature. As such, these findings were expected for this qualitative case study of the Transport Authority. Nonetheless, as purported by McHugh (1997, p. 345), leaders cannot expect to just impose change on employees with the hope of them just adjusting without any type of objection or resistance. If this is the belief, then this is just a notion that will hold no reasonable merit for successful organizational change outcomes (Crestani, 2015).

4.6.4 Research question four asked: What role do the employees of the Transport Authority play in the change management process? This question examined two (2) main effects of organizational change on a whole –how involved employees were in the change process as well as if employees understand the impact of change on 'self.' It also sought to examine how the theory of appreciative inquiry as it relates to having people at the center of change, can impact positive change outcomes. This

was an underpinning objective of this research which sought to investigate the effects of the ‘people factor’ of organizational change.

4.6.4.1 Findings for research question four. The findings indicated that employee involvement in the change process was lacking or in most cases ‘non-existent.’ This was the consensus of both the participants of the interviews and those of the questionnaire survey. However, there was a minor significant difference in how employees view the impact of change on themselves, in that fifty percent (50%) responded ‘Yes’ to the question of understanding how the organizational change will impact them while Forty-eight percent (48%) responded ‘No’ in not having a clear understanding of how organizational change will impact them. This was very reflective of the results of the interviews where most employees stated that most times they are ‘resistant’ to change and often have to ‘rebel’ in order to express their opinions in times of organizational change. Even so, most believe that their input is not taken seriously, as the change is usually exacted the way management had originally envisioned.

To this extent, research contends that change cannot happen without people (Day et. al. 2016)..) as such, organizational leaders must consider their input at the onset of change. As such, the principles of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry along with the merits of positive psychology become important contributors to effecting positive change and successful outcomes (Kotter, 1995; Ismail, et al. 2006).

4.6.5 Research question five asked: How the theories of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry can be used as an effective mechanism during the change management process, especially, as it relates to the ‘resistance’ to change and positive change outcomes?’ This question sought to examine how the theories of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry can be used as an effective mechanism during the change process. This was based on the underpinning tenets of the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study which encapsulates the application of the principles of positive psychology as an influence of positive change outcomes (Seligman, 2014). The premise of this construct was based on popular research literature which indicated that more than seventy (70%) percent of change initiatives

failed due to reasons ranging from using traditional or customary approaches of implementing change from a top-down approach to one of the main hindrances to successful outcomes – resistance to change (O'Reily, 2008; McKinsey, 2015). To this extent, this question speaks to employees' cognition, mindset and behaviour during the change process, all pertinent factors for understanding change from a 'people-focused' perspective and impact the domain of 'self.'

4.6.5.1 The findings for research question five. The research findings suggest that employees are most resistant during change as well as the overarching 'negativity' of the organization's environment during change, which they so aptly described as feeling like a 'battleground.' This provided some level of understanding of how the theories of both cognitive dissonance (motivational drive) and appreciative inquiry (focusing on people, the positives, collaboration, and shared vision) may provide a framework for organizational change which could impact the level of success through the promotion of positive organizational change. The effects of this paradigm are explained further below via some of the tenets of positive psychology – cognitive impact, mindset, and behavioural change accordingly.

4.6.5.2 Cognitive Impact of Change

Change affects people. As such, one of the first levels of change in any organization will speak to people's beliefs, perceptions, and experiences during the change process. Therefore, while the construct of cognition is difficult to establish, it can be observed in how people react to change (Boohene & Williams, 2012; Toprak, 2018). As such, it is a crucial determinant of the possible change outcome.

Research dictates that people's cognitive reasoning will impact their immediate environment but also the organization's group structure (Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Lau & Woodman, 1995). As such, when one's perception begins to change, then the possibility exists where that level of energy can perpetuate throughout the entire organization, whether it be positive or negative. For example, if employees perceived the change to be negative, then they are likely to resist it as they see it as a 'bad thing.' As such, the lens through which one view change can influence their epistemic reasoning and thus influence how one reacts to the change (Lau & Woodman, 1995). Therefore, understanding the theories of

cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry can serve organizational leaders to manage people and the overall change management process.

4.6.5.3 Mindset Change during the Change

The level of one's cognition will then lead to mindset change. Therefore, if one person or a group of persons are motivated to shift their energy and have a change in their cognitive reasoning, then they are able to create a paradigm shift not only for themselves but for the group and bolster the possibility of moving from being a member of the thought world to becoming a vibrant participant of the world of action (Lau & Woodman, 1995). Therefore, research contends that leaders must seek to create a paradigm shift during the change process which can help employees to cross that threshold. This should be a major goal of organizational leaders during the change to impact positive change outcomes.

4.6.5.4 Behaviour Change during the Change

As it relates to the theory of appreciative inquiry, behavioural change is a critical component of organizational change. This level of behavioural change must be viewed at both the employee and organizational levels so as encompass a culture of change in the organization (Seligman, 2008; Cooperrider, 1986; Hughes, 2011). Within the context of this research, organizational leaders must seek to consider both aspects as well as ensure that a common language or theme exists where the implementation of change is concerned to bring about the likelihood of success. To this extent, it can be concluded that people's overall cognition will shape their beliefs and mindset which will in turn impact their behaviour towards and during change. Please see Figure 4.3 for an illustrative representation of organizational change as purported by the findings of this research.

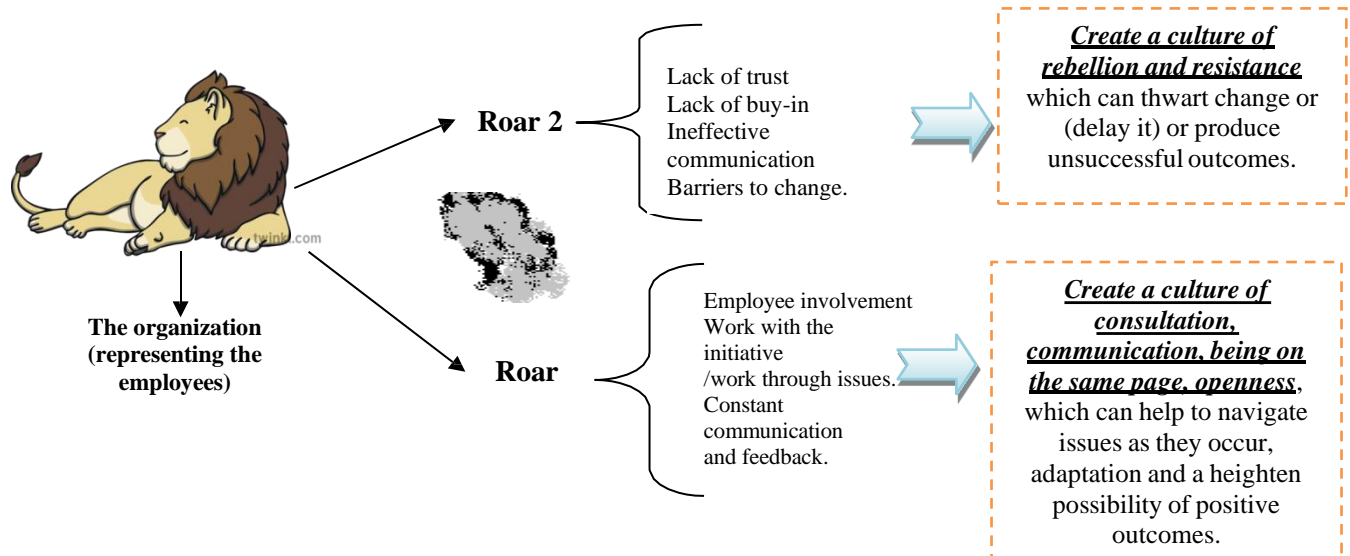


Figure 4.3: Illustrative representation of Organizational Change based on the Findings. (Source: Researcher – based on a summary of the research findings, 2021).

As per Figure 4.3 above, based on the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study and the findings, a pictorial representation can be provided as it relates to how positive psychology can influence positive change outcomes. As such, the lion represents the organization and its employees. While there will always be grey areas when it comes to managing change due to its complexity as well as based on the fact that organizational leaders are dealing with people, the findings of this study denote two (2) distinct responses that can occur when change is being implemented – a roar or the act of listening.

Therefore, when certain variables are present in times of organizational change such as lack of trust, inability to sell the change as well as ineffective means of communication, then that can invoke a *roar* which can ultimately lead to the development of a culture of resistance and rebellion towards the change which can thwart, delay or cause unsuccessful change outcomes. On the other hand, with the employee being fully engaged in the change process and having certain variables in place such as constant communication and feedback and both management and staff working through issues as they occur, then that can bring about an environment of trust, openness, and empowerment of employees, which can heighten the possibility of positive change outcomes. Conflict is inevitable (McNamara,

2010), but is necessary at times as it can help employees through the process of team development which include forming, storming and norming as described by (Tuckman, 1965). This, according to the research can help to empower employees as they are now able to evaluate themselves as well as the current systems of the organization and processes which can help to foster organizational change and promote learning. According to research, this type of activity can help the organization to both create and exploit knowledge and information which can result in better organizational performance (Farrell et al., 2005). Therefore, having clear roles and systems in place to measure the performance of employees along with proper methods of communication in periods of change is critical for success (Ramasamy, 2017).

4.7 Summary

The findings of this qualitative case study presented in this chapter include data from two instruments, semi-structured interviews, and a questionnaire survey. Consideration was given to the sample of both the interviews and questionnaires based on the nature of the research. Through analysis, a pattern began to emerge to classify evidence of the impact of how change was implemented and actual change outcomes, be they positive or negative. As well as how attributes of positive psychology can serve as a foundational mechanism to combat certain factors that are prone to negatively impact successful change outcomes in general, but, at the Transport Authority, a government-based organization and the one on which this research is based.

Through the use of an iterative process and thematic coding, determinants of the impact of organizational change began to emerge, which could be identified as one of the five (5) themes, each supported by foundational theories of organizational change.

The themes included change readiness and perception which speaks to how change was implemented in the organization as well as how employees perceived change. Change at this level appears to be the initial step in the organizational change process as it can incite a paradigm shift which can help to change one's mindset not only about themselves but that of the organization. Another theme

that emerged was about barriers and influences of organizational change. One of the main responses cited was that of installed political parties as a major influence or barrier to change and one which helps to create an air of mistrust and resistance to change. Other themes that emerged included the management and leadership of change which can help to set the tone for the change and finally, how change is communicated as well as how involved employees were during the change process were all emerged themes from the analysis and all of which, if not foreseeable or managed can lead to unsuccessful change outcomes. These themes reflected the research objectives and provided answers to the research questions as a whole.

The findings answered the salient questions of the research construct. As such, I learnt that the organization do not have any model/s or policy in place to guide the change process. Therefore, change is usually implemented in an ad-hoc fashion and from a top-down management approach with the expectations that staff will comply, adjust, and implement the change. However, this is usually not the case as most employees resist or rebel against the change which ultimately impacts outcomes, negatively. While some changes are implemented, especially those having to do with licensing of vehicles which is the main income generator for the organization, some of these changes are classically denoted by the findings as *'nine-day wonders'* as their success are short-lived.

As it relates to 'if' or 'how' politics in the form of political parties play a role in influencing or creating a barrier to successful change outcomes. Findings suggest a resounding 'yes' and not a matter of 'if.' Additionally, external stakeholders in the form of taxi and bus operators also play a critical role at times in how change is implemented, as management tried to keep this core group of customers 'happy', even to the detriment of employees.

The findings further answer the question of how employees view organizational change. The findings denoted that they perceive change to be more bureaucratic at the Transport Authority as the decisions are usually made by higher-level management and simply communicated to the lower-level staff. This also helps to further clarify employees' role in the change process, another pertinent objective

and research question of this study. The findings also revealed that employee involvement was lacking and in most cases non-existence when it comes to change. As such, they are just expected to adapt and implement the change. The findings further answered the research question of how the theories of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry can be used as effective mechanisms in the change process. The results denoted three (3) mechanisms to be taken into consideration - cognitive, mindset and behavioural change to cause a paradigm shift from old behaviours to new ones that are more desirable to impact positive change outcomes.

The conclusion of the matter is that change, which is a complex phenomenon, does not come in a 'one-size-fits- all' approach for successful outcomes. However, the findings suggest that having a more comprehensive, written, approach with people at the core can effect a more positive outcome, even if it requires more time and effort. Further analysis and interpretation of the findings, along with implications and recommendations are discussed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Chapter Overview and Introduction

This chapter culminates the research by providing the varying implications of the study as it relates to the research findings. It also outlines the recommendations based on the research and overall scientific literature. Several implications have been denoted as critical for successful organizational change outcomes as evidenced in this study. All of these surrounds the research objectives which include investigating the principles that guide the change management process at the Transport Authority, the role political party in power plays as it relates to the implementation of change initiatives at this organization, the role employee plays in the change management process as well as how they perceived organizational change. Other objectives include how the application of the principles of both cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry, which served as complementary theories to the grounded theory of the research – positive psychology, could aid in both the cited hindrance to successful change – resistance to change as well as positive change outcomes, particularly as it relates to the public sector and the new trust of the 21st-century organization.

A few of the implications of the study included the fact that employees are aware that change is necessary and realized that change is important for an organization's continuous growth. This reflects the research objectives that speak to employees' perceptions of change. However, the 'how' of change is likely to cause resistance if it follows structures that leave employees out of the change process. This was a testament to the research objectives of how the employee was involved in the change process at the Transport Authority, a public sector agency in Jamaica and the based organization of this research. As such, identifying and employing strategies for purported barriers to change as well as inculcating a culture of employee involvement in the change process was delineated by the findings of the research as imperative factors for successful change outcomes. Additionally, the models of change that could be adopted for this organization as it relates to the implementation of change were also discussed with steps

provided on the ‘how’ of adaptation to facilitate positive change outcomes. This is due largely to the theoretical premise, which was also observed in this study, that no one model can be considered the sole or ultimate structure for organizational change.

This is because change is difficult no matter from which angle it is implemented, personal or organizational-wise. However, continuous research has found that traditional approaches such as just implementing the change without employees’ input, or just depending upon general public sector reforms as in the case of Jamaica’s public sector, were not constructive strategies, as most did not realize the expected outcomes. As such, this gives rise to the many emergent models of change that attempt to incorporate classical underpinnings of change to those with people at the core of the change process. This research is part of this emergent phenomenon, as it seeks to investigate the influence of positive psychology, an emergent framework, as an approach to an effective management of organizational change, particularly from the context of Jamaica. To this extent, the Transport Authority, which is a government-based organization was chosen as the base organization for this study.

Positive psychology is a wide and evolving field in social sciences and one that has many different components that can be explored as it relates to successful organizational change, especially from a human or ‘people’ perspective. Therefore, the study employs an exploratory qualitative case study methodology with an attempt at triangulating the data for greater validity and reliability. As such, data was collected from a heterogeneous sample of the organization via interviews, which was the primary means of data collection and questionnaire surveys, which served to triangulate the data. All ethical principles were taken into consideration to ensure general research protocols were observed, particularly because employees formed the core of the data-gathering activities. As observed, the findings and interpretations of the data gathered were presented in the previous chapter (chapter 4).

5.2 Implications

What is implied by this qualitative exploratory case study? What are the practical implications found for organizational change scholars, leaders, and employees to understand from this research study? These implications will be explored in this chapter. As such, the implications of the study will be outlined as per the research questions, which are based on the research's stated objectives.

5.2.1 What are the principles which guide the change management process in the Transport Authority?

The findings of the research purport that there was no clear structure or set of principles in place at the Transport Authority as it relates to the implementation of change initiatives. In fact, most of the respondents' replied *Decisions are just taken and staff just has to adjust, Decisions are made heavy-handed, Management makes decisions based on feelings*, and that *Change was more reactive than proactive*. This was consistent with literature which denoted that most change efforts failed (Caldwell, Chatman and O'Reily, 2008; McKinsey, 2015). This is because the unstructured nature of change can lead to issues that can negatively impact the efforts of the change. Structure presents a level of clarity and expresses the message of change. Without this level of thoughtfulness, the change will simply not happen (Moraca, 2011). Nonetheless, the findings imply that employees understand that change is a necessary part of an organization and one that is critical to its sustenance. While employees do understand the necessity of change and the gravity it may impose on the life of the organization at times, they do not like how it is often implemented at this organization, the Transport Authority. An implementation approach they described as being from a '*top-down*' or '*heavy-handed*' approach. This approach to implementing change makes them feel as if they are just '*mere subjects*' of the change and for organizational leaders to implement the organization's agenda. Therefore, the change is just being forced upon them or what they collectively expressed '*forced down their throats.*' This type of approach can be inferred as having an impact on the degree of employee resistance coupled with the level of readiness and perception to change as implied by the study.

The foundation of positive psychology, which is the main theory of this research and the one that is being proposed for successful organizational change, speaks to employee inclusion in the change process from the onset, which can foster a sense of empowerment which is critical to organizational change success (Daniels, 2010; Cooperrider, 1986; Kotter, 1996; Dubreuil, Forest, & Courcy, 2014; Lewin, 2018). As such, one of the major findings and themes revealed by the study was the lack of employee readiness and perception as it relates to the implementation of organizational change. The findings suggest that most times when change is being effected, they are simply ‘not ready’. This sentiment was expressed by employees across all the offices that participated in the study. The study also revealed why this was so (why employees felt that they were not ready when change is being initiated?), the main response to this question was ‘*the way in which change was implemented,*’ which was collectively described as ‘*heavy-handed,*’ or what most employees denoted as ‘*top-down*’ approach management style. As a result, most employees usually hear about the change via email, memo, or stakeholder (usually, bus or taxi operators).

Email is the dominant means of communicating change in the organization as revealed by the study. However, this in and of itself is an ineffective means of implementing change as confirmed by the interviews and questionnaire survey as most employees do have access to a company email address. As such, not hearing of the change directly can cause people to become defensive and resist the change as the research indicated. Nevertheless, while top-level management is responsible for making decisions that will affect the entire organization, they should ensure that strong consideration of the ‘human side’ of change is considered, especially when people’s jobs may be affected (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003).

For this reason, the means of communicating change needs to be reviewed by the organization, as emails cannot be the main method of communication when most of the staff do not have access to this medium or even access to a computer as revealed by the study. Nonetheless, while the organization currently relies on email as the main means of communication, the study reveals that employees prefer a more formal method of communicating change, such as organizational meetings. Further, other modes

of communication must be explored and employed by the organization, particularly when communicating change. Further, even with the best model, if the appropriate leadership is not in place to effect change, then organizational change efforts will be futile as revealed by the study and confirmed by literature (Kotter, 1996, 2003).

There is a saying that goes ‘change starts at the top.’ This ideology somehow seems to be misconstrued to imply that organizational leaders have the sole right to initiate deep change and are equally able to judge their change effort as necessary (Manktelow & Carlson, 2015). However, Manktelow and Carlson (2015) suggest that most times, when some changes are taking place within an organization, organizational leaders, particularly executives are some of the last ones to know and by the time they do, the problem is already widespread and simply unavoidable. As such, instead of leading the change (Kotter, 1996; 2008), the organizational leader finds themselves playing ‘catch up’ and the employees – defense. This goes to show that management can have serious implications on organizational change and its outcomes. The findings of this research have proven that during change, employees desire to feel the effects of proper management of the change, to dispel the notions of mistrust, which was one of the opinions expressed by employees at all the offices visited during the data collection phase of this study. The effects of leadership during organizational change have been expressed throughout the gamut of this study, addressing it here as a major determinant of the research implications, particularly as it relates to this public sector organization, is a crucial first step forward.

Research has indicated in many instances, the complexities of organizational change which becomes even more challenging in public sector organizations due to many factors, one being the bureaucratic nature of these organizations and how change is usually implemented – from ‘top-down’ and many times, without the input of employees. This was one of the main findings of this research where employees felt like mere ‘*recipients*’ of change, a position to simply implement the change, regardless of how they perceived it. This, of course, has seen the organizations not having any truly long-term positive experiences with the implementation of organizational change. In fact, short-term

changes, which have been executed in the fashion outlined above, were described as ‘9-day wonders’ by the research participants. Meaning, they were not sustained.

5.2.2 *What is the role of the political party in power in the change management process of the Transport Authority?*

The implication revealed by the findings is that respondents of both the interviews and questionnaire survey believed that there are barriers to change and that these barriers or in some cases, denoted influences, are a part of the reasons that most change initiatives experienced unsuccessful outcomes. Based on the findings, most, if not all, of the participants, believed that installed political parties are a major barrier to change as staff believes that what ‘*these influencers say goes*’ regardless of the consequences on employees. In addition to political parties having ‘*too much say*’ in organizational change initiatives, the study revealed that stakeholders, in the form of taxi and bus operators, were also viewed as barriers to successful organizational change outcomes.

These groups of stakeholders are in fact, customers of the organization and constitute a mixed and diverse group as some are from low economic status (the trying man) to those of the higher echelons of society (having influence, money, and connections). As such, organizational leaders try to appease them and ensure that they are ‘*kept happy*’ at all costs. However, while employees seek to provide optimal customer service to all, they feel like some fractions of this group play too much of a role in influencing organizational change decisions even if it is to the employee’s detriment.

Nonetheless, there is an immediate remedy for this type of noted influence according to the findings, and that is for the organization to establish formal and transparent systems to guide the change process. This would include having stated objectives and a clear vision for the change which would then help to decrease the perception of ‘guesswork’ during the change process. This would allow employees to view the change initiative as a wholesome process and a serious endeavour that seeks to address concerns at all levels.

Nevertheless, totally eradicating installed political party's influence in the organization, especially in times of change, will be challenging as indicated by research (Burstein & Linton, 2002; Blee, 2012; Zons, 2013). This is due to several reasons, one being, it has been ingrained in the organizational culture for years, especially in an organization like the Transport Authority which is government-based. However, one could ask the question - Does it encourages positive initiatives? Well, the research study purports that it does at times. However, the light in which political party influences are portrayed by the respondents of this research is one with an air of negativity and overreach. While this in and of itself might be subjected to the political party affiliation of employees, organizational leaders must seek to find ways to contain these influences and build trust as part of a major theme of the organizational change process going forward (Coley-Graham, 2019).

5.2.3 How do employees perceive organizational change management process at the Transport Authority?

The findings of the research imply that employees view organizational change initiatives, negatively. In fact, the research denotes that the employees perceived change like a 'battlefield.' In that, they have to seemingly rebel to participate in most change initiatives. This state of perception is further heightened if they observe or perceived installed political party involvement in change processes. According to Bolman and Deal (2003), if organizational leaders ensure that procedures and processes are properly organized as well as communicated to employees, then this can allow for a more positive perception of change and thus a smooth transition during the change process. This type of structure to the change process will serve to bolster trust in management and even further lend itself to a more transparent process, assisting in change readiness for employees and ultimately allowing the organization to meet its stated objectives for the change (Boohene & Williams, 2012; Toprak, 2018).

Further, the process of change must be seen as a transparent process and employees must be recognized as part of the process and not just mere submissive agents. Additionally, research dictates that to remove barriers, employees must be optimally enabled and empowered for it to be effective and

surmount obstacles (Adler & Borys, 1996). This level of enablement can be realized through the sharing of information, engaging employees in the change process as well as providing an environment where they feel comfortable about the change, which will influence their state of well-being. Further, the sharing of information and employee involvement in the change process was found to be a positive strategy in a survey conducted by Brown and Cregan (2008) of a large public employer in Australia. The study found that when employees have an active involvement in the change process, then negative employee reports were significantly reduced. As such, in this process, managers adopt a participatory style of management which involves information sharing and allowing employees to become active participants in the decision-making process.

Consequently, Wright (2008) purports that enablement is critical to employees' sense of pride and the confidence they will place in their work and that of the organization. Wright (2008) further argues that organizational leaders in addition to ensuring adequate resources are in place to carry out work, particularly during times of change, and ensure that proper work infrastructure for sharing data is in place to help the employee understand the context of their work and feel comfortable to effectively carry out operational actions. As such, there must be some level of compromise and mutual respect and understanding among parties in times of the change process (Seligman, 2011; 2014). Hence the need to create a paradigm shifts from old behaviour to the envisioned one to be inculcated during times of organizational change (Seligman, 2011; 2014).

5.2.4 What role do the employees of the Transport Authority play in the change management process?

The research implies that the employee role as it relates to organizational change endeavours is little to non-existence. A tenet of this research is the implications of not having 'people' at the core of the change process. People are crucial to the discussion and execution of change, why? Ultimately the change will impact them in one way or another. As such, employee involvement will create a sense of empowerment, cohesion and positive mental states that are crucial in times of change (Oreg et. al., 2011,

Kotter, 1996; Seligman 2008; 2014). Therefore, one of the crucial implications of management is that of – employee involvement.

Employee involvement speaks to the opportunities for employees to participate in the organizational change decisions that will affect their work, either in their immediate capacities or in wider organizational terms (Barth & Nergaard, 2015). As such, employee participation can be distinguished as follows – direct and indirect. Direct participation refers to the employee's direct interaction with the employer while indirect participation refers to having discussions through the representation of some kind of employee representation for example, trade unions or some other type of work council. Trade Union representation usually implies public-sector employee interaction (Barth & Nergaard, 2015). However, the practice is now being promulgated in other types of organizations, for example, Amazon, with the recently publicized trade union discourses in Alabama (United States) earlier in 2021 or might we say, war.

As the research has denoted, the involvement of employees is usually concerned with how employee involvement will influence decisions rather than through representatives. Recent research has been seeking to understand organizational change from the perspectives of employees, including the role that they have purported to play, and which has been a long-time staple – the concept of being resisters to change (e.g., Bartunek et al., 2006; Oreg et al., 2011; Piderit, 2000). Nonetheless, employee involvement in the change process needs to be expanded way beyond the role of being considered 'resisters' which is usually assigned, but rather active participants in the change process (Piderit, 2000; Oreg et al., 2006). Further, apart from the references to being labelled as resisters to change, research has shown that there are other implications of employee involvement for example, readiness to change (Armenakis et al., 2007), support (Meyer et al., 2007) and commitment to the change process (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Kotter, 1996).

These studies have been very helpful in providing a kind of blueprint as it relates to the integration of multiple findings and models as it relates to the impact of employee responses to

organizational change initiatives. As such, these responses along with cognitive considerations, as indicated in this research, have been posited as useful components in understanding employees' involvement in the change process, taking into consideration the factor of resistance. While more research is stated to be needed to further understand some of the factors that either encourage or discourage employee involvement in the decision-making process, particularly as it relates to organizational change, research has found some potential influences that may account for the lack of employee involvement in the change process. These include the nature of work, the flexibility of organizational policies, human resource capacity as well as the characteristic of work tasks (Barth & Nergaard, 2015). Additionally, the findings of this research have delineated other factors that could have been and seem to continue to have potential influences on organizational change endeavours at the Transport Authority which is the based organization of this study. These include the way change is implemented, which in and of itself does not provide opportunities for employee involvement and the way employees perceived change, which is usually negative, which will impact their readiness for the change and buy-in. It also gives rise to their perception of management which usually surrounds an air of distrust (Please see research findings in Chapter 4 above). These are some of the implications of the findings pertaining to employee involvement and successful organizational change outcomes. Surprisingly, these were some of the same issues cited years ago via the many attempts at public sector reforms, many of which were stated to be unsuccessful.

Recent research and reports have cited real-world examples of the impact of employee involvement in organizational change efforts. One such was observed in a 2015 report that was published by Eurofound. The report analyzed organizations' and employees' involvement in the change process. Over Six Thousand and Eight Hundred (6,800) employees were surveyed from over Twenty-four (24,000) establishments. The analysis revealed that in 2013, only Twenty-seven (27%) percent of employees in the European Union worked in organizations that promoted employee involvement in the decision-making process and Thirty-eight (38%) percent otherwise. It must be noted that the survey was

designed to provide information on workplace practices such as working time arrangements, workplace innovation, employee involvement, social dialogue and most recently the conversation about digitization, all in an effort to guide the development of socio-economic policies in the European Union (EU) (Kankaras et al., 2015).

Unfortunately, the research did not cite if public sector organizations were involved in the over Twenty-four Thousand (24,000) establishments that were surveyed. The report also showed that there were noticeable differences between countries as well. For example, Nordic countries such as Denmark and Sweden had higher levels of employee involvement while countries such as Greece, Italy and Spain etc, or Southern Countries had low levels of employee involvement in the workplace. Here again, the distinction of the organizations that were surveyed was not stated. However, these reports have led the European Union (EU) in designing a framework that would seek to ensure that employees are informed and consulted when it comes to their involvement in the workplace, particularly as it relates to organizational change (Barth & Nergaard, 2015). According to the report, the European Union (EU) believes that a report of this nature will help in promoting social dialogue for employee participation in European Organizations (Barth & Nergaard, 2015). This leap by the European Union (EU) has led to additional research at the national level as it relates to the issue of employee involvement and participation at work. One such was a recent study in Austria that showed that employees were beginning to become very concerned about strong hierarchies at work, demanding more autonomy in the workplace as well as open communication with supervisors.

Additionally, from the perspective of trade unions, some researchers have shown the increase in participation by employees as well as the increased role that these unions are now playing as it relates to employee involvement in the workplace, particularly as it relates to organizational change. One of the reasons for this heightened role by the trade unions or collective bargaining agents is the greater interest in a participation-oriented approach as well as in some cases the support received from leaders at the regional levels. This was published in the report of two (2) German Research Studies published in 2015

by Otto Brenner Stiftung (Barth & Nergaard, 2015). On the other hand, other research has shown a deteriorating relationship between the traditional collaborative and participative model which is usually that of Trade Unions being representatives of employees in organizational change initiatives. This was the findings of a Norwegian report in 2015 (Barth & Nergaard, 2015). The research found that Unions believed that management had become increasingly top-down with a high degree of bureaucracy, especially as it pertains to foreign-owned enterprises. The study also found that many union representatives had never attended a meeting with the employee's employers or even engaged company managers in conversations.

These findings suggest that while some employees are becoming less interested and, in some cases, frustrated with their unions, unions themselves are becoming less invested in their roles and the level of interaction with managers. To this end, direct employee involvement is a critical managerial implication for the administration of organizational change for potential success. This goes directly to the heart of the public sector and in particular, the Transport Authority, which is a unionized organization, and the one on which this study is based. No longer should public sector organizations be in the same reform mode as they did at the onset of independence, with donors and consultants lining up for miles to implement change in silos and without employee involvement as that model has proven unsuccessful over the years. Organizational change requires much more than donor instructions and long tedious meetings with organizational leaders and that's it (Tindigarukay, 2004). Successful organizational change requires meaningful conversations with staff and efforts to involve them in the change decisions (Kotter, 1996; Seligman, 2014).

In conclusion, employee involvement matters! This is evident with the spate of research findings including this thesis. As such, it is to be treated as a major factor in the workplace, especially as it pertains to organizational change. Further, in the context of the social and economic development that the government of Jamaica is currently undergoing through its 'reformed', reform - Modernization Programme, now more than ever the strategic lenses must be extended into the realm of direct

employee involvement in organizational change decisions to remain competitive in the global sphere. As such, initiatives towards change must have engrained efforts of employee involvement as delineated by the proposed recommendations of this study with strategic management-support initiatives in order to support and maintain employees' well-being which can transcend to greater organizational performance.

5.2.5 How can the theories of Cognitive Dissonance and Appreciative Inquiry help to serve as an effective mechanism for organizational change, especially as it relates to 'resistance to change' and 'positive change outcomes' respectively?

Literature dictates that people's cognitive reasoning will impact their immediate environment and organizational group structure (Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Lau & Woodman, 1995). As such, as one's perception begins to change, then the possibility exists where that level of energy can perpetuate throughout the entire organization, whether it is positive or negative. Therefore, these theories stand as a complementary framework for inclusion into the change management process as it relates to understanding the cognitive side of change as well as the necessary motivational factors of change, particularly at the Transport Authority, where barriers to change have been identified. Barriers that can evoke employee resistance which could erode the efforts of successful change efforts (Kotter, 1996; Rock and Schwartz, 2006).

One such barrier that can cause resistance to change is mistrust in management, especially during times of organizational change (Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Lau & Woodman, 1995). The study revealed that there is a general mistrust of management, particularly during times of change. This was due to several reasons based on the responses from the interview participants across all the offices and ranges from how change is implemented to how it is communicated. This seems to have helped in creating a culture of resistance as employees felt like there exist some '*ulterior motives*' of management in implementing the change. This state of perception is further heightened if they observe or perceived installed political party involvement.

Additionally, this level of mistrust of leadership can also be attributed to another revelation of the study – the organization having no clear objectives, vision or message when implementing change. This was cited by most of the respondents of both the interviews (collective regions) and the questionnaire survey. An organization having no clear vision or message of change can create an air of suspicion, especially one where employees feel that installed political party and stakeholder influence is strong and prominent. According to Bolman and Deal (2003), vision transforms an organization's core ideology or sense of purpose into an image of what the future might become (p. 252). As such, organizational leaders must seek to have a concise message about change and pursue continuous dialogue with employees during the change process in articulating that vision in the prospect of making it an organizational reality. Further, research contends that employees' participation and communication can improve the level of trust in management which can help to impact the degree of resistance and thus change outcomes (Gaylor, 2001).

To this extent, Kotter (1996) purports that having the right leadership in place during change is a critical component of the process. Therefore, employees are seeking effective leadership from higher-level management as well as identified change agents to help in effecting the change as revealed by this research. Hence, Kotter (1996, 2003) suggests, that organizations must have key players in positions of power to aid in the progress of change and not those that might hinder it. Having the right people in place will help in the efforts of communicating the urgency of the change process and provide consistent communication due to the 'sheer magnitude' of the task of change (p. 87). As such, having the right leadership and management attitude to drive the change process is an essential component of an organization's successful change process.

Additionally, the theory of appreciative inquiry (AI), a strength-based approach to change, offers organizations the opportunity to enact organizational change by examining its strength, such as what works best, and then using those strengths as a starting point for creating positive change and successful outcomes (Crestani, 2015). As such, it holds the potential to offer positive effects for practice

development (Grieten et al., 2017). As posited by Stavros et al. (2016), it promotes change from within, and thus encourages employees to view the organization with an ‘appreciative eye.’ Being grateful and looking for ways to help the organization to move forward as well as offers individuals a new perspective to change. This suggests that one becomes aware of the degree of negative thoughts and biases that can often time pervades the mind (Stavros et al., 2016). Therefore, the application of its principles can help organizations to invite employees, who would be the change recipients, to participate in dialogues, and state their stories, achievements, strengths, and innovations. Consequently, linking the positive energies of the organization to foster any change agenda. To this extent, research contends that appreciative inquiry (AI) is making an impact around the globe, particularly, through the recent empirical study by Verleysen et al. (2014).

This study purports that organizational leaders would best consider enacting and sustaining the principles of appreciative inquiry and its application can serve as an effective way to increase psychological capital, which could help to create an environment to generate new possibilities through collaborative means, which could ultimately effect systematic organizational change (Coughlan, 2008). As it relates to the theory of cognitive dissonance, the literature sought to explore it from varying angles, such as a standalone model to impact organizational change as well as in terms of its effect in offering a greater insight on the renowned barrier to change – resistance. The premise of the theory is that people will become motivated to change a behaviour or decision that is conflicting with their original beliefs, even if that means promoting counter-attitudinal attitudes and behaviours (Festinger, 1957; Kitayama & Tompson, 2015; Aronson, 1968).

Consequently, organizational leaders can explore varying paradigms to help in the management of resistance to organizational change. These include the paradigms of free choice, induced compliance, and effort-justification to engage in activities that can reduce dissonance (that uncomfortable feeling when conflicting thoughts are present) to those that can motivate employees to make decisions about change that is more aligned with the desired change outcomes (Harmon-Jones, 2019; Price & Harmon-

Jones, 2015; Festinger, 1957;1964). To this extent, this study argues that these theories and their embedded techniques are critical in forming a coherent framework in the management of organizational change (Bushe & Marshak, 2009) and thus could serve as a foundation for organizational change agenda (Cooperrider et al., 2008).

An important message of the literature is on the matter of employee involvement and perception of change, which have been highlighted as critical components of successful change outcomes. Additionally, political party influence or involvement in the change process may also offer insight as to how change is implemented at the Transport Authority and its outcomes. Therefore, these factors should be important considerations for the Transport Authority in the implementation of its change initiatives, to achieve successful outcomes.

Importantly, it must be noted that the study is not claiming that these methods are the only means of influencing positive organizational change outcomes. However, based on the core tenets of the study, the evaluation of the theories has demonstrated how positive psychology could be applied in an organizational setting, particularly the Transport Authority, which is the based organization of the study and reap success. Furthermore, the outcomes of the research will include new knowledge and published application that will only serve to embolden future research in the field of positive psychology and organizational change.

Furthermore, scientific literature has evidenced that organizational change can adversely affect the health of employees (Oreg et. al., 2011). In fact, Flovik et al. (2019) denoted that organizational change efforts have been directly associated with various mental health concerns, including somatic health. According to Flovik (2019), somatic health concerns are issues of fatigue, emotional distress and problems of functioning in the workplace such as completing designated tasks, being productive and even issues of absenteeism and high volumes of sick leave. This is amplified when organizations engage in change, especially that categorized as large-scale such as restructuring and efforts to downsize

(Kivimaki et al., 2001; Bamberger et al., 2012). The fact is that change implies some kind of organizational shift from a known to an unknown state (Stensaker et al., 2001).

This shift in the organization may be a purposeful attempt to get rid of particular features or to gain others. On the other hand, the change might be spontaneous, involving some sort of reaction to an organizational stimulus or some other development outside of the organization's control (Stensaker et al., 2001). However, not all organizational change will be negative (Jian, 2007) or have some sort of negative repercussion. Therefore, change can be an opportunity for both the employee and the organization (Flovik et al., 2019). To this extent, it is up to organizational leaders to clarify their change efforts from the initial stage of the change endeavour to help employees cope with any unfavourable outcomes. Hence, as the findings of this research denote, having a clear plan to guide change, could serve fruitful in this effort. Further, this research contends, having such guided effort in place, could serve as an essential first step in preventing adverse effects on employees' health and well-being (Flovik, 2019). This, according to Flovik (2019) could foster successful change outcomes.

Research purports that two (2) main work factors are impacted during organizational change – the psychological and the psychosocial work factors. The psychological work factors speak to the employee as an individual and the aspects of their work such as the perceived level of autonomy they feel during times of organizational change as well as the job demands that might be required during the organizational transformation process, among other factors. Research has linked these psychological factors or working conditions to both the individual and the organization as a whole (Holden et al., 2011; Stansfeld & Candy, 2006). As such, these psychological factors have been said to be associated with overall organizational productivity (Dollard and Neser, 2013; Poulsen et al., 2016; Montano et al., 2017) as well as the health of employees (Bambra et al., 2009; Hausser et al., 2010; Schmidh et al., 2018) and to sick leave (Head et al., 2006).

On the other hand, the psychosocial work environment comprises both organizational–social and psychological factors, all of which ultimately define the context and the quality of the varying work

aspects (Nieuwenhuijsen et. al., 2010). To this extent, research has shown that some psychosocial work features may impact employees' health more than another. In fact, in a recent study by Flovik (2019), eleven (11) unique work factors were identified as having a negative impact on one's mental health and well-being during organizational change. These include – Job tasks which include job control and demands, job roles (which involve the clarity of the roles and the conflicts that may arise due to change, including the ambiguity of the tasks and the role), supportive leadership, which is the social aspect of work which takes into consideration other fellow worker's support and the social climate that is created, particularly during times of change and finally, the concerns about job predictability (will the job still be available after the change, do I need to start seeking out work elsewhere?).

As such, this takes into consideration the predictability of the job during moments of change as well as the organization's future after the change. Certain aspects of leadership may even augment the psychosocial working environment in that, employees are looking to managers for support when the change is taking place, particularly if the change involves some sort of restructuring. However, organizational leaders may not be able to provide this level of support, which can give rise to employee perception that management is not supportive (Gilley et al., 2009; Holten et. al., 2015). As a result, the social cohesion within the group that may have been experienced before the change process may now be negatively affected as the employee perceived trust issues with fellow employees as well as with managers and view them as unsupportive (Campbell & Pepper, 2007). These are all considered adverse effects of change that affect one's health and well-being during times of organizational change. To this extent, research purports that organizational leaders must seek to develop target interventions aimed at reducing the potential adverse effect of change. Some of the target interventions have been expressed through the recommended models of change as discussed in this research – Kurt Lewin's model of change (1947), Kotter's (1995) and Seligman's (1998 – present) models of organizational change.

Research has shown that strategies that are aimed at alleviating potential risk factors to manage what has been denoted as 'stressors' in the organization as it relates to organizational change, could

prove fruitful in reducing some of the risk factors associated with one's psychological well-being such as depression and absenteeism, which could result in improved productivity (Bambra et al., 2009; Kelloway & Barling, 2010). Some of the mechanics that can form core aspects of the interventions to help manage one's overall well-being during times of change have been stated throughout this study and other scientific literature - the prevention of burnout and supervisor's support and job control.

5.2.5.1 Burnout

Research has shown that organizational stressors, which include organizational change, can cause workplace burnout (Khamisa et al., 2015; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Maslach & Leiter, 2008). One of the reasons cited as a factor for burnout is the increase in job demands that tends to arise when the organization is going through changes. For example, the amount of work and the time provided to complete it as well as the decreased job control will create some level of burnout, especially if it occurs over an extended period. This type of exposure will create what studies have denoted as 'stressors and the psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, all of which may impact the employee's mental state (Maslach et al., 2008; Puelo, 2011). As such, while research contends that change is complex and avoidable, it does show that managing change effectively through carefully designed mechanisms suitable to the organization at that particular time of change may make the process less stressful for employees and can at least reduce some of the negative outcomes of organizational transformation as findings of the research and literature dictate. For this reason, research shows that social support and a sense of employee job control have been proven as important organizational determinants for employee health during times of change (Maslach et al., 2008; Puelo, 2011).

5.2.5.2 Supervisor Support and Job Control

Supervisors more so than the higher management body work closely with employees and as such, are said to have the ability to influence the health of employees (Kuoppala et al., 2008). In fact, Edwards et al. (2006) reported that mental health workers who had supportive clinical supervisors experienced lower levels of negative attitudes towards patients. This level of support when extended to

higher-level management was found to be associated with lower levels of emotional exhaustion and negative attitudes towards work (Hannigan et al., 2000). This level of support was found to be even more significant during times of organizational change, which could result in more favourable change outcomes.

This was concurred in a study done by Moyle and Parkes (1999) with employees of a retail company. The study investigated the effects of worker relocation of the retail workers and the perceived support from the management team, including supervisors. The results showed a reduction in the employee's psychological stress levels based on the supportive relationship they experienced with supervisors. On the contrary, the effects were different when management support was low or non-existence, especially during times of change. In that, employees experienced higher levels of conflict, ambiguity, and work overload, particularly during the organizational change process (Swanson and Power, 2001). As such the support at work and the degree of job control have been positively associated with employees' positive psychological health as well as their attitude and behaviour towards work.

Given the above, change will always cause some amount of uncertainty regarding its outcome and future. Furthermore, some changes, particularly those that are extensive in nature, may involve more management-driven approaches with little or no employee involvement. This will create other issues among employees and the change outcomes as was observed by the finding of this study. Additionally, due to the uncertainties that arise during organizational change, the research denotes that it will most naturally affect employees' mental states, in one way or the other (Day et. al., 2016). Hence, the proposition is to incorporate positive psychology mechanisms in organizational change processes, particularly at the Transport Authority, the based organization for this study. Those that seek to implore organizational leaders to look at change processes in a holistic way instead of just on the line of 'trying to merely meet the objectives of the change goals of the organization.' Nevertheless, organizational change will typically be perceived as a novel and unknown phenomenon that will disrupt the flow of the organization (Day et. al., 2016).

5.3 Recommendations for Application

Based on this case study conducted at the Transport Authority involving the investigation of the influence of positive psychology as a factor for positive change outcomes. There are three (3) proposed change models which are based on the review of the literature and the results of the research that could create the type of positive impact on change outcomes if adopted. The models are the famous and decade-old Kurt Lewin's model of change (1947), Kotter's (1995) and Seligman's (1998 – present) models of organizational change. These models may be inclusive of other options that may exist. However, these are the ones that have brought more insight into the methodology and conceptual framework that was denoted for this study on organizational change management at the Transport Authority.

Further, all three (3) models have some of the processes and structure required for successful organizational change based on the findings of the research which is based on the collective responses of the participants of both the interviews and questionnaire survey. It must be noted that all the proposed models are discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of this study. As such, they are only mentioned in this chapter as per their application to the process of organizational change at the Transport Authority, the organization that this research is based. Please see Figure 5.1 below showing the synopsis and the synergies of the models mentioned in this section that is being proposed as recommendations for the application of organizational change based on the research findings.

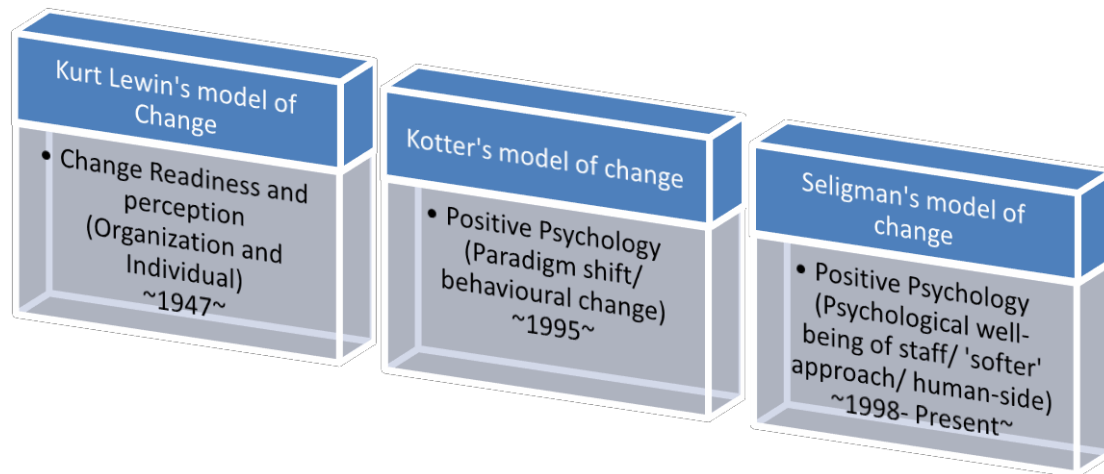


Figure 5.1: Synopsis and Synergies of the Recommended Models of Change (Source: The Researcher based on the findings of the study, 2021).

5.3.1 Kurt Lewin's Model of Organizational Change

This model of change was introduced by Kurt Lewin in 1947 but is still relevant today. The model, as per the Transport Authority, will speak to the findings as it relates to the structure of change as well as employee readiness and perception of organizational change. As research denotes, employee readiness and perception are critical to the change process (Moraca, 2011, Senior, 2002, p.205). As such, the principles of this model could be used as the first step in the change management process at the Transport Authority, the based organization of this study. The model is based on the notion of a three (3) steps approach to organizational change - unfreezing, changing, and refreezing again. As such, research pertains that it allows organizational leaders to understand the change from a more structured and behavioural-sensitive approach, one that the research denotes is lacking at the Transport Authority. As such, employing a structured phase approach in implementing change would see the organization preparing the minds of the employees for the change (the first stage) in helping them to transition to change (the second stage) and then solidifying the learnt behaviour and new paradigm as the change is implemented and the organization continues its path in experiencing the new outcomes (the third phase). According to Lewin (1947), it is at this stage that the organization work at institutionalizing the change to create a stable environment and build employees' trust and confidence for the long term. To this

extent, based on the three (3) phases, these are some of the structured approaches and principles to implementing the change:

1. Implement the change with the expected results in mind. In that, the change leader would seek to visualize the expected result and work towards that desired outcome.
2. Create a sense of urgency for the change and manage any signs of resistance or behaviours that can negatively affect the process.
3. Discuss all aspects of the change with all tiers of the organization. These include its objectives, vision, and mission. This will help employees to embrace the change as well as help shape the change process as it is implemented.
4. Implement the change and ensure that training is incorporated where needed. This is to ensure that employees can effectively carry out the change. Further, ensure that the skills learned for the change are effected and not treated as ‘mere training’ as the study revealed.
5. Continuously seek to identify any resistance or behaviours that could hinder the progress of implementation now that the change has become an organizational reality. Bear in mind, that the organization is now shifting from one stage to another. As such, organizational leaders must work to support this shift.
6. Sustain and build on the new momentum by constantly reinforcing positive behaviours and celebrating short victories and milestones. Ensure that meetings are still a viable part of the process (department/organizational-wide). This is to discuss issues and progress and the continued way forward.
7. Continuously work to ensure organizational stability. According to Carter (2008), this is the culmination of the process and that which will help in achieving permanent and successful results.

5.3.1.1 Kurt Lewin's Model and Employee Involvement in the Change

According to Glew et al. (1995), employee involvement in the change process is an effort to increase their input into decisions that affect the organization's performance as well as their well-being. On the other hand, Barth and Nergaard (2015) define it as the opportunities for employees to participate in the decisions that affect their work, be it their immediate task (task discretion) or those that are related to the wider organization. As such, it is concerned with the capacity of employees to influence the decisions as an individual and not indirectly through a designated representative (such as local trade unions or work councils). With that said, employee participation can be direct or indirect, with the former being the common concept that forms the foundation for the diverse notions of the workplace – high involvement and thus forms the basic ingredient for organizational innovation (Barth & Nergaard, 2015).

This attempt to involve employees' inputs into the decision-making process in periods of transformation can be categorized into four (4) terms – power, information, knowledge and skills and rewards. These elements according to Hussain et al. (2018) are those features that can help to promote employee involvement so that they can overcome the act of resistance to organizational change. This approach to change has been classified as one of the oldest, yet most effective strategies in developing both the planning and implementation of the change. Further, according to Vroom and Yetton (1973), this strategy will yield employee participation which could result in high-quality change thus reducing or eliminating the prevailing construct of 'resistance' in the implementation stage of the transformation process. Further, Cummings and Molley (1977), purport that this level of planning and implementation of change may help to contribute to the level of innovation that is appropriate for the organization at that moment in time.

However, Pierce et al. (2002) in their study denoted that for the organization to experience the level of innovation that is needed during change; then organizational leaders must relinquish their status quo and support employee involvement and stimulate the process. This level of stimulation must seek to address employees about the change and as such educate them about the change while engaging in

continued dialogue as the change is being implemented. Organizational leaders must also seek to become involved in supporting the task/s accomplishment as well as provide the level of emotional support and incentives to co-optate and seemingly coerced employees to accept the change (Hussain et al., 2018). In this vein, employees will become further involved in the change process as they become even more accepting of the change.

This type of effort according to research will lend itself to the level of transparency in the change process, which can reaffirm and enhance employee involvement. Additionally, Morgan and Zeffane (2003) denote that this ‘new norm’ will further encourage the opinions of employees which will allow the organization to have a greater sense of control during the transformation process (Morgan & Zeffane, 2003; Higgins et. al., 2003; Furst & Cable, 2008, Oreg, 2006). Nevertheless, while co-optation can be used to garner employee participation and support for the change, organizational leaders must ensure that it is strategically applied because if employees feel that they are being tricked into not resisting, or that they are being treated unfairly or lied to, they may respond very negatively. This might create even more resistance to the change, an unwarranted response (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008).

Additionally, the second step in Lewin’s model – unfreezing, has the effect to shift both employees’ behaviours and attitudes to the next desired level (Hussain et al., 2018). To this extent, employees will feel empowered by the authority and the responsibilities of the change. As such, they become owners, instead of just ‘mere agents’ of the change (Mathieu et. al., 2006). This was one of the findings of this study, where employees felt like they had ‘no say’ in the change process and were only required to implement the change after all decisions were already made.

5.3.1.2 A Synopsis of Kurt Lewin’s Model and Organizational Leadership

The model of change established by Kurt Lewin delineated a set of functions for the role of leadership during organizational change. Due to the critical nature of change, it is best to bring to the forefront of this study, some of those critical elements, particularly, as it relates to the findings of the

research on the issue of management and leadership. Firstly, let us establish a working definition of leadership. Northouse (2004) define leadership as a process in which an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal/s. A more current definition described it as someone endowed with certain qualities such as (ambition, skills, and personality) necessary to influence a group of people to reach a common goal (Strait, 2020). Nonetheless, according to Bauer (2016), there is a difference between just helping someone to reach a goal and telling them every step to take towards the goal. Instead, organizational leaders need to expand their knowledge, learn new skills, ask productive questions, and convey respect for others. As such, the organizational leader sets the tone for the organization and should be able to ‘lead the change’, which is even more crucial during transitional processes. To this extent, Cummings and Worley (2003) presented five (5) key functions of leaders during the change process, these involve, motivating the change, establishing a vision for the change, developing ‘political’ support, managing the transitional process of the change and finally, sustaining the change momentum for continued success.

The first two (2) factors – motivating and creating a vision for the change are said to be reflective of the current unfreezing phase of Lewin’s model while developing support and managing the transition of the change the ‘change phase’ or the ‘moving of change’ phase. Lastly, the sustaining role is more in line with the implementation of the ‘refreezing’ phase of the change model (Hussain et. al., 2018). All five functions are crucial for organizational leadership, with the change process becoming even more critical due to the factor of resistance to change (Stanley et. al. 2005; Hussain et al. 2018). Therefore, the application of the model theorizes that leadership becomes vital to the change process and will be dependent on a high degree of openness on the part of the organizational leader. As such, organizational leaders must work to influence employees and motivate them to work towards the vision of the change, while in the same breath managing and overcoming any obstacles as they arise (Laura & Stephen, 2002; Hussain et. al., 2018; Strait, 2020).

To motivate employees, Greiner and Shein (1998) and Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) suggest that leaders should explain the need for the change by providing the necessary information and articulating clearly, how the change can benefit employees and other stakeholders, form alliances and social networks to help with the communication of the change as well as providing them with decision-making powers. Additionally, Hussain et al. (2018) purport that in some cases, the organizational leader may need to circumvent organizational leadership (formal processes), in order to help with the achievement of the desired change outcomes.

5.3.2 Kotter's Model of Organizational Change

Another possible strong recommendation that was mentioned in chapter 2 of the study and one that is more geared towards applying the principles of positive psychology to the change process is that of Kotter's model of change. This model focuses on changing behaviour and cultural norms that have become a part of the organization and those that may have attributed to undesirable change implementation and outcomes (Casey et al., 2012). The principles of this model are being recommended to form part of the continuous efforts of change implementation for successful outcomes. Kotter's approach to change is considered by researchers as an emergent model of change and not necessarily a planned approach like Kurt Lewin's model (By, 2005). However, the model outlines eight (8) steps to change that must be executed in a step-by-step approach (Kotter, 1996, Ramasay, 2017). The steps outlined in the model include:

1. Creating a sense of urgency around the change initiative.
2. Creating camaraderie with employees by establishing an alliance to guide the change process. This will help to empower employees as they feel critical to the process.
3. Create a vision and strategy to direct the change efforts.
4. Articulate the change using the best means possible.

5. Encourage wide-reaching action to implement the change as well as address structures that may seek to challenge the vision of the change. This will help the organization to manage obstacles (political or otherwise), that could thwart successful outcomes.
6. Celebrate short-term wins, openly. This includes rewarding those who have contributed to the win and encouraging others in the same light as well.
7. Elaborate on the gains while continuing to work on the change.
8. Anchor new approaches as part of the 'now' culture of the organization as well as create continuity plans.

Kotter's change model framework has been successfully applied in many organizational settings with the recent one being in higher education, generally for Administrative and Technological changes. This was outlined in a study conducted by Wentworth et. al. (2018). In this study, the researchers reported on their use of the model's steps to replace a teacher evaluation system. Their success was attributed to their adherence to the outlined steps of the model. However, they noted the significance of organizational leaders, in the application of the model to include employees as part of the coalition team to fit within the shared vision and governance of the model as well as to gain buy-in from other members of staff. This type of involvement, they noted assisted in the communication of the vision of change and thus helped the employees to understand how the system could benefit them, personally and organizational-wide. Additionally, the researchers noted that being transparent also played a pivotal role in the success of the model. Their success was also hinged on aligning the organization's incentive systems to build trust among employees.

5.3.3 Seligman's Model of Change

This model of change rest on the premise surrounding positive psychology by means of invoking positive individual traits and promoting the normal and successful development of humans (Seligman, 2018). Aspects of the model's principles may be incorporated with that of Kotter's change model to

achieve successful change outcomes. As such, it is often viewed as the study of one's happiness and well-being as it seeks to understand human emotions, traits, and the organization in general. To this extent, it does not see humans as resisters to change but rather as individuals of value which can help in creating a sense of empowerment for them which can then translate into organizational performance, especially during times of uncertainties (i.e., organizational change). Please see Figure 5.2 below with an illustration of the expected transition based on Seligman's model of change (old norms to new paradigm reality).

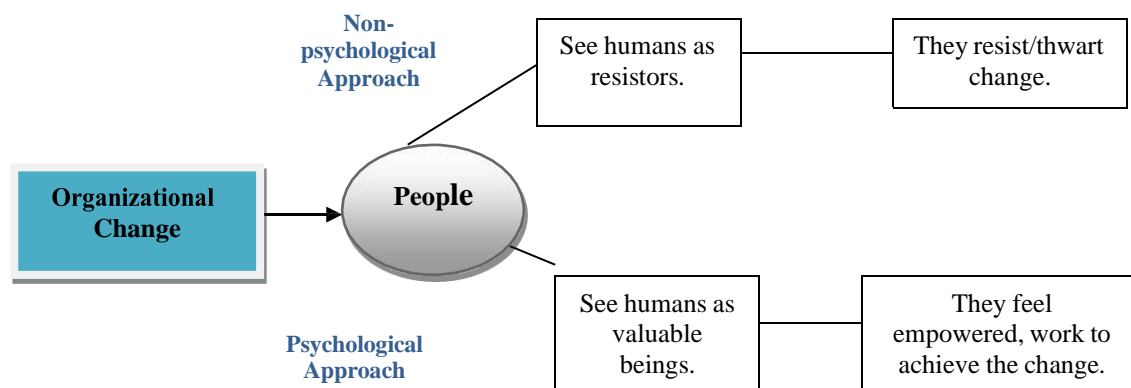


Figure 5.2: Organizational Change - Old Norms (traditional approach) to New Paradigm Reality (Emergent Models). (Source: The Researcher, based on the models presented – Serving as a partial adaptation of the PERMA Model of Wellbeing, Seligman, 2018).

But how can organizational leaders infuse happiness in the workplace, particularly during the change process? According to Seligman (1998), this can be achieved by conducting a careful review and application of the principles of his subsequent model – PERMA. This model represents the five foundational elements of happiness and well-being as seen by Seligman. As such, the acronym PERMA stands for Positive emotion, engagement, relationship, meaning and accomplishments (Seligman, 2018). The model is a derivative of Seligman's foundational model of 1998 of positive psychology and is considered the practical approach that endorses the strategic advantages of an organization, especially in times of change. It contends that the organization leader must seek to create a level of motivation through the development of employees and their skills and then work at increasing their potential and

manage the progress to obtain a healthier organization which of course can serve to increase productivity and growth (Perez-Mayo, 2019).

Importantly though, both the employee and the employer will play a critical role in establishing a positive or ‘healthy’ work environment during organizational change. Therefore, the success of any positive intervention is going to rely heavily on employees’ mindset and behaviour as well as the willingness on their part to enact their own positive intervention. This will ensure that individual employees are making an active effort to establish an environment where all everyone can flourish (Seligman, 2018; Perez-Mayo, 2019).

5.3.3.1 Positive Intervention when Enacted by Employees

One of the positive psychology interventions that employees at the Transport Authority can execute to improve their well-being in the workplace, especially in times of change is that of the learning and application of emotional intelligence. This was one of the terminologies that was so aptly used by a few participants during the data collection process (interviews). Particularly, as it relates to the organization during times of change which was described by participants as a ‘battlefield’ where people have to rebel to convey their opinions.

Emotional intelligence speaks to the ability of an individual to both recognize as well as control his or her emotion while taking into consideration the emotions of others (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). In this regard, one become self-aware (being able to recognize personal emotions and their triggers), self-regulating (managing emotions positively), able to motivate themselves (that inner drive from personal gratification after an achievement), empathetic (recognize, understand, and experience the emotions of someone else) and a heightened development of social skills (interacting and negotiating with others, creatively). Additionally, emotional intelligence will also help employees to overcome mental barriers associated with negativity during the change process which can contribute to positive outcomes (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 2001).

5.3.3.2 Positive Intervention to be Enacted by Organizational Leaders

Organizational leaders must realize that employees are their most valuable resource, an argument that cannot be stressed enough. As such, when employees are happy, feel confident and satisfied with their work, they will put more thought and effort and emotions into it which in turn can help to build a more productive environment (Fredrickson, 2001). This involves the organizational leader creating an atmosphere of inclusion, through transparency, open communication, and encouragement of everyone's input.

While inculcating a positive work environment can serve the organization positively during times of change. Organizational leaders must ensure that employees' rights to freedom and free speech, even if it is negative are not impeded. This was observed in a ruling by the National Labour Relations Board in 2016, a federal agency in the United States against T-Mobile. As such, the organization was faulted, in that; they violated the law by incorporating provisions in their Employee Handbook mandating employees to maintain a positive work environment (Konnikova, 2016). To this extent, the organization prevented employees from convening meetings that were intended to discuss their dissatisfaction, thus neglecting the very attributes of a positive work environment. This type of infringement discouraged transparency and employee engagement as the organization felt that such activities would make them 'look bad.'

Consequently, research contends that it is very difficult to impose positivity from a top-down approach and achieve positive results (Konnikova, 2016). This is because employees will feel that things are being forced or externally controlled which will have a negative effect. As such, organizational leaders must seek to be transparent and encourage employee engagement even if it is some sort of negativity against the organization.

Finally, my overall recommendation for application for the Transport Authority is for the organizational leaders to seek out ways to incorporate any of the models proposed in the organization individually (to see what works) or to use an integrative approach as research denotes that no one model

is perfect to automatically become contextual to all organizational situations (Sidorko, 2008, p. 316). Further, developing a system of change would be a start for the organization and one that should evolve as the organization changes and grow. Employees need to see this type of effort being expended in the change management processes as they have indicated that there are no guiding principles and structure when it comes to the implementation of organizational change.

Additionally, it is recommended that both the employer and employees alike, approach the core concepts of positivity in the workplace with an open mind. Letting go of any preconceived notions, doubts or skepticism will allow change initiatives to thrive and every action successfully implemented (Berg et al., 2008). By doing so, both parties will purposefully create a healthier, happier, more productive, and sustainable workforce environment.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

This study was designed to gather the perceptions and opinions of employees within the Transport Authority, a public sector organization as it relates to positive organizational change management. The study was a timely and necessary one due to the impact organizational changes can have on organizations of this nature. Additionally, this is the first comprehensive study on the organization to date being a public sector entity. Moreover, research or information on organizational change from a Jamaica context that I have found only produced short editorial pieces of no real substance.

Further, there are many signs that the research on the positive psychology movement which is the science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits and positive organizations are gaining momentum around the world. This suggests that opportunities do exist for future empirical studies to support the claims and promise of this emergent field of organizational change (Donaldson, 2011). Therefore, additional research on this subject, from the perspective of other governmental-based organizations could help to provide greater insights and additional interpretations as it relates to the

influence of positive organizational change on these entities. This could help the government in many of the change initiatives that underscore the country's 2030 agenda (Jamaica's National Development Plan), as government organizations are expected to lead most of these changes. The Jamaica 2030 vision is a strategic road map to guide the country to achieve its goals of sustainable development and prosperity by the year 2030. The vision is guided by seven (7) principles which include transformational leadership, partnership, transparency and accountability, social cohesion, equity, sustainability (economic, social, and environmental) as well as sustainable urban and rural development. As such, a study of this nature could be instrumental in providing public organizations with the necessary tools during these times of change and transition, for success. Further, the premise of the study could be employed in other organizations from a Jamaica context, with additional studies going beyond the study's immediate geographical boundaries. To this extent, the methodology could be duplicated to research organizational change in other types of businesses and industries, widening the scope internationally.

Secondly, a follow-up study could be completed in say about five (5) years to examine how the application of the principles of the proposed change models has impacted organizational change outcomes at this organization or the wider public sector. This implication for future research concerning these models could provide researchers with additional insights as to how change models can be adopted by organizations during change processes, especially, one that is government based. This organization, the Transport Authority, is constantly changing, which was even observed during this research. Additionally, in five (5) years, there will be another general election, and the possibility of a new political party being in power. As such, a follow-up study would be a way of conducting additional research on the topical construct with additional comparative analysis of the same organization in futuristic terms.

Most importantly, findings from this research could serve to enrich the understanding of the Transport Authority and the public sector as a whole about organizational change and its impact on the lives of public sector employees and organizations in general. Public sector bodies could also gain opportunities to learn more about some of the reasons for failures in the implementation of change as

well as gain greater insights into how particular models of change could be adopted and lead to more positive outcomes.

The opportunity also exists for future research to incorporate other qualitative research methods such as participant observations, focus group discussions as well as experiments. These alternative approaches to this case study methodology could provide varying viewpoints and additional insights into this phenomenon and other social issues. Additionally, the research design could be applied to other sectors as well as in other geographical contexts to enhance external validity.

Accordingly, future research could also be conducted to better understand the human side of change and its impact on positive and successful organizational change outcomes, which is a premise of this research study. This is particularly important due to how work is now conducted and will continue to revolutionize through the advancement of technology and other global phenomena, for example, the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, employees are no longer just being required to learn a trade and stick with it for a lifetime, but to enhance themselves in every sphere of the world of work to sustain themselves, economically and otherwise. Therefore, as work or the way in which it is viewed and performed changes, so does the life of the organization to keep pace with the change, anticipate others as well as create change themselves (Florea, 2013). To this extent, change has become a dominant feature in the life of all organizations, globally.

Conversely, decades ago when a company could simply get away with just implementing change without employees' input and expect successful implementation, today, that type of leadership has been challenged due to the revolutionizing of the workplace and the workforce. Therefore, studies into the behavioural aspects of change or what is often denoted as the 'humanistic' approach to change is becoming and will continue to be an emergent factor in years to come. As such, further research in this field, especially as it relates to the public sector or other sectors in Jamaica could help the country to advance studies in organizational change from a behavioural or humanistic perspective, further contributing to the discussion at both the local and international level.

Additionally, future combined research and actions geared at producing new insights into some foundational topics such as motivation, leadership and organizational learning and design can be explored. To this extent, I am suggesting a very ambitious and worthwhile agenda for future research that could serve to stimulate thoughtful work in the research of organizational change, particularly as it relates to positive psychology and other theories geared towards exploring human empowerment and enablement in times of change.

5.4.1 Limitations of the Study

Every research will face some sort of limitations. However, how these limitations are viewed and mitigated will be dependent on the researcher's philosophical viewpoint as well as the contingencies that are put in place to offset the impact of the stated limitations, whether it be the sample size, length of the study, the type of environment in which the data will be collected as well as any methodological constraints (Wargo, 2015). For this study, the following limitations were observed and experienced:

1. The reliability and validity of the study. As such, all facets to help ensure these crucial factors were taken into consideration throughout the study.
2. The study is qualitative and uses both interviews and questionnaires as means of data collection. However, the interviews are considered the primary data collection methodology based on the overall research objectives and design.
3. The data collection phase of the study was conducted in a setting that is not only conducive to the activity but could be replicated due to the type of organization and the set of established parameters and thus will help in boosting the research validity and reliability.
4. The data collection process was challenging in the sense that it was conducted during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic. As such, more strategic means were employed to capture the responses of the sample population. As such, visits to the organization were adjusted based on COVID-19 restrictions as well as altering travel dates for out-of-town travels. However, all the data collection sessions were convened, and the data was collected as outlined.

5. This research is a case study that is limited to one organization. As such, while the results can suggest some level of transferability both in the wider public and private sectors, its generalizability may not be easily determined, particularly in the private sector. As such, additional studies will be needed to determine a greater level of generalizability.
6. Notably, the methodological approach chosen for this research study does have some intrinsic limitations. One such is that the findings were drawn from the collection and analysis of data from a medium-sized sample of employees of the Transport Authority, a government agency in Jamaica. Therefore, a limitation of the study is the size and scope of its sample population as it only represents a reasonable size of a seemingly structured sector.
7. Further, the study objectives were to investigate how positive psychology could be used to influence positive or successful organizational change, especially with an understanding of the theories and principles of cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry, emergent theories of change. As such, the objective was not to achieve statistical generalization but rather, analytical generalization (Yin, 2003) due in part to the chosen methodology. To this extent, the size of the sample population was mitigated by gathering data from multiple sources of data, ones that were relevant to the stated constructs of the study as well as by completing an in-depth analysis of the instruments employed.
8. The research proposed three (3) models of change that could be adopted by the Transport Authority in their organizational change efforts. These models were implied based on the findings of the research as well as the theoretical assumptions that ‘no one model’ can be considered the sole model in achieving successful change outcomes. As such, future research is warranted as per the outcomes achieved (if applied) as per the application of the principles of one or all these models as opposed to the many other change models that are available when it comes to positive organizational change. Therefore, future research could serve as both interesting and insightful in this realm.

9. The research attempted to triangulate the data as it relates to organizational change. As such, significant insights were gained using this approach for this case study. However, it would be logical to conduct further studies on both employees and management as it relates to cognitive dissonance and appreciative inquiry to gain further insights into organizational change and the behavioural impact from the lenses of these emergent phenomena.
10. Finally, the study was limited to a government-based organization in Jamaica. Nevertheless, most government-based organization tends to have similar patterns of interest and nature due to their standardized processes. However, research suggests that studies that are limited to a single sector may have a diminishing impact when it comes to other sectors. Therefore, future research that goes beyond this geographical and organizational boundary may allow for additional insights into the research topical construct.

5.5 Conclusion

Organizational change is defined as a movement from one state toward a desired future state or a general response to some sort of significant threat or opportunity external to an organization. As such, the aim of this study was to investigate the possible influence of positive psychology as an approach for an effective management of organizational change from a Jamaica perspective. Throughout the study, it has been established that organizations are sensitive entities, especially when it comes to organizational change. Nonetheless, change is critical in every aspect of life and that of the organization is no exception. Additionally, organizational change can have a tremendous impact on employees, one of the factors that were observed in this research study as well as in many literatures on organizational change in general. To this extent, this qualitative case study attempted to investigate how positive psychology could be used by an organization to influence positive change outcomes, particularly at the Transport Authority, a public sector entity and the based organization for this study.

The study was conducted with the permanent employees of the Transport Authority with ages ranging from Eighteen (18) to Sixty-eight (68) years of age and an average tenure of seven (7) years. The data collection was conducted via two (2) main instruments and modalities, semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire survey, the latter of which served to triangulate the data. To this degree, the findings suggest five (5) themes as areas of focus as it relates to organizational change. These were, change readiness and employee's perception of change, barriers, or influence of change as well as its impact on the change process, the type of management and/or leadership, before, during and after the change, employee involvement in the change process and finally, communication, how do people know and are kept informed of the change process.

One of the major findings of the research was that the organization had no structure in place as it pertains to the implementation of change initiatives. As such, change initiatives were introduced in an ad hoc manner through a top-down leadership style. This way of implementing change resulted in a lack of organizational readiness and a negative perception of change by employees. As such, while employees view change as integral to the organization's survival and success, the way it is or has been implemented over the years has created a culture of resistance or one which employees have aptly characterized as a 'battlefield.' Therefore, having documented processes and procedures to guide the change process where there is a clear message and vision of change, will be a crucial first step in the implementation of change in this organization. Visioning is a very crucial step in the change process. A good vision will provide the necessary direction to employees in times of change and beyond. The importance of having a clear change vision was bluntly expressed by Simonson (2005) who posits that if the vision of an organization is to have the best workforce in the industry and the leaders go about this by ignoring the opinions of its employees, and simply just hire candidates not appropriate to help in realizing the vision as well as spend little by way of training of its employees through the provision and educational opportunities, then it is just sending the message that the vision is not important and does not even worth the paper on which it is written. This research study supports this argument very well

and recommends the need for factually assessing the adequacy of the Vision statement and estimating the effectiveness of implementation as suggested by the research findings.

Secondly, the findings suggest that installed political parties had ‘too much say’ in how or when the organization implements change. While the research and literature contend that some amount of political or social group interest will influence organizational change, particularly one that is government-based, employees have become frustrated with the degree to which these influences have affected their lives as well as the barriers they present to the change process as denoted by the research. Therefore, employees are advocating for a level of transparency in political party’s influence, which will ultimately help to build confidence in the organization and a level of trust in management which is currently lacking. This is seemingly so, as the research revealed that there was a general mistrust in management, which was also found to be a barrier and influence on the successful implementation of change.

This lack of trust was based on many factors. However, the findings suggest, that how change was implemented ‘heavy-handedly’ or from a ‘top-down’ management approach with very little or in some cases, no employee involvement, was paramount. As such, the findings revealed that this way of implementing change created another type of barrier in and of itself as it relates to successful change outcomes. Consequently, management found it challenging to ‘sell the change’ and more importantly, gain ‘buy-in’ after the fact. Therefore, the change is just implemented, and employees are expected to adapt or face the consequences. However, the literature dictates that employees, who are going to be affected by the change, must be able to understand all components of the change as well as its direct relational effect on their jobs. Additionally, a study by Reichers et al. (1997) revealed that employee buy-in is often necessary during the change process for the change to be successful.

Therefore, management decisions about change should include the employee in all aspects through the use of effective methods of communication, and training as well as providing processes and tools for supervisors to effectively lead the change amongst their constituents (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003).

According to Creasey (2003), good change management is critical for successful change outcomes and involves the organizational leaders listening to employees, encouraging their inputs and suggestions while managing resistance or negative behaviours as they arise and celebrating small and large victories throughout the change process. This researcher contends that this is key to profound social and organizational change, and as I might add, a much-needed approach at the Transport Authority.

Additionally, how change is communicated was also revealed by the study as a huge deterrent to employee engagement and organizational success. This was largely expressed by collective employees to be based on the way change decisions are made, which is usually from top management and communicated via email to which the majority of the staff do not have access. As such, the findings revealed that employees prefer more meaningful interactions where change is concerned and that formal meetings would be a better approach to communicating change. Nonetheless, the organization must seek to improve upon its email protocol, so that all employees are fitted with a company email account to be able to keep abreast of the organization's happenings as well as staff and management activities. This could be one of the organization's structural change efforts that could contribute to other organizational-wide changes and success in the future.

Employee involvement in the change process was also revealed as a major concern by the findings. According to the research, employees at the Transport Authority play little or do not play a role in change decisions as change is usually just implemented and they either adapt or face other consequences. However, emergent theories and those that this research is premise denotes that employee wants to work, be enabled and feel like they are a part of the organization. Further, they want to be heard and contribute to issues that affect the organization. To think otherwise, will create issues of resentment and as notably revealed by the research, a culture of resistance to change and mistrust in management. As Wright (2008) puts it, enablement is important to employees' sense of pride, joy and the level of confidence they place, not only in their work but in the life of the organization.

With all that was said, the study proposes some solutions, all ingrained in literature and emerged based on the findings of the study. The proposed solutions are also based on the argument that has been denoted by literature of no one theory or model being able to adequately provide all the answers to organizational solutions, particularly as it relates to organizational change.

To this extent, three (3) models of change were proposed that were considered useful in helping the organization to have a more structured approach to change, incorporate employee involvement, address behavioural tendencies that can hinder progress as well as assess the results and introduce meaningful solutions as the organization evolves. The theories that could assist in this new paradigm include Kurt Lewin's three (3) step approach to change which can help to address employee's and organizational readiness as well as employees' perception and involvement in the change process. Additionally, Kotter's and Seligman's models of change, which were also proposed in this study and could serve as a great tool in helping the organization to manage change processes. These two (2) theories mirror some aspects of Kurt Lewin's theory of change particularly, as it relates to employee behaviour during the change process. Most importantly though, Kotter's and Seligman's model of change seeks to make people a central component of the change process, one of the tenets of this research study and the integrated conceptual framework it is built on.

As a result, employees must not be viewed as agents to inflict the change on but rather as vital to the process if organizations desire to experience success. However, this will not be an easy task, as one would now be dealing with people's behaviours and attitudes, which include how they think and traits that are internal and individualized and which an organizational leader may not be able to tap into during the change process. Nonetheless, the organization and employees must be willing to create a workplace that is flourishing and positively engaged, goals that are fundamental to the models proposed. Further, positive psychology is a forward-looking theory and one that can help to create a level of hope and empowerment that is not only necessary during change but throughout the life of the organization.

By implementing the interventions introduced within this study, employees and the organization will be encompassing the practice of positive psychology. Therefore, as the organization incorporates positive psychology into their vision, mission and message of change, employees will begin to feel more valued and empowered which will result in them performing better, being confident in their work and that of the organization as well as inculcating greater pride and commitment to the organization which can help to make the change process even easier (Cabrera, 2012). However, there must be a genuine commitment on both the part of employees and the organization to improve the quality of the work environment and create an atmosphere for the organization to flourish and function optimally (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Turner et al., 2002).

Nonetheless, while this study and the analysis have helped to provide useful and meaningful data as it relates to organizational change and proposed models of change to help create positive interventions to improve workplace conditions for successful change outcomes, it can only be achieved if both the organization and the employees are willing and desirous in doing so.

To this extent, it is suggested that further research could only serve to bolster the topical construct from a Jamaica perspective, particularly as it relates to Jamaica's 2030 vision, which is a strategic plan for the overall growth and development of the country, and which is being anchored by the public sector. Additionally, further research could also go beyond geographical and industry boundaries to gain greater insights into the effects of positive psychology on organizational change and its varying pathways to success.

Accordingly, the study has managed to reveal the significant influence positive psychology could have on organizational change, particularly at the Transport Authority. As such, the findings are consistent with previous studies on organizational change from a positive psychology perspective.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – UNICAF’S APPROVAL



☐

UREC's Decision	
Student's Name:	[REDACTED]
Student's ID #:	[REDACTED]
Supervisor's Name:	[REDACTED]
Program of Study:	UUM: DBA - Doctorate of Business Administration ▼
Offer ID /Group ID:	O16874G15838
Dissertation Stage:	3 ▼
Research Project Title:	Investigating the Influence of Positive Psychology as an approach for an effective management of Organizational change [A Jamaica Prospective]
Comments:	<p>Informed consent:</p> <p>Use the correct template</p> <p>REAF:</p> <p>The student should try to give the questionnaire to more than 40 participants as the amount of participants completing the questionnaire should be of at least 30% of the overall population studied; not the combination of both Q&Q</p> <p>Questionnaire:</p> <p>Remove the phrase 'Have a blessed day' at the end of the questionnaire as no inference should be made to any religious groups."</p>
Decision:	B. Approved with comments for minor revision ▼
Date:	11-Aug-2020

APPENDIX B – REQUEST INPUT EMAIL

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me yesterday as it relates to the captioned subject.

As discussed, I am in the process of collecting data towards the completion of my research as per the requirements of my Doctoral Studies. My research will be focusing on ***Change Management***, particularly, as it relates to how an organization can use the discipline of '*positive psychology*' to successfully manage change. Ultimately, a model of change will be developed that embodies the theory of 'Cognitive dissonance' and 'Appreciative Inquiry' in the transformation process. Both theories seek to find solutions as it relates to 'resistance to change' and how to garner change agents' engagement.

The data collection is expected to be carried out over a period of five (5) days. However, further discussions can be held, especially due to the current COVID-19 situation. Additionally, I was seeking to work with [REDACTED], Research and Statistics as the Gatekeeper due to her charismatic nature with employees. However, I am open to further dialogue on this, if you have someone else in consideration. The number of persons needed for this research is sixty (60).

I have attached a formal letter which will provide additional details as per the research.

Looking forward in working with the Transport Authority in this endeavour.

Thanks in advance for your kind consideration.

Await your timely feedback.

Best Regards
Doctoral Fellow

Please see letter below:

APPENDIX C – OFFICIAL LETTER – INTRODUCTION

Research Dissertation and Gatekeeper

I am a Doctoral student at UNICAF University, Malawi. As part of my degree, I am carrying out a study on the 'influence of Positive Psychology as an approach for an effective management of Organizational change [A Jamaica Prospective]'. The based organization for this study is theThe Transport Authority was chosen as it was perceived as an integral organization within Government, not only as a regulatory body, but as a transformational unit to inspire change.

Additionally, the participation in this research could serve to benefit the organization in leading the Government in the creation of even more effective mechanisms to carry out transformation for long term success. In this regard, I am seeking to engage an individual, preferably from the management team to participate as a 'Gatekeeper.' The responsibility of the Gatekeeper is to assist in the recruiting of participants for the researcher. All other responsibilities after recruitment will be carried out by the researcher. This study will be using semi-structured interviews in the data collection process.

The main tenet of this research is to investigate how change is affected in the public sector and in particular, the Transport Authority. Are there any guiding principles? And the role positive psychology can play in the long-term success of transformation if it is adopted. Hence the title *"Investigating the influence of Positive Psychology as an approach for an effective management of Organizational change [A Jamaica Prospective]*. The name of my supervisor is [REDACTED]

All participation is voluntary. As such, upon recruitment, participants will be provided with detailed information as it relates to the research and will be required to sign a Consent Form before becoming an active participant. These documentations will be submitted beforehand to the Human Resource Department as well as to the designated "Gatekeeper."

Thank you in advance for your time and for your consideration of this project. Kindly please let me know if you require any further information or need any further clarifications.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Doctoral Fellow
Jamaica

[REDACTED]
Research Supervisor
UNICAF University
Area 4, Plot 67, Lilongwe
Malawi
+265-1755-333

APPENDIX D – FOLLOW-UP EMAIL - REQUEST FOR INPUT EMAIL

Good day,

I am just seeking an update as to the soonest I can commence the data collection process.

Also, I had forgotten to mention the method of the process. It will be a group interview, 10 persons per group, as such, a total of 6 sessions.

I was thinking that I could do four (4) sessions in Kingston, one (1) at the Ocho Rios Office and the other at the Mandeville Office. What do you think?

Await your feedback,

Have a great day,

Regards

APPENDIX E – FOLLOW-UP EMAIL – RECRUITING OF PARTICIPANTS

Good day,

We seem to be having a challenge as it relates to the organization of this process.

Would it be possible to have at least one two (2) sessions this week, say Friday? That would mean that an email would be sent to employees, which would allow Carolyn to start recruiting volunteers.

Await your feedback,

Regards,

APPENDIX F – FOLLOW-UP EMAIL – AFTER THE INTERVIEWS

Good day,

By way of update

I will be sending a *close out* email to you and the TA team. However, I am still awaiting feedback from my supervisor as it relates to same, as well as the way forward should any additional information be required.

Thanks again for all your assistance,

Much appreciated!

Best Regards

APPENDIX G – EMAIL SENT BY GATEKEEPER TO MANAGERS OF THE REGIONAL OFFICES

This was repurposed from the Official Gatekeeper letter that was sent as well upon verbal conversations.

Good day Managers,

██████████ has selected the Transport Authority to be a part of her research paper for her Doctoral Studies and as such, she will be conducting an exercise with members of staff to assist with her study on Organizational Change.

She would like to engage sixty (60) volunteers (employees): **40** from Head Office (119 and 107), **10** from SRO (Mandeville) and **10** from NRO. Each session will have ten (10) volunteers.

Date: Head Office (119 and 107) June 16 and 17 (4 Sessions in total)
SRO (Mandeville) June 18 (1 session each)
NRO June 19 (1 session each)

Location for Head Office and Times for all locations to be finalized.

Please note, your permission will be required to have members of your department participate and as such I will ask selected persons to assist with the names for each location:

Kindly advise members of your department of such venture so that the names can be submitted no later than Friday, June 12, 2020.

Each participant will be required to sign a consent form and there will be give-a-ways for participants in the sessions.

I can be contacted at my extension (2611) if there are any questions or concerns regarding the matter.

Regards

APPENDIX H – EMAIL SENT BY GATEKEEPER TO REGIONAL GATEKEEPERS OF THE REGIONAL OFFICES

Good day Managers,

Please be reminded that the exercise regarding the captioned matter begins tomorrow **June 16, 2020**. Each session will last approximately 30-40 minutes.

The schedules and locations are as follows:

June 16 – 107 Maxfield Avenue at **10 am (group 1) and 11am (group 2)** in the Boardroom

June 17 – 119 Maxfield Avenue at **10 am (group 1) and 11am (group 2)** in the Lunchroom

June 18 – SRO at 10am

June 19 – NRO (time to be decided/List of names to be submitted)

The below lists represent the members of staff who will participate in the survey from each region.

APPENDIX I – EMAIL SENT TO GATEKEEPERS FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY (This was after the initial Interviews)

Good day Team,

As discussed, please see attached questionnaire.

I was instructed by my Ethics Committee to have same completed in addition to the interviews. The questionnaire comprises of Twenty (20) questions, that requires mostly a (YES/NO) response. No name is required. In addition, it follows the questioning of the initial interviews.

You can complete same online or physically as follows:

1. Using the **fill and sign option** in Adobe when the document is opened. Just click on 'fill and sign' then text and place the text cursor in the space you wish to write. or.

2. Upload the document to - PDF Escape via this link - [PDFescape - Free PDF Editor & Free PDF Form Filler](#). Then do this: click on FREE ONLINE then upload PDF then click on TEXT and complete the form. After you have completed the form, click on SAVE (the blue disk icon), then download using the GREEN ICON. Then saved to your computer and send via the email on the Questionnaire. NB: Please ensure that you save the file to your computer so that you will be able to upload it to PDF Escape

PDFescape - Free PDF Editor & Free PDF Form Filler

Red Software

Edit PDF files with PDFescape - an online, free PDF reader, free PDF editor & free PDF form filler. View PDF doc...

3. Print and complete and submit to the Designated person/s.

Deadline: Monday, July Thursday, July 27, 2020. Quota per region - 20 or more.

Looking forward once again to your usual kind assistance and corporation.

If you require any assistance or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via this email or at:

Thanks again,

Have a blessed day!

Regards

APPENDIX J – SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

[December 2018]

Title of Research

“Investigating the influence of Positive Psychology as an approach
for an effective management of Organizational change
[A Jamaica Prospective]”

I am a Doctoral student at UNICAF University Malawi. As part of my degree, I am carrying out a study on the ‘influence of Positive Psychology as an approach for an effective management of Organizational change [A Jamaica Prospective]. The research will commence with the data collection period and ends upon assessment and publication of the research.

The research is seeking to engage at least 60 volunteers. These volunteers will participate in the completion of a questionnaire and/or an interview session. These activities will be largely conducted on the grounds of the organization, most specifically, in the conference room. Your participation in this research could serve to benefit the organization in leading the Government in the creation of even more effective mechanism to carry out transformation for long term success.

The data collection period will span over 1 month. Only 3 days will be utilized. However, this timeframe is scheduled to accommodate any changes in the date for the different data collection activities. It should be noted that while we appreciate you responding to all the questions asked, you may choose not to respond if you so desire, especially if you feel uncomfortable. This is your choice, and you will not be penalized in any way.

The main tenet of this research is to investigate how change is affected in the public sector and in particular the Are there any guiding principles? And the role positive psychology can play in the long-term success transformation if it is adopted. Hence the title “*Investigating the influence of Positive*

Psychology as an approach for an effective management of Organizational change [A Jamaica Prospective].

The name of my supervisor is Dr. Apostolos Pistolas.

Participation is voluntary. As such, you have the option to withdraw, without consequences before the study commences as well as during or after the conclusion of the data collection process. To this extent, you will be provided with an Information sheet and will be required to sign a Consent Form. You will be provided with a copy of both documents after signing. In addition, after each data collection activity, you will be provided with an opportunity to review your responses before submission. Further, all your data will be destroyed upon your withdrawal from the study and will not be used for any analytical purposes.

All participants have the opportunity to request a copy of the interview scripts and make suggestion for amendments before a final copy is drafted.

The researcher does not envisage any potential risk of harm due to the nature of the research and the way it will be conducted. However, any perceived risk observed after the commencement of the research will be assessed and dealt with appropriately.

It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that data is kept in the strictest of confidence and that your identity is protected. As such, you will not be required to enter your name on any data collection instrument. Further, the researcher will use unique numbers to identify each participant. Only the researcher will be able to understand these numbers, which will be used for analytical purposes.

All data will be stored off the premises of the organization for access by the researcher. The results of the study will be made available to all research participants.

If you require any additional information or have any concern, please contact the researcher at: or via email:

APPENDIX K – SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Organizational Transformation [A Jamaica Perspective]

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE [Data Collection]

Purpose

This document is designed to solicit participants' confidential input on organizational change. The document comprises 15, pre-written questions which will serve as a guide for the interviewing process.

Confidentiality

Participants responses to these questions will be kept completely anonymous and within the confines of the interview setting. Additionally, the information gathered will only be used for the purpose of the research.

No requirements to sign document. To further safeguard participant's confidentiality, no one outside the research team will ever see participant's responses. The researcher will collect the responses and present the results to as per the research guidelines.

1. How are change initiatives implemented in your organization?
2. In your opinion, have current or previous change initiatives achieved their objectives?
- 2a. If No, why? If Yes, why?
3. Do you believe change is important to an organization?
4. How involved are employees in the change process of the organization? (Based on response, allow participant/s to explain their response/s further).
5. How are the organization's communication channels during change?
6. In your opinion, how effective is communication from the leadership team to those involved in the implementation of change?

7. How quickly do you think that your organization adapts to changes?
8. How do you feel about the culture within your organization relating to change?
9. In your experience, what has helped /what would help change projects to be successful within your organization? Why?
10. In your experience, has anything limited the success of change projects within your organization? If yes, what?
11. Do you think that your organization is undertaking too much or not enough change at the moment?
12. Do you believe change initiatives are influenced? If yes, by what? If no, why?
13. As an individual, how quickly do you adapt to change?
14. I can trust our management and believe what it says (Yes/No). If yes, why? If no, why?
15. I agree with the organization goals and vision. If yes, why, If no, why?

For Demographic Purposes

1. Participant's Age
Age:
2. Participant's position classification
Job title:
3. Participant's duration with the organization?
Number of years employed:
4. Participant's Salary Grade

\$40,000 to \$100,000 monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$101,000 to 200,000 monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$201, 000 to 350,000 monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$351, 000 and over	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX L – QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

QUESTIONNAIRE

“Investigating the influence of Positive Psychology as an approach for an effective management of Organizational change [A Jamaica Prospective]”

This questionnaire is purely for research purposes. As such, all information provided will be kept confidential and will only be used for the research.

The questionnaire is organized into five (5) distinct sections. Each section, if different from the previous, will provide additional instructions to help with completion. A total of Twenty (20) questions are outlined.

Your participation is highly appreciated.

SECTIONS AND QUESTIONS:

Change vision and mission (Readiness):

	Questions	Yes	No
1	Is there a clear vision of organizational change?		
2	Is there a clear and concise message about the change?		
3	Do employees understand the scale of the change?		
4	Can the achievement and progress of the change be measured?		
5	Are the right systems in place to support the change?		

Management/Leadership:

	Questions	Yes	No
1	Does the management team demonstrate a behaviour that is fully supportive of change initiatives?		
2	Do you think the management team has the right people involve to make the change happens?		
3	Are managers and supervisors able to translate the message of change to employees that report to them?		
4	Are employee's concerns being heard and responded to by management during change?		
5	Do you trust the management team as per change initiatives?		

Employee Engagement:

	Questions	Yes	No
1	During change, do you understand how the change will impact you?		
2	Have employees been given reasons to 'buy in' and be engaged with the change?		

3	Do you have any resistance to change?		
4	Does the organization have training available to assist in the change?		
5	Are there informed, passionate and engaged 'change team' in place during change initiatives?		

Barriers to Change:

	Questions	Yes	No
1	Do you believe there are barriers to the organization's change initiatives?		
2	Have barriers that derail change been identified with a plan to remove them?		
3	Do installed political parties have any influence on change?		
4	Do employees have fears about change initiatives?		
5	Are employee's fears about change been addressed in tangible ways?		

Communication:

For the first three (3) questions, two (2) responses are given with a range of responses between them. Please mark an (x) in the most appropriate box. The closer the box is to the answer, the stronger you agree. For example, if you feel that the guidelines provided on COVID-19 by the government have helped you to make better choices on yours and your family health; you would complete the questionnaire as follows:

Example	Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Very much so
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If you have no views on a particular question, please leave it blank

1	How effective is communication from the leadership team during change?	Very ineffective	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Very effective
2	Does the message about change from the leadership team make you feel that you will be comfortable about the change?	Less comfortable		More comfortable
3	Is the discussion on change focused on the conceptual side of change (not the details on how to do it)?	More conceptual		More details on how to do it

4. How are change mostly communicated to employees? (Choose the one that best applies)

- Email ☐
- Meetings ☐
- Memos ☐
- Customers ☐
- Supervisors ☐
- Others, please state _____

5. What would be the most effective way for you to receive communication about change? (You can choose all that applies, however, please answer based on your priority with 5 being the most useful and 1 being the least useful).

- Email ☐
- Meetings ☐
- Memos ☐
- Customers ☐
- Supervisors ☐
- Casual Conversations ☐
- Other (Please specify): _____

Participant Profile:

1. How long have you been employed to the company? _____
2. What is your age? _____
3. If you feel uncomfortable in providing a precise age to question 2 above, please answer via the ranges provided:

Your Age:

- 18-25 ☐
- 26-35 ☐
- 36-49 ☐
- 50-65 ☐
- 65 and over ☐

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. If you have completed electronically, please save and return via email to:..... If you have completed a paper copy, please submit to the Researcher or the designated Gatekeeper.

APPENDIX M – PARTICIPANT’S INFORMED CONSENT FORM



UU_IC - Version 2.1



Informed Consent Form

Part 1: Debriefing of Participants

Student's Name: [REDACTED]

Student's E-mail Address: [REDACTED]

Student ID #: [REDACTED]

Supervisor's Name: [REDACTED]

University Campus: Unicaf University Malawi (UUM)

Program of Study: UUM: DBA - Doctorate of Business Administration

Research Project Title: "Investigating the influence of Positive Psychology as an approach for an effective management of Organizational change [A Jamaica Prospective]"

Date: 15-Jul-2020

Provide a short description (purpose, aim and significance) of the research project, and explain why and how you have chosen this person to participate in this research (maximum 150 words).

This study will investigate the influence of positive psychology as an approach for an effective management of organizational change from a Jamaican prospective. The researcher will use face-to-face interviews to collect data as per the research topic. The questions that will be asked will entail those having to do with organizational change as well as the topic of general communication between managers and staff as it relates to change.

You were selected to participate in this study as you meet the selection criteria as per the research objectives. However, your participation is voluntary, which means that you can withdraw at any time. Please take the time to go through this document before signing. If you have any concerns or do not understand any of the words or concepts used, please let me know and I will certainly take the time to discuss same with you.

The above named Student is committed in ensuring participant's voluntarily participation in the research project and guaranteeing there are no potential risks and/or harms to the participants.

Participants have the right to withdraw at any stage (prior or post the completion) of the research without any consequences and without providing any explanation. In these cases, data collected will be deleted.

All data and information collected will be coded and will not be accessible to anyone outside this research. Data described and included in dissemination activities will only refer to coded information ensuring beyond the bounds of possibility participant identification.

I, [REDACTED], ensure that all information stated above is true and that all conditions have been met.

Student's Signature: [REDACTED]

Informed Consent Form

Part 2: Certificate of Consent

This section is mandatory and should to be signed by the participant(s)

Student's Name:

Student's E-mail Address:

Student ID #:

Supervisor's Name:

University Campus: Unicaf University Malawi (UUM)

Program of Study: UUM: DBA - Doctorate of Business Administration

Research Project Title: "Investigating the influence of Positive Psychology as an approach for an effective management of Organizational change [A Jamaica Prospective]"

I have read the foregoing information about this study, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss about it. I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions and I have received enough information about this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason for withdrawing and without negative consequences. I consent to the use of multimedia (e.g. audio recordings, video recordings) for the purposes of my participation to this study. I understand that my data will remain anonymous and confidential, unless stated otherwise. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Participant's Print name:

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

If the Participant is Illiterate:

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had an opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the aforementioned individual has given consent freely.

Witness's Print name:

Witness's Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX N – NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

Title of Research Project:

“Investigating the influence of Positive Psychology as an approach for an effective
management of Organizational change
[A Jamaica Prospective]”

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research to discuss matters pertaining to organizational change processes.

By signing this agreement, you agree as follows:

- A. To hold in confidence any information that is discussed or made available to you directly or indirectly.
- B. To avoid discussing any information that is said by other participants, during and after the research study with friends, family members, organization representatives or anyone.
- C. To accept a moral and legal obligation not to use or disclose any information by written or any other means including that of social media.
- D. Not to reveal the identity of other research participants.
- E. To notify the Principal Investigator immediately should you become aware of an actual breach of confidentiality or a situation which could potentially result in a breach, whether this be on your part or on the part of another person.

Signature

Date

Printed name

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Printed name